IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF CHILDHOOD IN EUROPE

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Alliance for Childhood
European Network Group

# *Supporting families to meet children's needs by making quality family support a right for all children*

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# A framework for child and family support in Europe

## *Contributions from*

## *The European Family Support Network*


**Lucía Jiménez**

University of Seville (Spain) - Chair of EurofamNet

**John Canavan**

University of Galway (Ireland) - Vice Chair of EurofamNet


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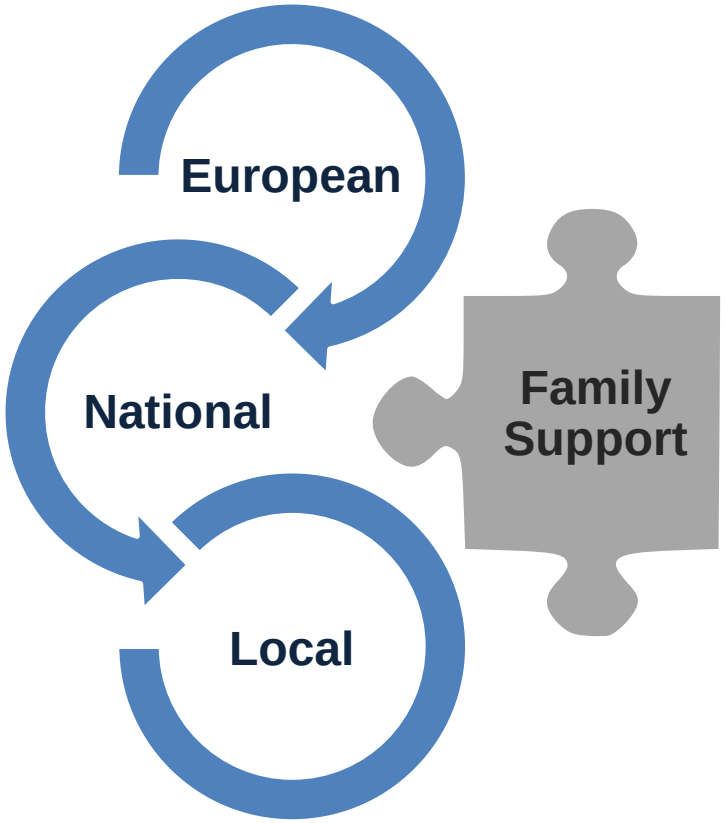
# Families as target of policy & provision

**European Child Guarantee**



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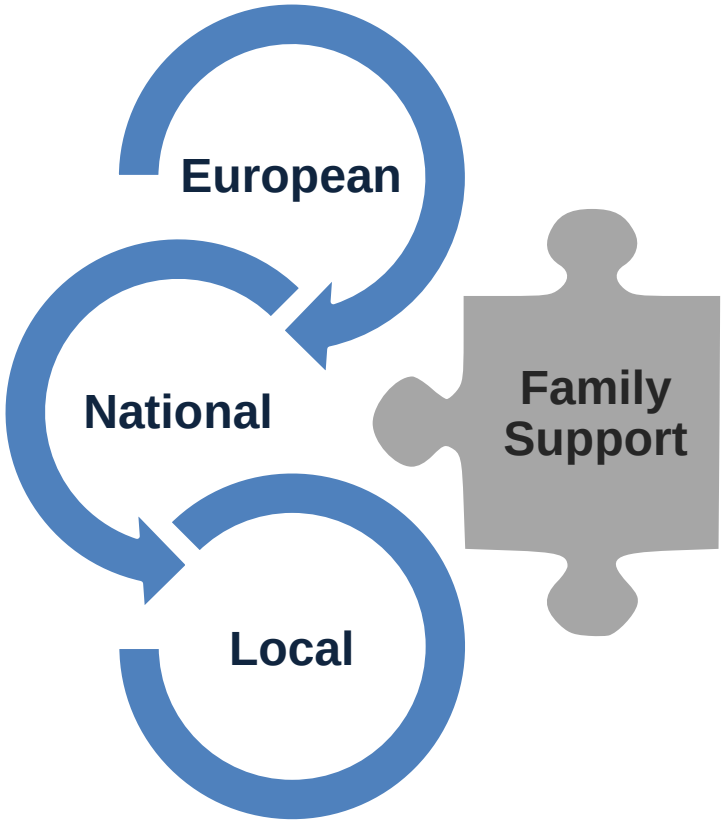


