

How Policies That Impact Migrants Amplify or Mitigate Stigma Processes

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Abstract

How are stigma processes reflected in policies that impact migrants? How might policies that impact migrants amplify and/or mitigate stigma processes for migrants? This chapter explores the role of policy narratives and frameworks (e.g., assimilation, integration, multiculturalism) in shaping specific policy types (e.g., targeted, universal, mainstream) that differentially conceptualize and affect the roles, rights, and opportunities of migrants in society. The complexity of the policy-making process is examined, including the specific policy context and political discourse, trade-offs leading to a mix of policy types, competing policies across jurisdictions (e.g., international, federal, regional), and differential implementation of policies. Throughout, policies are considered that can intentionally or unintentionally generate, amplify, and/or mitigate stigma processes. In addition, this chapter examines consequences of these policy-generated stigma experiences for both migrants and nonmigrants, the feedback processes from these stigma experiences to the demand for policy change, and strategies to improve policy making with specific consideration for stigma in the context of migration-generated diversity. Empirical gaps in the literature are noted and recommendations are made to address these knowledge gaps.

Introduction

We have come together as scholars of migration policy and stigma to understand how a stigma framework can be applied in the context of migration-generated diversity. Specifically, we consider how (a) stigma processes could be reflected in policies that impact migrants and (b) policies that impact migrants

might amplify and/or mitigate stigma processes for migrants. We limit our focus to liberal democracies that aspire for equal rights and freedoms for all. We also limit our focus to the treatment of migrants *after* they have crossed a country’s borders. However, we acknowledge that variation in the restrictiveness or expansiveness of policies about who is allowed to cross borders in the first place also contributes to overall stigmatization of migrants.

In this chapter, we discuss how the great narratives of equality in society shape the development, passage, and implementation of specific policies that impact migrants, at multiple levels and with multiple approaches, occurring within the context of the politics surrounding policy making. Next, we outline how these policies (and related politics) can intentionally or unintentionally generate, amplify, and/or mitigate stigma processes for migrants (Figure 8.1). We consider how to assess the consequences of policies for stigma processes, and how stigma experiences have the potential to generate feedback processes for policy change. We also consider potential strategies for policy making,

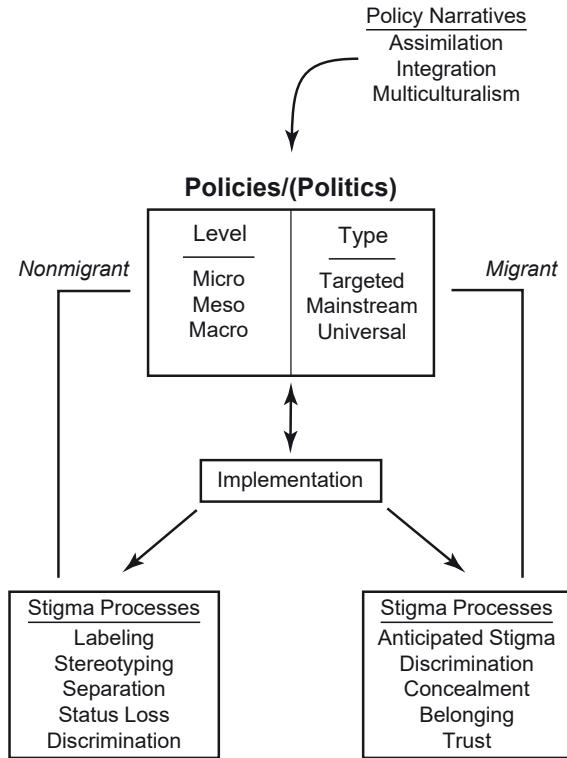


Figure 8.1 Conceptual model of how migration policies interact with stigma processes, outlining how the presence and implementation of policies can intentionally and unintentionally initiate stigma processes that impact the lives of migrants. Shaped by dominant policy narratives, different types of policies enacted at multiple levels can generate, amplify, or mitigate stigma, both from nonmigrants and for migrants.

particularly in the context of migration-related diversity, to monitor and respond to these stigma processes. Given the limited existing evidence at the intersection of these two areas of research, we highlight the many research gaps that still remain in understanding the bidirectional relationships between policies that impact migrants and stigma processes experienced by migrants across diverse contexts.

Migration as an Organizing Force and “Migrant” as a Social Category

Our definition of (international) migration and the status of being a “migrant” is embedded in the organization of the contemporary world since World War II, the era of the nation-state, wherein each country’s borders are rigidly defined and enforced and individuals are assigned citizenship and/or permission for temporary or long-term residence within a country by its government. A widely applied definition of migrant is “someone who changes his or her country of usual residence, irrespective of the reason for migration or legal status. Generally, a distinction is made between short-term or temporary migration, covering movements with a duration between three and 12 months, and long-term or permanent migration, referring to a change of country of residence for a duration of one year or more.”¹ Accordingly, as long as contemporary states exist, migrants will also exist.²

This means that migrants stand out as a social category of people at risk for stigmatization. Labeling someone as different is the first stage of the stigma process (Link and Phelan 2001). However, not every label generates stigma (e.g., labeling someone as tall is not as likely to generate stigma). Therefore, labeling is necessary but not sufficient to define stigma. It remains an empirical question whether being labeled as a “migrant” will always result in stigma. However, in any country where migrants are not entitled to the same rights as those with citizenship, such labeling will likely perpetuate stigma by designating migrants not only as different from others but also of lower status, which is most clearly demonstrated via restricted access to rights and resources.

Not all migrants are stigmatized equally. Migrants are perceived differently given the intersection with other social categorizations (particularly, class, gender, and race), and these perceptions shape policies and their consequences. In particular, certain migrant groups are more likely to be *perceived* as migrants due to visible phenotypic differences from native born groups. This is particularly true for migrant groups racialized as non-White in majority White

¹ See “Definitions” at <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/definitions> (accessed July 28, 2022).

² There are scholars, however, who argue for a critical reorientation of research that shifts migration from the subject of study to the perspective of study given how use of these concepts risks reproducing their harms (e.g., Römhild 2017).

countries who continue to be perceived as outsiders regardless of their citizenship status (e.g., “Swiss by law” vs. “Swiss by culture”). In North American and Australian contexts, migrants are viewed as being distinct from indigenous populations and the descendants of enslaved people who were forcibly brought to the country. In the European context, the terms “migrant” and “ethnic minority” are used more interchangeably and there is considerable overlap. One consequence is that this terminology is also applied to the descendants of migrants (e.g., “second-generation migrant”), which may perpetuate stigma by labeling them as distinctive from other native born even when, by definition, they are not migrants.