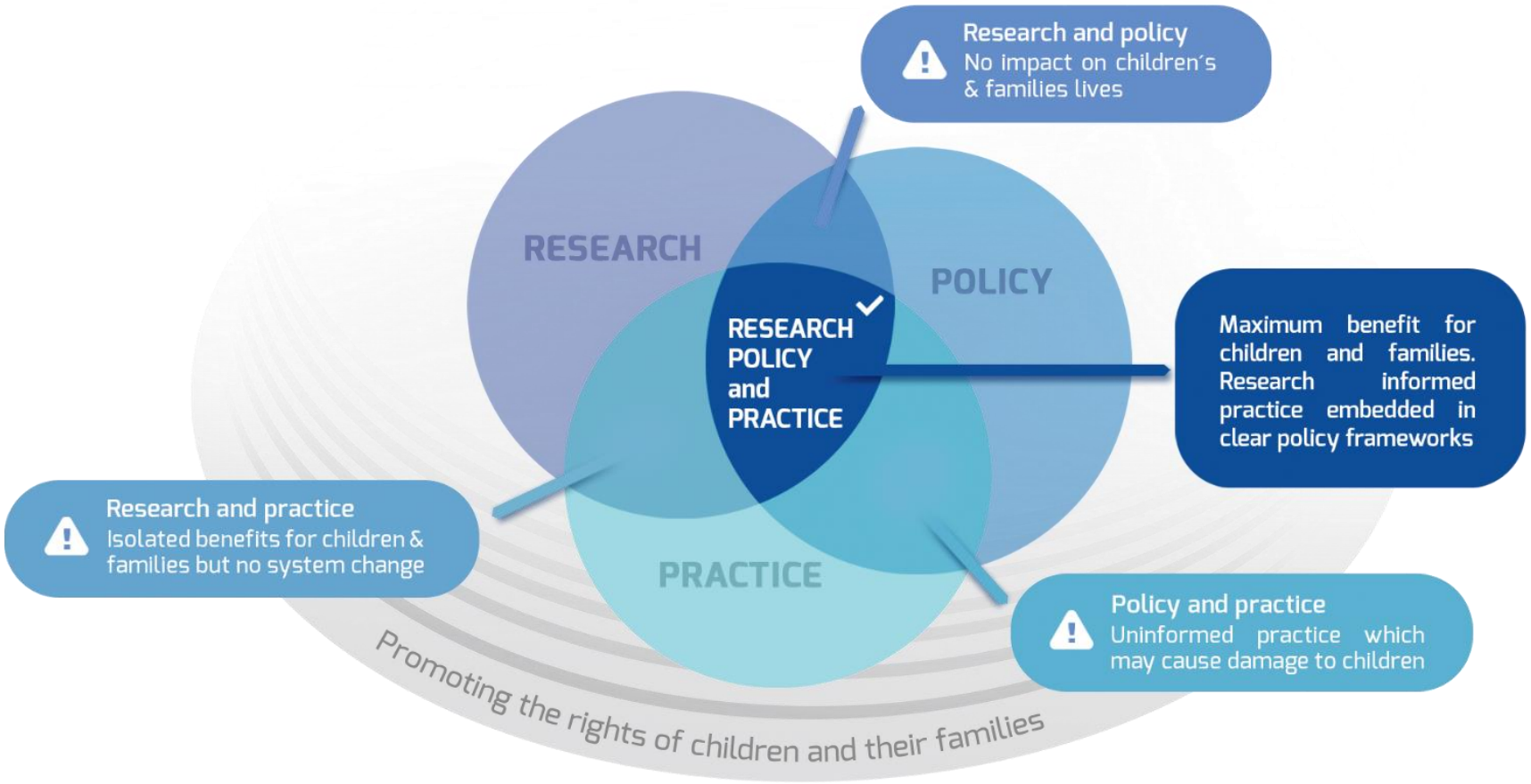

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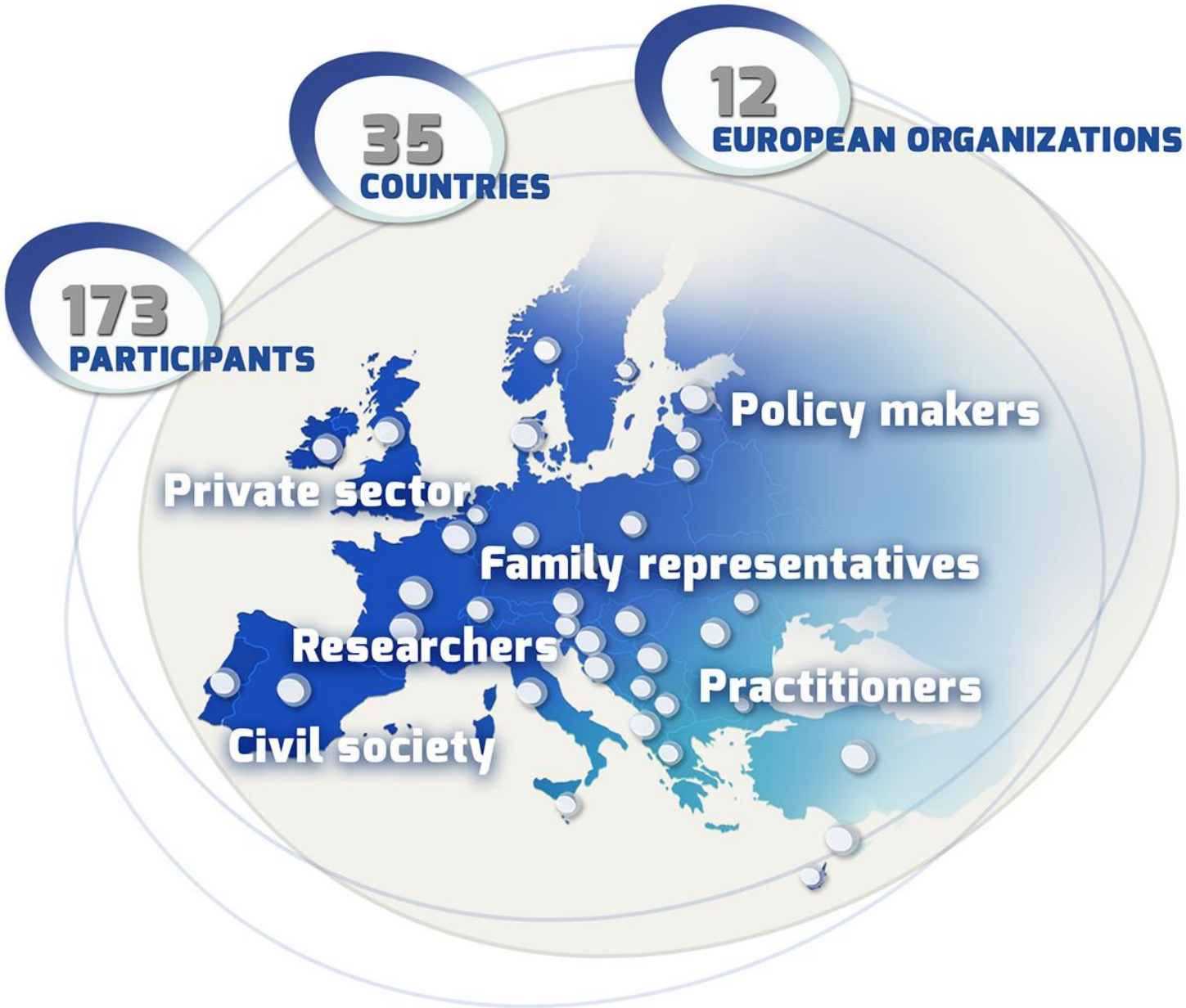


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Developing the European conceptual framework on family support

**BOTTOM-UP PROCESS**

Developing a standardisation framework on skills

**DIALOGICAL STYLE**

Quality standards and evidence-based programmes

**DOUBLE-LAYERED STRUCTURE**
National-European

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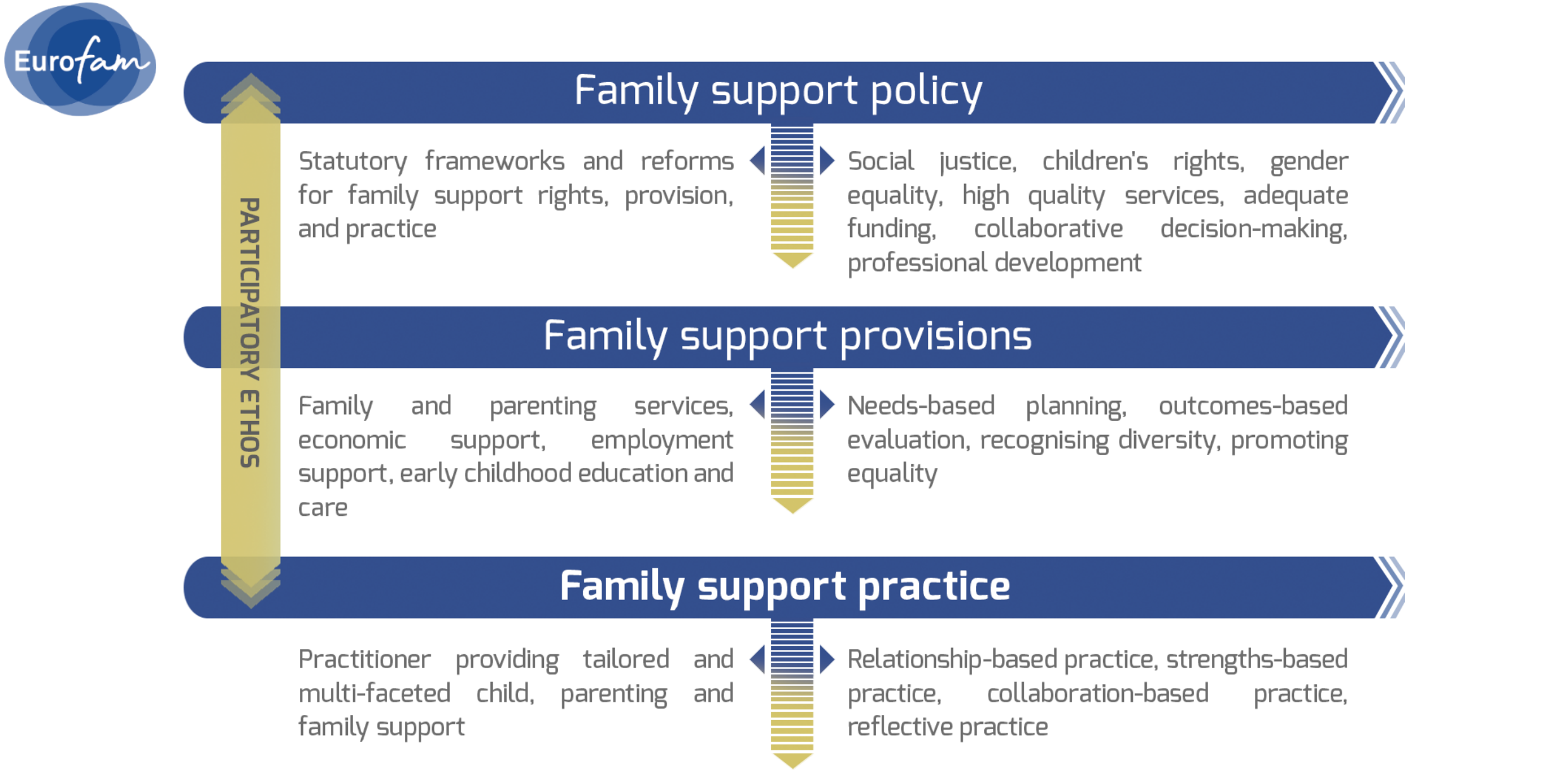