These multiple overlapping identities exist in policy making, specifically in policies that address migration as well as, more broadly, ethnic minority groups. Given the state of these literatures, our use of “migrant” primarily focuses on first-generation migrants but includes any descendants who are still classified or perceived as “subaltern outsiders” in those countries. For simplicity, we refer to the remainder of the population without a migration background as “nonmigrants.” By this, we specifically mean members of the majority or mainstream population who were born in the same country in which they now reside and are also part of the dominant racial/ethnic group(s) that possesses the power to be able to perpetuate stigma toward migrants. It is important to note, however, that use of these terms is imperfect as they legitimize the very categories that contribute to stigma and discrimination.

Policy Narratives and Frameworks

A classical question for liberal democracy is: How can a state ensure cohesion in a religiously and ethno-racially diverse landscape that is stratified according to class and gender? National narratives around social cohesion (along dimensions of homogeneity to diversity) and the resulting policy frameworks (along dimensions of race blind to race conscious) shape the construction of who “we” are, and that construction shapes and is shaped by institutions (Foner and Simon 2015). For migrants, this more specifically focuses on if and how migrants can be incorporated or integrated to feel solidarity with the national identity. In turn, these constructions create the context in which stigma processes are generated, amplified, and/or mitigated (Lamont et al. 2016). We define cohesion as sharing a set of values and norms that are deemed to be at the core of the society, such as agreements about the civic society, the rule of law and institutional procedures, a sense of connectedness and belonging, and ancestry, ethnicity, or undefined cultural commonalities.

Depending on their history of nation building and migration-related diversity, societies develop models of immigrant incorporation that differently value expressions of cultural differences and recognition of ethno-racial identifications (if not identities). Some societies have narratives and frameworks

that downplay or exclude diversity (e.g., segregation). However, in societies that aspire to equality and social justice, a usual typology of narratives and frameworks for dealing with diversity distinguishes between paradigms of assimilation, integration, and multiculturalism (Alba et al. 2012; Joppke 2007). A central tension occurs between (a) monitoring different group trajectories to improve conditions for the more disadvantaged and pursue equality, and (b) ignoring group differences to achieve equality through a colorblind approach (i.e., treating everyone the same and expecting that a universal approach will improve conditions for the disadvantaged). Thus, while each of these approaches implies different policy frameworks that intend to deter stigmatization and discrimination, how successful or unsuccessful each of them are remains an open question.

Assimilation

The assimilation paradigm favors equality through invisibility of minorities and strives to design and implement colorblind policies. This paradigm can be beneficial in creating a structural function to preserve such solidarity by, for example, attempting to enable people to function equally via equal distribution of resources. Further, the strategy to downplay ethnicity and race might reduce problems of stigmatization attached to official labeling and identification by conveying these labels should not matter. However, this approach can also create a tension between social processes of racialization, which take place in interpersonal interactions and institutional settings, and the lack of positive actions against their consequences in the context of equality policies. Further, as long as the assimilation framework operates in a context where legal categorizations, such as migrants and native, or citizens and foreigners, determine differential access to civil and political resources, then neither invisibility nor equal distribution is possible.

Integration

The same can be said about the integration paradigm, which has considerable overlap with the assimilation paradigm. Despite its recognition of some dimensions of cultural differences, it promotes mostly colorblind policies to avoid reification of ethno-racial identities and fragmentation of the society along ethnic lines. Deviations from these norms are interpreted as a threat to cohesion, and thus what could have been a driver for inclusiveness can result in exclusion and stigmatization. Integration policies mostly bring outsiders (migrants and ethno-racial minorities) into the mainstream population, as this will grant full access to the social resources associated with their membership. In other words, while the existence of differences is acknowledged and recognized, the expectation is that outsiders should adopt the norms and expectations of the dominant society to achieve cohesion, rather than transform the structures and

institutions of society to make them open for people to participate in society as they are. In societies that favor integration, conflicts take shape around the definition of norms and which changes, driven by participation of minority groups, are acceptable for the majority population. In this sense, the integration paradigm is more flexible to the incorporation of migration-related references into the core system than assimilation and, in an ideal scenario, might offer more avenues for stigma reduction.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is usually described as a full recognition of cultural diversity that entails symbolic dimensions and forms of group-based political and social rights attributed to ethno-racial minorities (Modood 2007). This recognition might reduce the dynamics of stigmatization, even though it increases the labeling attached to identity politics. The multiculturalism paradigm is frequently associated with proactive antidiscrimination policies, in part because race-conscious policies can be adopted without raising contradictions, as in the assimilation and integration paradigms. The intention is to recognize differences without hierarchy, such as by separating identity labels from negative stereotypes of different groups, which could result in discrimination. Some argue, however, that this may result in harmful consequences; by demarcating and making the existence of certain groups salient, hierarchies between groups may be perpetuated if some groups perceive themselves as superior to others (Koopmans 2013). Hierarchies that feed into stigma could have negative consequences for individuals or groups who are perceived as not contributing positively to social cohesion by maintaining cultural differences.

Summary

In general, support for anti-migration policies is higher than anti-migrant sentiment (Margalit and Solodoch 2022). In particular, the policies and attitudes around wanting to restrict and keep people out of a country differ from those that address how to treat people once they live in the country. In our assessment, the assimilation and integration paradigms appear to be more common in countries with robust social welfare policies (e.g., Nordic and Western European countries), whereas the multicultural paradigm is more common in countries with more extensive migration histories and less regulated labor markets (e.g., Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, United States). The history of each state and the conditions needed to create change in these societies frame the context for each of these paradigms. In a time of increasing movement of people, goods, and ideas across borders, it is thus especially acute to determine how these paradigms impact stigma processes across differing contexts.

Policy Types

Based primarily within the dominant policy narratives and frameworks of each nation, three main policy types are used to address inequality and discrimination: targeted, universal, and mainstreaming. Additionally, explicit antidiscrimination policies also exist. While many of these policy types first originated to address class and gender inequality and discrimination, they have also been extended to address the conditions of migrants and ethnic minority groups. However, the effectiveness of the different policy types in deterring stigmatization and discrimination and reducing inequality remains an open question. Finally, although beyond the scope of this chapter, it is worth noting that policies that do not specifically address migrants might also be strongly impacted by the presence of migrants and thus require further consideration (e.g., housing, education, health-care access).

Targeted

Targeted policies intentionally designate resources and opportunities for groups (in this case migrants) and are most likely found in the multicultural paradigm, in countries with more extensive migration histories. One example of this type of policy would be the creation of language training programs to assist migrants in acquiring the local language. This approach explicitly recognizes that inequalities exist and that support may be needed in response. It attempts to mitigate stigma by directly addressing some of its causes (e.g., language differences) and consequences (e.g., inability to obtain a job due to language limitations). However, this approach also carries a risk, namely, it specifically labels migrant groups to receive the benefits of the policy (e.g., making language differences more salient, revealing additional resources are being invested in a subset of the population). In particular, the redistribution of resources for specific groups, rather than improving resources for everyone, could contribute to a perceived hierarchy that perpetuates stigma. Sometimes targeted policies use proxies, such as targeting deprived neighborhoods that have high concentrations of migrants without specifying the group to benefit from the policy (e.g., opening a language center in the neighborhood). Targeting neighborhoods instead of migrants is less accurate in reaching the desired population but might also mitigate stigma by not labeling the population explicitly. It remains an empirical question whether group-specific policies are possible without initiating stigma processes or by having any countervailing policies and practices in place.

Universal

Universal policies are more common in countries that have adopted assimilation and integration paradigms and are present in social democratic countries with more robust social welfare policies. According to social democratic

ideology, equality is enhanced when all individuals have access to the same resources. Proponents of this approach argue that by not explicitly naming target groups, they are reducing the likelihood of stigma and discrimination. These policies were originally developed to reduce inequality based on class and gender and have now been extended to migrants and ethnic minority groups (e.g., “colorblind” policies). A central tenet here is to distribute rights and resources to individuals rather than groups. Further, by offering the same services or benefits to everyone, the intention is to improve conditions for the entire society. An example of this would be offering universal prekindergarten education that focuses on language acquisition. Such a program would benefit all children but would arguably have the greatest benefit for children who speak a different language at home. However, a critique of universal policies is that they may not address inequalities that specific groups, such as migrants, experience. For example, a similar program for adults would never exist because there is not a universal need for it. In this case, the biggest risk for stigma is through policy inaction or its dilution into generic policies that fail to reach migrants and address their specific experience of stigmatization.

Mainstream

Mainstream policies are similar to universal policies but incorporate concern for a specific target group. While universal policies intentionally do not consider any groups, mainstreaming policies acknowledge that group-specific inequalities exist and aim to reduce them through targeted policies that are implemented in a universal way (Scholten 2020). An example of this would be having school policies that require language services on campus; although any student could use these resources, they will be most beneficial to migrant students who are not native language speakers. In practice, these policies are most frequently used to combat gender inequality. However, such policies can also be used to curtail specific traditions or behaviors that fall outside of the dominant culture. For example, French laws that banned religious symbols in schools in 2004 and “full face coverings” in 2010 targeted Muslim women (e.g., wearing hijab or niqab); however, the general wording of the laws did not explicitly single out Muslims (Bowen 2010; Hennette-Vauchez 2017). Additionally, legally sanctioning some forms of stigma may enable stigma in other forms. For instance, banning “full face coverings” in schools may exacerbate how people treat Muslim women who wear such coverings in other settings, even though such behaviors are not legally condoned. The potential for mainstreaming policies to mitigate and amplify the risk of stigma overlap with both targeted and universal policies. As with targeted policies, labeling a group is required; however, as with universal policies, separation is not required. Targeted or universal policies may be the best option for specific circumstances, while mainstreaming policies may offer the best balance to

manage the risk of stigma. However, comparing policy types for their influence on stigma processes remains an empirical question.

Antidiscrimination

Antidiscrimination policies create the normative framework addressing unfair treatment and disadvantages attached to protected grounds (e.g., nationality, ethnicity, race or color). These policies target not only unfair treatments or biases based explicitly on protected characteristics, but also neutral provisions and selections that entail disproportionate negative impact on individuals or groups identified by one or several protected characteristics. Detecting discrimination necessitates monitoring decision-making processes everywhere they occur and acting against these processes; their consequences require different ways to enforce equality (Fibbi et al. 2021; Fredman 2011). For institutions or individuals who intentionally or unintentionally discriminate, these policies enumerate strategies to review and respond to such incidents. Most antidiscrimination policies combine coercive actions based on sanctions and proactive actions that promote diversity. However, it is challenging to enact formal policies against discrimination in countries where data collection is lacking on race, ethnicity, or immigration status (Simon 2017). Therefore, antidiscrimination policies are implemented and enforced primarily in countries that utilize a multicultural approach to immigrant incorporation. In their pure form, antidiscrimination approaches transform the structures of society and allow full participation of members without requiring them to adjust to specific norms.

Summary

Targeted, mainstream, and universal policies all have the potential to amplify and/or mitigate stigma. These types of policies may address aspects of the migrant experience that do not directly relate to stigma or discrimination but may inadvertently affect all stages of the stigma processes. For instance, increasing access to jobs can lead to greater financial independence and reduce stereotypes (e.g., that migrants rely on the state for benefits and services). Antidiscrimination laws, by contrast, focus specifically on the ultimate stage of stigma: discrimination.

Policy Making and Implementation

The actual practice of policy making is complex. Policies do not exist in a vacuum but are part of a larger context and political discourse surrounding their passage and implementation. Typically, policies are a mix of frameworks and types to meet the different political trade-offs that need to be made. Policies occur at multiple levels that might be aligned with or contradict each other.

Finally, heterogeneity in the implementation of policies will ultimately determine their actual impact.

Importantly, the absence of policies (i.e., “policies of inaction”) can reinforce stigmatization and discrimination toward a group by actively choosing not to offer policies to address their needs or to redress the harms they experience (Link and Hatzenbuehler 2016). This lack of action could be intentional (e.g., not passing a proposed policy) or unintentional (e.g., not being concerned about the experiences of the group to propose any policies that would benefit them).

Policy Context and Political Discourse

Universal and mainstreaming policies, which are intended to benefit a specific group but offer rights to everyone, vary in whether their text explicitly mentions the target group. The political discourse surrounding the drafting and passage of such policies, however, might make the target group known. For example, a few states in the United States have passed laws that permit all state residents to obtain driver’s licenses, which are specifically intended to benefit undocumented migrants (as those with documented status are already eligible for driver’s licenses). While this was not stated explicitly in the proposed policies, public debate around these policies focused almost exclusively on undocumented migrants. Similarly, the political debate for policies on “deprived neighborhoods” often focuses on the concentration of migrants in these neighborhoods. In theory, policy approaches that do not label the target population should be able to mitigate stigma. In reality, however, these policies cannot be separated from the political discourse that surrounds them, which might still include labeling even if the final policy does not. Further, these debates are often rooted in the narratives of equality that already exist (mentioned above). Thus, it proves difficult to disentangle the ideological and material aspects of the policy when considering the potential stigmatizing consequences (discussed below). Whether stigma fades once the political debate is forgotten over time or whether stigma persists if the targeted group is labeled in the policy remains a question for future study.

Policy Mix and Trade-Offs

To understand the complexity of policy effects, one must bear in mind that policy regimes are not simply assimilationist, integrationist, or multicultural, and the subsequent policies are not simply universal, mainstream, or targeted. Often referred to as a “mixed bag” (de Haas et al. 2015:4) or a policy mix (Schultz et al. 2021), policies are shaped by diverse political interests influenced by economic stakeholders, democratic decision-making processes, and constitutional norms (Boswell and Geddes 2011; Hampshire 2013). Sometimes different policy dimensions might even be contradictory and reflect different policy models. Ruhs (2013) argues that there might be a trade-off between an

openness expressed toward migrants and the rights they obtain once they are in the country. For example, in rich countries, where there is a negative relationship with certain migrant groups, programs that are more open to let in migrant workers also extend fewer rights to them. The policy decisions taken in such cases might be related to cost and benefit calculations: an increasing number of low-skilled workers could lead to greater welfare costs.