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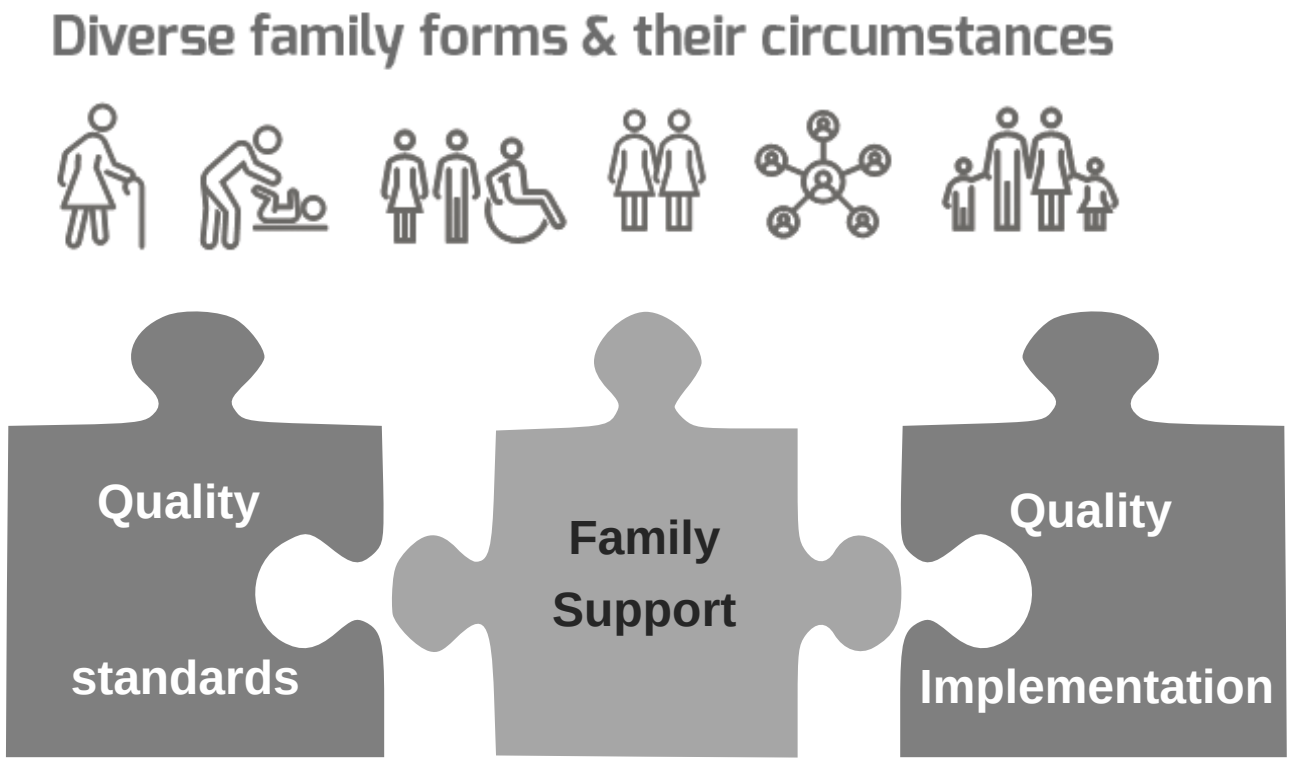
# Quality support provision for all families

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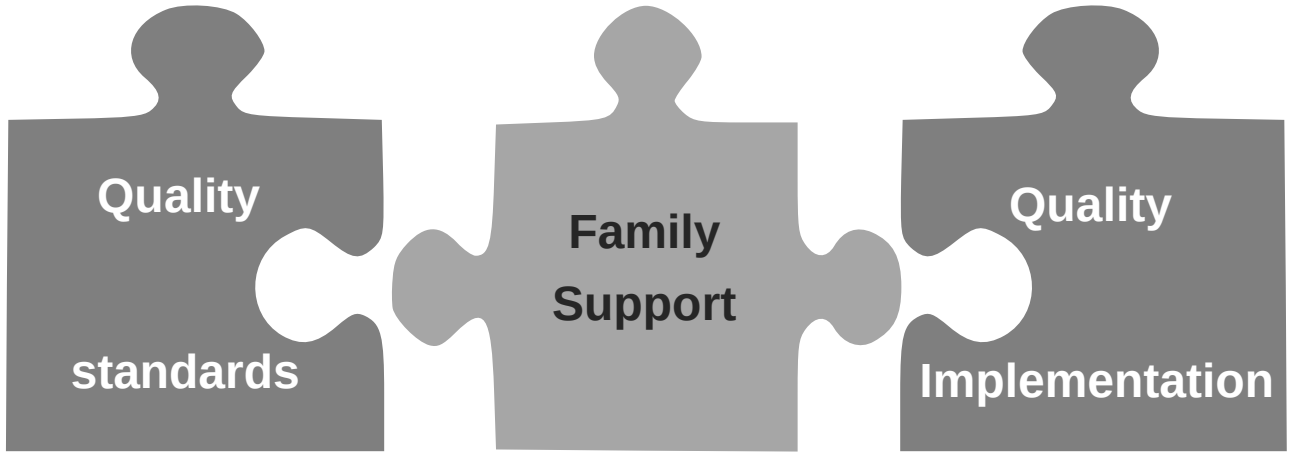