At the same time, some policy dimensions are viewed as more important than others. For instance, some people might care more about border controls, whereas others might be more interested in the integration of migrants. Competing interests create the basis for trade-offs in policy regulations. In a study by Helbling et al. (unpublished), preferences about policies that govern migration flows were found to be conditional on policies that govern entrance criteria and rights eligibility. Respondents in the study who oppose migration, in general, were willing to compromise and allow more migration, if entrance criteria became more selective. Others who support migration were willing to compromise and accept less migration if rights become more generous.

Demand for specific policies often arises as a reaction to specific events. In 2015, for example, in response to mass sexual assaults on women in Cologne, Germany during public festivities on New Year's Eve, there were calls for more restrictive migration policies. Calls for more expansive migration policies or greater protections from stigma and discrimination often accompany public protests and social movements that demand fair treatment for migrants.

Competition across Levels

Different jurisdictional levels (e.g., federal vs. regional) have their own policies. This creates the potential for conflicts across levels: one level may follow more restrictive policies while another may be more inclusive toward migrants. Further, policies at higher levels often need to be implemented at lower levels, creating additional opportunities for conflict, from refusal to selective implementation of a policy. When specific stigma processes are activated, this may also differ across levels. Finally, at each level, policy awareness may also differ. For example, an individual might be aware of more proximal local laws that shape everyday experiences and interactions or of larger federal or regional laws that take precedence over local ones and bear greater importance, even if they are more distal.

Policy levels are commonly organized around the macro, meso, and micro levels. Currently, there is limited literature that links multiple levels simultaneously to understand how the totality of policies across levels might amplify and/or mitigate stigma processes (for a rare exception, see Lattanner et al. 2021). A true multilevel approach would include, for example, macro-level policies, such as legal frameworks that regulate discrimination or policies that structure group-based rights as well as micro-level policies both in terms of

actual execution of legal frameworks and situation-specific policies in schools or at workplaces.

International governing bodies are situated at the top macro level. Although many different actors are involved in agenda setting as well as the conceptualization, definition, and implementation of policies regarding stigma and discrimination, supranational institutions assume an important role. The agenda on antidiscrimination in Europe, for instance, has been strongly influenced and even piloted by the frameworks set by the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD),³ the Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI),⁴ and more directly by the European Directives on Equality in 2000.⁵ International treaties are not strictly speaking binding instruments, but CERD is exerting a soft power on state members through two mechanisms. First, members are obligated to report on the state of racism in the country every four years. Second, CERD strongly recommends that more data is collected, broken down by ethnicity and race or proxies that would give a reliable account of the disadvantages faced by minority groups. The European Directives have a direct influence on the adoption of antidiscrimination laws in European Union countries and the definition of legal and policy frameworks on racism and ethnic and racial discrimination. The transposition of these directives into national laws has not only contributed to change the legal framework, but also to create awareness among policymakers and to disseminate concepts, terminologies, and toolkits related to antidiscrimination in European Union countries, where debate about racism and discrimination was rare if not inexistent (Banton 1996; Geddes and Guiraudon 2004; Keane and Waughray 2017).

However, macro-level policies, like antidiscrimination laws or the distribution of specific rights to groups of people, may be necessary but insufficient to cause major changes in discriminatory outcomes. At the most micro level, it may be more effective to consider and target resources aimed at micro policies or the operationalization of general frameworks (Sabbagh 2011). Examples could include simple changes such as blinded job applications, external grading of pupils and students, or protocols to steer distribution of lab access at universities. Such policies have several potential advantages. First, they are more easily implemented as such policies rarely encounter major political pushback. Second, they can hinder both unintended and intended discrimination and increase barriers for intentional discriminatory behavior, while not targeting or

³ See "Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination" at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/cerd> (accessed July 28, 2022).

⁴ See "European Commission against Racism and Intolerance" at <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance> (accessed July 28, 2022).

⁵ European Directive "implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin," a.k.a. Racial Equality Directive 2000/43/EC and Employment Equality Framework Directive 2000/78/EC.

stigmatizing individuals for unintentional behavior. Third, they are effective at the micro level and can have positive impact, even after short periods of time. Fourth, micro policies can influence other areas, mindsets, and behaviors that contribute to larger societal changes over time. These possibilities warrant empirical investigation.

Policy Implementation

Even when a policy does exist, whether and how it is implemented (i.e., both lack of implementation and selective implementation) can amplify and/or mitigate stigma. For example, in Germany policy stipulates that undocumented migrants can obtain a certificate for health insurance from a government office so they can access health care. Nonetheless, many migrants do not take advantage of this opportunity because they fear repercussions of having to disclose their undocumented status to state officials (Mylius 2016). The existence of the policy suggests an intentional effort to decrease stigma toward migrants; however, in actuality this is not realized. Consider further examples: Following the legalization of same-sex marriage by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2015 (*Obergefell v. Hodges*, 135 S. Ct. 2584), several county clerks refused to grant marriage licenses to same-sex couples (NBC News 2022). Uneven implementation of the policy undermined its ability to reduce stigma in some geographic regions within the United States. In Denmark, there is a highly restrictive policy which stipulates that the religious curriculum in schools should only focus on Christianity. As written, this policy would amplify stigma for students from other faiths, many of whom are likely to be migrants. However, because many teachers have chosen not to implement this policy, the harmful effects of this proposed curriculum have been mitigated.

Together, these examples illustrate the role of “street-level bureaucrats” (e.g., government officials, teachers, health-care workers) who put policies into practice. They are the ones who are directly in contact with members of the community (Lipsky 2010). These individuals can be influenced by a range of factors, ranging from their awareness and interpretation of the policy to their own personal preferences and biases. Similar to the “street-level bureaucrats,” civil society institutions that represent migrants’ interests, or other social networks in which migrants are embedded, may also contribute to the interpretation (or misinterpretation) of policies. Inaccurate information about policies can impact their broad implementation as well as the ability for migrants to access the intended benefits and services, even when implemented fully.

Finally, in addition to official implementation of policies, there is the perceived threat of implementation. In the U.S. context, the threat of detention and deportation has been shown to deter access to health and social services to which migrants are entitled (Fleming et al. 2019); this was also seen in the German example discussed above. Additionally, there could be backlash from institutions or individuals who are not part of the implementation process. Fear

of backlash can impact implementation; even when implementation occurs, subsequent backlash could also deter access to the benefits and services enumerated in the policies.