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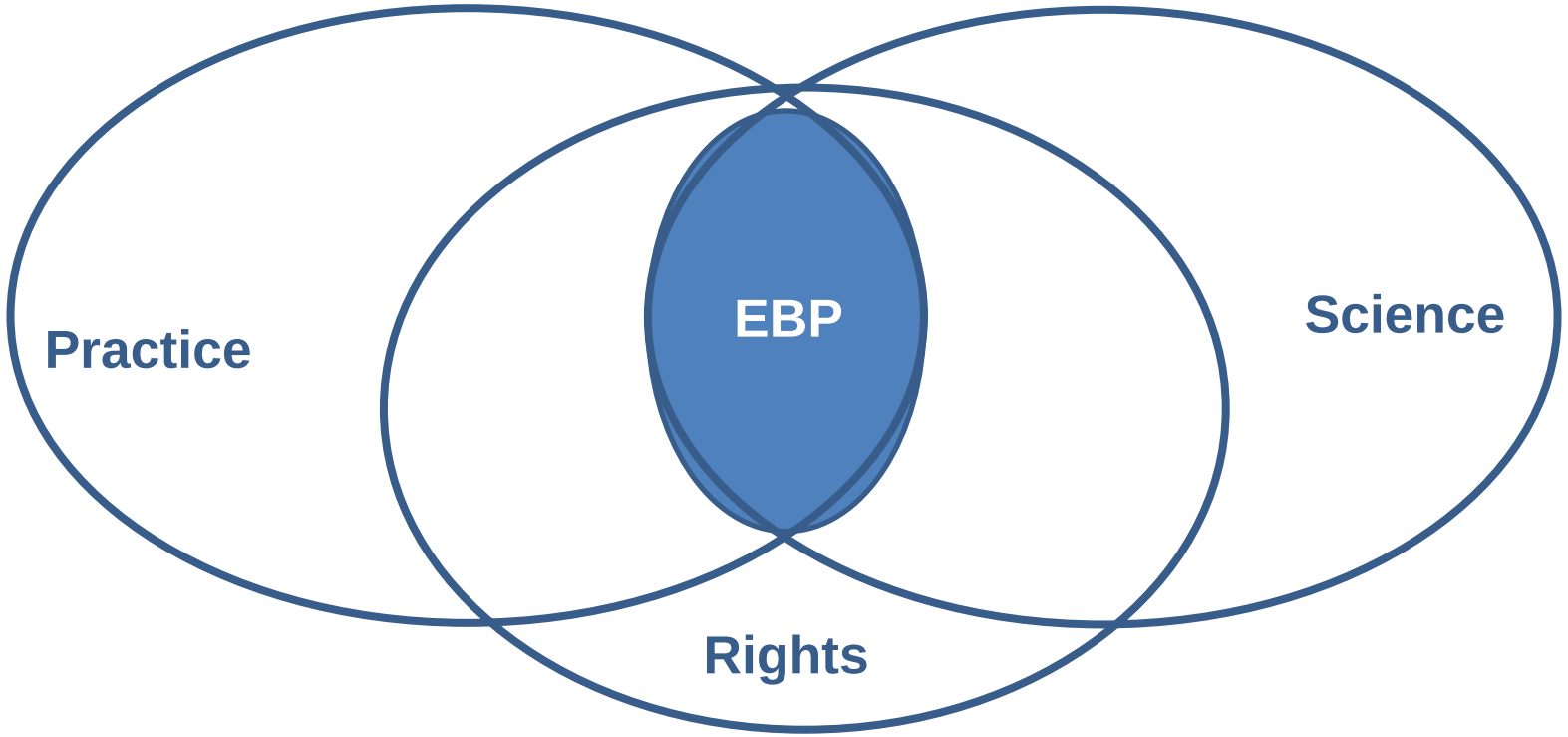
# Evidence in Family Support

**Quality standards? Quality implementation?**

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# Quality standards in family support provision