Although policy implementation is an important pathway that could help explain the heterogeneous impact of policies on stigma, there are major challenges in measuring these concepts. This constitutes an important area for future research. Implementation science applied to policy implementation provides an emerging framework that might be particularly useful for advancing future research on this topic (e.g., Purtle et al. 2022).

Assessing Policy Consequences and Impact of Structural Stigma

All policies can have dual consequences: the potential to amplify and/or mitigate stigma for both migrants and nonmigrants. To assess policy consequences, a major challenge relates to the lack of relevant categories in routine data collection. In the United States and Great Britain, the majority of datasets do not measure migration background although they do measure racial and ethnic categories. In the European Union, the majority of datasets do not measure racial and ethnic categories but do measure migration background (Voyer and Lund 2020). Thus, determining whether and how policies affect different groups is often not possible. Further, assessing policy consequences will require developing better methods for enumerating and measuring the different stigma processes (e.g., Link et al. 2004). Below we consider both the limited existing evidence and some potential strategies for assessing these consequences from these dual perspectives.

For Migrants

Research on structural stigma—defined as “societal-level conditions, cultural norms, and institutional policies and practices” (Hatzenbuehler and Link 2014:2)—provides a framework for understanding the consequences of policies that impact migrants (see Hatzenbuehler, this volume). The concept of structural stigma was developed to consider how stigma may be embedded in social institutions, including in laws and policies (e.g., Corrigan et al. 2004). Research demonstrates that policies can impact stigma, intentionally and unintentionally, in at least three ways: by amplifying or mitigating stigma, as well as through inaction caused by the absence of policies or the selective implementation of them (Link and Hatzenbuehler 2016).

There is growing evidence that structural forms of stigma, as measured via laws and policies, adversely shape the lives of the stigmatized, including individuals with mental illness and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) populations (see Hatzenbuehler, this volume, 2016, 2017a). For instance, quasi-experimental studies have shown that rates of psychological distress

increased significantly among sexual minority individuals living in U.S. states that implemented laws denying services to same-sex couples; rates, however, did not increase among sexual minorities living in states where these laws were not implemented (Raifman et al. 2018a). Conversely, health outcomes improve when laws and policies expand rights and opportunities for stigmatized groups (e.g., Hatzenbuehler et al. 2012; Krieger et al. 2013). Although there is less research on how policies amplify and/or mitigate stigma processes specifically, there is a growing literature on the impacts of policies on migrant health outcomes (Perreira and Pedroza 2019). Recent studies have shown linkages between restrictive migration policies and adverse health outcomes among migrant groups, or those perceived to be migrants (e.g., Frost 2020; Samari et al. 2020), and between more inclusive migration policies and improved outcomes among migrant groups (e.g., Young et al. 2019).

Resource and Psychosocial Pathways

Research indicates at least two pathways for how policies shape outcomes among the stigmatized, including resource and psychosocial pathways. Regarding the former, policies can influence access to economic, social, and political resources across multiple settings (e.g., employment, education, health care). For instance, in the United States, there are 1,138 statutory provisions in which marital status is a factor in receiving federal benefits, rights, and privileges (USGAO 2004), and state governments confer even more benefits (Herek 2006). The financial advantages conferred through marriage range from tax laws and employee benefits to health insurance, pension plans, and death benefits (e.g., expenses of wills and properties). When same-sex couples were denied the opportunity to marry, the dollar value of the estate tax disadvantage between same-sex and heterosexual couples was estimated to be more than \$3.3 million over the life course (Steinberger 2009). For migrants, it has been proposed that immigration policy and citizenship status not only restrict access to these resources but also restrict political and civic participation (e.g., voting, running for office), which constrains their ability to change the very laws and policies that impact them in the first place (Misra et al. 2021). There is a large literature documenting associations between economic adversity and the development of health problems (e.g., Nandi et al. 2004), indicating that the financial insecurity engendered by policies can compromise health for stigmatized groups.

These examples demonstrate how laws and policies can affect health outside individuals' awareness of the policy because policies shape (and reflect) the social structure in which individuals are embedded. However, research indicates that laws and policies also influence health via appraisal pathways; that is, via subjective awareness and experience (Figure 8.1). Studies have identified several psychosocial mechanisms linking structural stigma (measured via laws and policies) and health, including identity concealment (e.g., Lattanner et al.

2021), social isolation (e.g., Pachankis et al. 2021), self-stigma (e.g., Berg et al. 2013), perceived discrimination (e.g., Frost 2020), thwarted belongingness (e.g., Lattanner and Hatzenbuehler 2022), and stress (e.g., Flores et al. 2018). In other words, in environments with policies that promulgate and reinforce stigma, stigmatized individuals are more likely to conceal their identities, to be socially isolated, to internalize negative attitudes about their group, to perceive greater discrimination (for groups that are unable to conceal their identities), to feel less social belonging, and to experience greater stress. This research suggests that many individuals are, in fact, aware of structural stigma and appraise these environments as threatening to their sense of safety (Diamond and Alley 2022; Lattanner et al. 2021), which in turn contributes to negative health effects. For migrants, both their awareness of the general political climate (e.g., Morey 2018) and enforcement (or perceived threat of enforcement) of specific migration policies, such as detention and deportation, contribute to negative psychological impacts for those directly and indirectly impacted by this enforcement (e.g., Nichols et al. 2018; Von Werthern et al. 2018).

Hatzenbuehler (this volume) provides several recommendations for future research directions related to the consequences of policies for migrants. In addition, we highlight additional empirical questions that warrant further study:

- It is clear from the evidence reviewed above that policies which impact migrants can directly and indirectly activate stigma processes for migrants. Research is needed to identify which specific policies activate which stigma processes, including labeling group differences, attaching them to stereotypes, separating groups (“us” vs. “them”), status loss, and discrimination (Link and Phelan 2001). For instance, policies that provide specific protections (i.e., targeted policies) likely label group differences, but do they also confer stereotypes and lead to status loss and discrimination? Is it possible for policies to activate some stigma processes but not others?
- How do we assess whether a policy leads to stigmatizing consequences? We generated three possibilities: (a) analyze the narrative of the policy, (b) assess the disparate impact of the policy on migrants (vs. non-migrants), and (c) test whether the policy initiates specific stigma processes (described above). Are there other ways to evaluate this issue?
- How do we identify the right time horizon, knowing that most studies measure impacts over a very short period, whereas most policies are intended to change things over the span of multiple years? Are short-term stigmatizing effects an acceptable trade-off if longer-term benefits are achieved?
- Policy are often mixed in regard to their treatment of migrants: some policies restrict rights whereas others expand them. What overall impact does this have on migrants? How do we differentiate the stigmatization that occurs as a result of the political discourse surrounding

issues relevant to migrants from the stigmatization that results from the policy itself? Studies have begun to examine this question (e.g., Bohman 2011; Flores et al. 2018), but more research is needed.

- Most of the research reviewed above focused on pathways at the macro and micro level. What meso-level mechanisms explain the consequences of policies that amplify and/or mitigate stigma? How might the effects of policies cascade through the social networks of migrants? How might policies at the macro level affect policies and practices among institutions at the meso level (e.g., schools, workplaces)?

For Nonmigrants

Policies intended to benefit migrants and mitigate stigmatization might have positive or negative impacts on the majority or mainstream society (whom we have, for simplicity, termed “nonmigrants”), which is primarily responsible for enacting stigma toward migrants in the first place. However, limited studies have focused on how policies intended to benefit migrants intentionally or unintentionally affect nonmigrants. Often, stigmatizing policies and practices serve a function for the nonstigmatized population and the loss of that function is likely to have negative consequences (Phelan et al. 2008). Further, some individual members of the nonstigmatized population might feel that anything designed to advantage migrants *must* disadvantage them. In other words, increasing the rights or resources of migrants might also increase negative attitudes toward them. In light of this, most of the available evidence on how policies impact nonmigrants have focused on negative changes in attitudes, including experiences of threat, backlash, and polarization.

Material and Cultural Threat

A major reason why policies that are intended to benefit migrants might have a negative effect on nonmigrants is due to the real or perceived threat to material or cultural resources (Stephan et al. 1998). The threat to material resources includes perceptions that migrants have lower socioeconomic status, compete for jobs, or drain resources. The threat to cultural resources includes perceptions of undesired changes to a cultural way of life or overall social cohesion. Some evidence suggests that cultural threats matter more than economic ones (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014). Further, since it is hard to be aware of structures such as policies, it can be easier to project negative views and behaviors onto the people who are implicated by the policies (e.g., migrants) rather than the policies themselves (e.g., policies which place migrants in subordinate positions in societies) leading to stigma at interpersonal levels.

In particular, competition for resources could be perceived as a zero-sum game (Piotrowski et al. 2019). However, illustrative experiments compared policies that were zero-sum versus non-zero-sum situations. In their study,

Helbing et al. (unpublished) analyzed meals served in canteens: whether halal dishes replaced an existing meat dish (zero-sum) or were added as another option (non-zero-sum). They also looked at the effects of replacing a religious holiday (zero-sum) versus adding another one (non-zero-sum). They found that people who identified with the political left responded well to the non-zero-sum options but those who identified with the political right did not, lending support that stigmatization of migrants is not solely due to competition for resources but likely other factors such as cultural threat.

Opinion Backlash and Polarization Processes

Multiple studies have shown that attitudes toward migrants are shaped by integration and citizenship policies. All concur that integration policies have a direct influence on individual attitudes toward migrants and that nonmigrants generally align with these policies. While integration policies are broadly about the treatment of migrants within a country, a key dimension is citizenship policies that enumerate the criteria by which migrants might become citizens of the country in which they reside. Weldon's (2006) study reports that countries with individualistic civic regimes are more tolerant than collectivistic ethnic regimes. Ariely (2012) suggests that individuals in countries with a *jus soli* regime (i.e., birthright citizenship) express less xenophobic attitudes than individuals in countries with a *jus sanguinis* regime (i.e., citizenship determined by parents' nationality). Schlueter et al. (2013) find that more liberal citizenship regimes are related to lower levels of perceived migrant threat. Finally, Wright (2011) argues that more migrant-inclusive definitions of the national community are found in countries with a *jus soli* regime.

These studies adopt a socialization perspective, look at the average policy effects on the population, and assume a consensus among nonmigrants, at least implicitly. A shortcoming of this approach is that it does not leave room for disagreement over these policies, which may have a polarizing effect. Instead of assuming consensus, some studies show that the general public holds conflicting views and often disagrees with the liberal policies implemented by political elites. The notion that policy decisions which are disliked or threaten the status quo could cause a negative reaction that adversely affects the group profiting from the policy is known as "opinion backlash" (Bishin et al. 2016). Backlash reactions have been documented to affect several minority groups, including ethnic or racial groups (Bratton 2002; Preuhs 2007), women (Zagarri 2007), and sexual minorities (Fejes 2008). In the United States, for example, there has been a backlash against policies in support of multiculturalism and affirmative action over time (Lawrence 1998). Similarly, Traunmüller and Helbling (2022) show that permissive policy decisions lead to a polarization in attitudes toward Muslim migrants. Citizens who agreed with decisions to let Muslim migrants hold public rallies and demonstrations (aimed at increasing recognition of their

interests) became more sympathetic to their cause, whereas those who favored restrictive decisions were more critical toward Muslim migrants.

The policy feedback literature also helps us understand these polarization processes (Mettler and Soss 2004; Pierson 1993). According to this approach, policies affect politics: Policies shape citizens' attitudes and behavior by allocating resources and creating incentives, on one hand, and providing information and normative content on the other. Such policies primarily affect groups that are directly affected by these policies, but they can also influence the majority population. In their investigations into how antidiscrimination policies influence citizens' support for the democratic system and its institutions, Ziller and Helbling (2019) show that antidiscrimination measures and knowledge about rights to equal treatment foster perceptions of government responsiveness. This, in turn, increases political support not only among target groups but also among citizens who are not directly affected by these laws but advocate egalitarianism.

The experience of threat, backlash, and polarization is often measured in the short term. Thus, it remains to be determined whether these policies ultimately lead to a positive change over the longer term, and whether short-term negative reactions are unavoidable in the interim.

Feedback Processes from Stigma to Policy Change

Experiences of stigma and discrimination may propel multiple actors into action and feed back into the political process, as they advocate for new policies. One interpretation might be that people are socialized at the political level, where they adopt norms and values; another is that policies reflect the deeply held norms and values of a society. Both are likely true. While policies shape how people view migrants, there are opportunities for migrant and nonmigrant views to feed back into those policies. In addition, specific catalyzing events might activate policy feedback processes. To date, there is limited research on how stigma processes generated by policies could directly feed back into responses for migrants and nonmigrants around policy change or resistance (e.g., maintenance of status quo). Figure 8.2 illustrates potential pathways for stigma experiences to feed back into policy and inform change.

From Migrants

The top half of the heuristic model in Figure 8.2 describes the migrant perspective. Typically, migrants who experience a loss of resources due to stigmatization are financially compromised. This makes them less powerful because it takes resources to enter the political process. The right to vote allows for advocacy through official channels but is often not afforded to most migrants. This, too, inhibits their ability to participate in the political process.