**Metin Özdemir**
Örebro University (Sweden)

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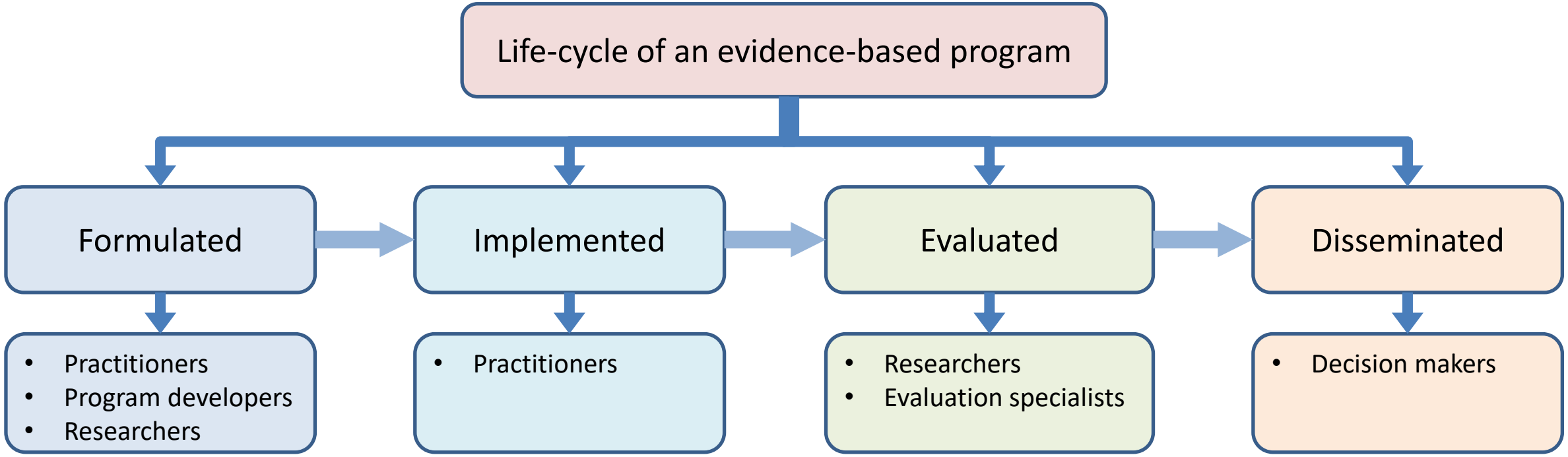
# Evidence-based programs to support families and children

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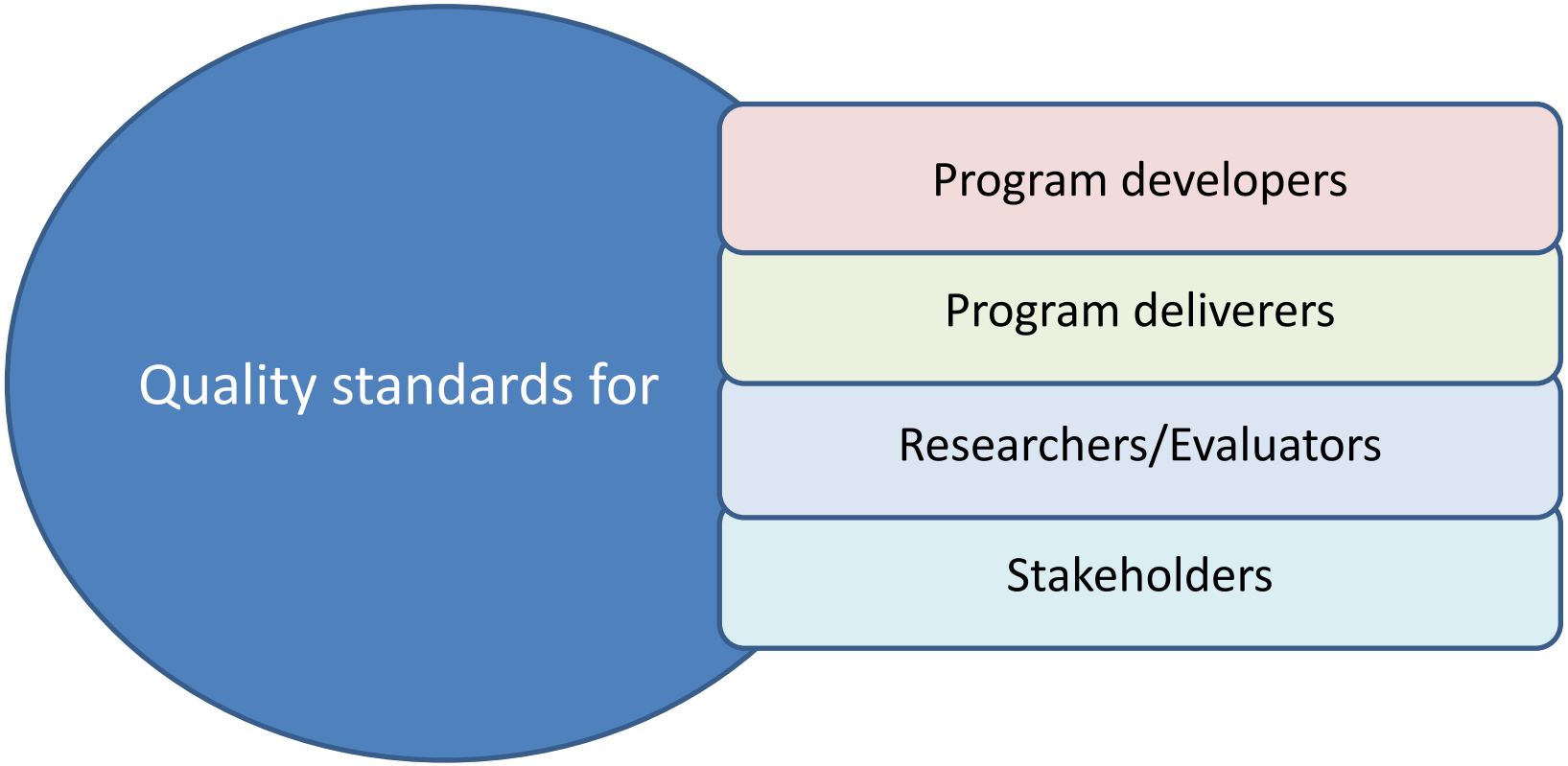
# Quality standards for family support programs