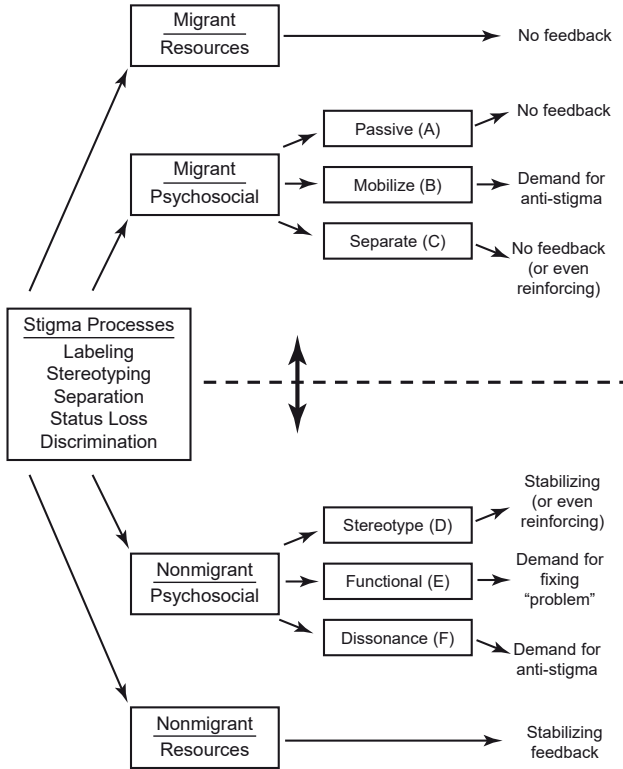


Figure 8.2 Feedback processes from stigma experiences to policy change for migration. These stigma experiences can inform a potential feedback loop back to social policies, providing another opportunity to amplify or mitigate stigma for both migrants and nonmigrants. These include resource pathways (e.g., economic, political) and multiple potential psychosocial pathways, which have the potential to mobilize for change, maintain the status quo, or reinforce beliefs to actively resist change.

Stigmatization influences the psychosocial aspects of migrants and may motivate a range of responses (Hirschman 1970). First, it may make migrants become *passive* (Figure 8.2, A) and inhibit their actions to influence policy—as if loyalty can only be demonstrated if they do not question their circumstances. One indicator could be that many migrants do not participate in the political activities even when they do have access to act, such as voting in local elections or campaigning for supportive candidates. This results in a complete lack of feedback.

Second, migrants may *mobilize* (Figure 8.2, B) to express their opposition to unfair treatment. This is the “voice” channel that demands better treatment (i.e., anti-stigma). Social movements can be used to pressure the state to change when it otherwise would not. This is often not just about access to resources, but also access to the opportunities to be allowed into the decision-making

processes that govern the access to resources. The possibilities to form groups and associations are often guaranteed by constitutions and the opportunities for being heard in political systems vary. However, everything else being equal, mobilization and organization increases influence in the policy feedback loop.

Third, migrants may *separate* themselves from or exit mainstream society (Figure 8.2, C). This could occur in multiple ways, from a separation into subcultures (e.g., living in ethnic enclaves) to leaving the country altogether. When migrants leave the country, they relinquish all hope in to influence policy. Separating into subcultures runs the risk of being interpreted as deviant behavior. Not only could this reinforce negative stereotypes held by the majority population, it may reinforce stigmatizing policies and practices. All of these feedback processes can occur simultaneously, which means their effects will also interact with each other.

From Nonmigrants

Stigmatization of migrants also influences nonmigrants, as illustrated in the bottom half of Figure 8.2. In terms of resources, the existing privileges of nonmigrants are protected (e.g., in the labor market, in housing, and in voting). Everything else being equal, this should simply reproduce and reinforce existing stigmatizing policies and practices toward migrants.

However, the stigmatization of migrants influences psychosocial outcomes for nonmigrants in diverse ways. First, nonmigrants may endorse stigmatizing *stereotypes* and moral deservingness heuristics (Figure 8.2, D). A long line of research demonstrates the importance of negative stereotypes in reproducing policies toward deviant groups (Chavez 2008; Fiske 2011; Gilens 2009; Larsen 2013; Petersen and Aarøe 2013), where little is done to alter stigmatizing policies and practices. Second, nonmigrants may start to have *functional concerns* for the operation of their society (Figure 8.2, E), especially if they perceive stigmatized migrants, including through mobilization, to be materially and/or culturally threatening (as described earlier). This could feed back to the system through the demand that politicians “fix the problem,” either by increasing stigmatizing policies, decreasing anti-stigmatizing policies, or some other pragmatic policy solution. Third, nonmigrants may experience *dissonance* between the creed of equality and the stigmatization that is taking place (Figure 8.2, F). This is especially common among those on the political left. The psychological need to live in a just world is well documented (Bénabou and Tirole 2006; Lerner 1980), yet the dissonance created might feed back in the form of blaming migrants (e.g., reduce their sense of dissonance by justifying the treatment of migrants). Alternatively, the dissonance might create the demand to destigmatize policies and practices to align with their views. If this demand is strong, it might face counter mobilization, which could lead to backlash and polarization (described earlier).

In this model, the best chance for feedback to demand destigmatizing policies and practices occurs when stigmatized migrants mobilize and nonmigrants experience dissonance. This would be a moment of progressive opportunity. The best case for feedback that reproduces or reinforces stigmatizing policies and practices occurs when stigmatized migrants separate or exit and nonmigrants base their policy demands on existing stereotypes, combined with moral deservingness. Although not fully realized in this model, these mechanisms are likely to be contingent on the institutions and opportunity structures that can offer agency and influence to various groups. Thus, these mechanisms may affect change or continuity on different timescales. Further, most policies are only designed for incremental change to promote equality within existing constraints, although occasionally policies can introduce dynamics that lead to more significant change over time.

Envisioning Changes to Policy Making and Policies to Reduce Stigma

Strategies to Improve Policy

Research, policy, and practice interact to set and implement policies (Figure 8.3). As discussed above, the decision to improve policy often comes in response to specific events or experiences. However, proactive strategies can also be used to advance specific goals. In terms of strategies to improve policies, the following points require consideration (Votruba et al. 2020):

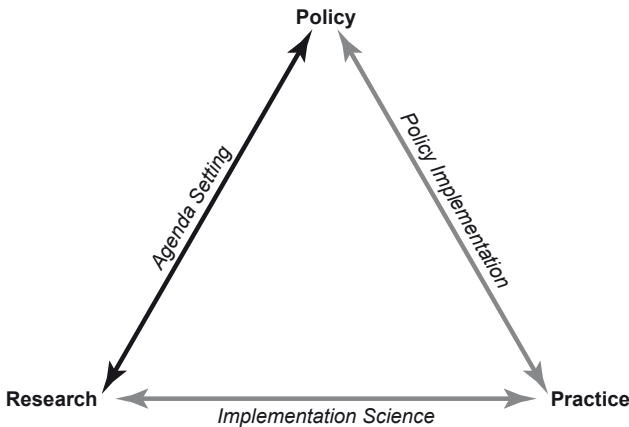


Figure 8.3 Simplified evidence-policy-practice model, showing the relationships that impact the development and evaluation of strategies designed to inform the broader social context (i.e., societal attitudes) and social policies that enable stigma processes. Adapted from Votruba et al. (2020) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Agenda setting: bringing the topic of stigma and migration onto agendas of policy makers.
2. Defining the goals of the policies you want to introduce or change.
3. Defining the outcomes or criteria you will use to evaluate the policies.
4. Developing strategies to improve policies.

First, *agenda setting* refers to bringing certain topics onto the political agenda. To achieve this, it is helpful to understand the opaque system of policy making as well as to build the capacity to communicate research findings and to have access to key people. In addition, it is important to align the topic with other policy priorities (e.g., social cohesion or poverty) and to build coalitions of stakeholders and trustful relationships with key individuals. This may be initiated by the state (if they care about change already), by migrants (and nonmigrants) mobilizing for change, or by external pressures (e.g., EU, UN).

Second, the *goal* to be achieved by the policy change must be clarified. If the issue concerns the quantity of migration, extreme goals could be the shut-down of any migration versus the complete dismantling of all borders, not to mention more measured, intermediate solutions. If the issue concerns the degree of change, options range from finetuning a functional system, incremental improvements, or radical change. In terms of the time horizon, one could think of short-term changes, possibly related to election cycles, or long-term cultural change, possibly extending over several generations. In defining goals, it is important to consider who sets the goals: members of the resident country (i.e., the elites vs. the general population), migrants who reside in the country, or both together.

Third, what *indicators* can be used to measure the success of policy change? Since any change may exhibit mixed effects on different levels (e.g., structural or individual, short or long term, local or national), it makes sense to collect multiple outcome measures over time. Further, policy implementation should be measured as to whether policies are followed under real-world conditions in different places by different actors at different times. Finally, a well-intentioned policy, even if formally implemented, may not work in practice if it creates side effects or if other barriers prevent migrants or other minorities from accessing a source of support. For stigma, some potential indicators include perceived discrimination, psychological distress or well-being, physical and mental health, civic rights (e.g., voting), human rights, level of integration (e.g., access to labor market, access to education), and reduction in income inequality.

Finally, there are a range of *strategies* to achieve policy change that can be used alone or in combination. Different stakeholders can form social movements to achieve policy change (see Okamoto and Adem, this volume). As with mental illness stigma (Rüsch 2023), protest, education and contact have the potential to improve public attitudes and acceptance of pro-migrant policies. Particular focus needs to be placed on domains that “matter most” for

migrants, such as access to the labor market or voting rights. Strategies may differ depending on the level they need to address (local, regional, national, international). Any strategy may want to use (social) media to reach its audience. Finally, strategies should consider the degree to which they want to risk creating a backlash or polarization of public opinion.

Given the limited knowledge of this process, research has a vital role to play to both inform and evaluate how policy making and policies can be used to reduce stigma. Research can provide information on the differential aspects of policy narratives and policy types on stigma and can inform the development and evaluation of a range of strategies. Further, researchers can translate this work, which will assist the agenda setting process for policy makers.

Specific Considerations for Stigma Due to Migration-Generated Diversity

There may always be people who harbor stigma toward migrants, and any effort to reduce stigma faces the risk of creating backlash or further polarization. While stigma may not be possible to eradicate, it exists on a spectrum and concrete efforts can achieve significant reductions. Even if short-term negative attitudes are unavoidable, it is important to consider the impacts over longer time periods to assess meaningful change. It is also helpful to remember that policies of inaction or a lack of implementation of helpful policies may do just as much to contribute to stigma (Link and Hatzenbuehler 2016).

Since migrant experiences are so contextually dependent on individual nations (and vary for different migrant groups within countries), we offer guiding principles rather than specific strategies. For all migrants, limited or conditional citizenship and differential access to rights, resources, and opportunities constitutes a primary barrier in all nations that sets migrants apart. To dismantle this barrier, multiple approaches are needed across multiple levels and with multiple actors to implement both top-down (policies) and bottom-up (social movements to push for policy change) approaches. The state and policymakers play a particular role in reaching both migrants and nonmigrants through both resource and psychosocial pathways. However, care must be taken in institutions such as education, employment, and health care to avoid amplifying stigma. Civil society and community organizations that represent migrant or related interests often mediate relationships between the state and migrants, including the interpretation of policies. Finally, it is integral to consider the role of migrants and increase their agency to advocate for their own rights.

While discrimination is the most consequential behavioral outcome of the stigma process, and some existing policy approaches do specifically address antidiscrimination, the stigma framework offers opportunities to consider interventions for other aspects of the stigma process. Understanding that policies can both amplify and mitigate *specific* stigma processes (e.g., labeling, stereotyping, separation, status loss, discrimination; Link & Phelan, 2001), and that these processes can interact across multiple levels and multiple types of

policies, offers more specificity when considering proactive strategies to generate anti-stigma policies and practices. Moreover, a broader view of stigma processes offers opportunities to consider not only the ultimate consequences (i.e., discrimination) of stigma processes but also other stages along the way (i.e., negative anti-migrant stereotypes and status loss). Of course, changing or replacing attitudes is extremely challenging and there is limited existing evidence of effective strategies. Understanding stigma as a fundamental cause of inequity (Hatzenbuehler et al. 2013) illuminates its reproducibility; in other words, if stigma is reduced in one domain, it often manifests in another domain.

Conclusions

Any policy that intentionally or unintentionally impacts migrants has the potential to generate, amplify, and/or mitigate stigma. In a utopian world, where borders are not considered fixed or necessary and there are few to no restrictions on who is considered a part of society, the distinction between migrant and nonmigrant could cease to exist. Until then, the social category of “migrant” remains necessary, even as it starts the labeling process, to track the impact of stigma. Further, stigma processes are sometimes so deeply embedded in existing systems and structures that they go undetected. Understanding that stigma often has a functional role helps identify where it exists and why it can be hard to change. When policies fail to reduce stigma, it may be because they do not adequately address the function that stigma is serving in that context. Thus, structural stigma offers a useful framework (a) to assess how policies that impact migrants contribute to stigma and (b) to enumerate key areas for future research and intervention to successfully reduce stigma toward migrants. In addition, stigma at the structural level can perpetuate stigma at other levels, so assessing these interactions is also needed. Given the lack of empirical evidence at almost every stage, theoretical concepts require testing with multiple methods and approaches to triangulate findings, including the development and evaluation of strategies to improve policies at local, regional, national, and international levels. Such strategies need to consider how the political discourse, perception of policies, and (selective) implementation of policies (or lack thereof) can impact stigma, which will inform policy feedback loops and strategic policy making to make intentional changes. A major challenge is to identify the appropriate methods, data sources, and outcomes, given limited prior efforts to measure how policies impact stigma and, more broadly, how beneficial policies can have beneficial outcomes (and on what time horizon). Because of the unique histories and contexts of each nation, strategies that work will likely vary for different migrant groups in each country. The frameworks, processes, and consequences enumerated in this chapter can inform possible approaches across contexts.