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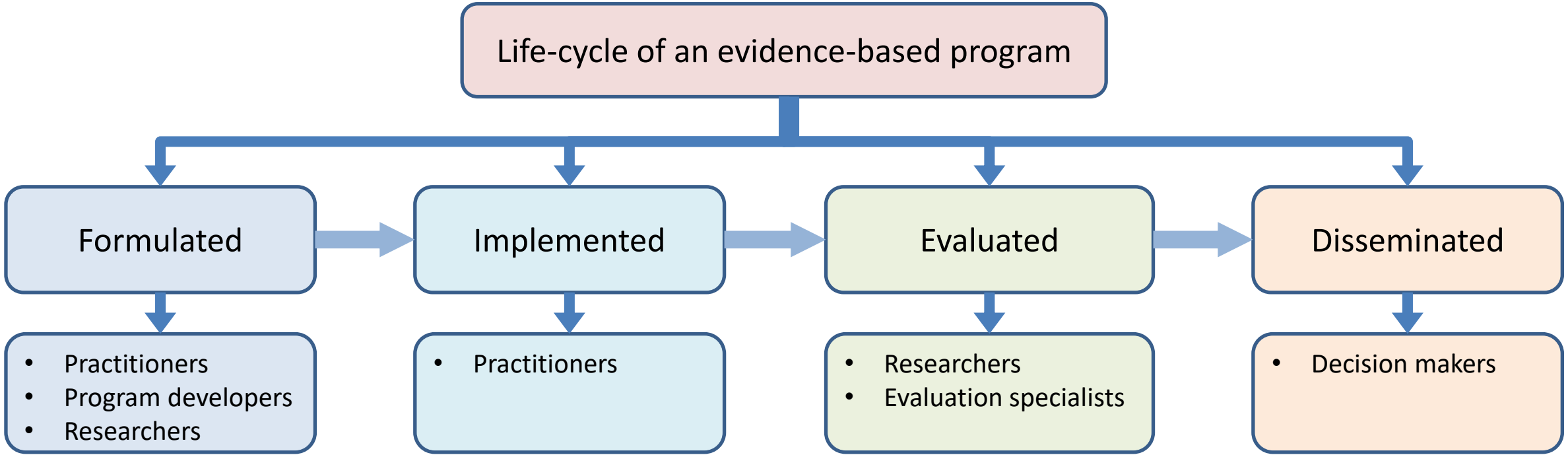


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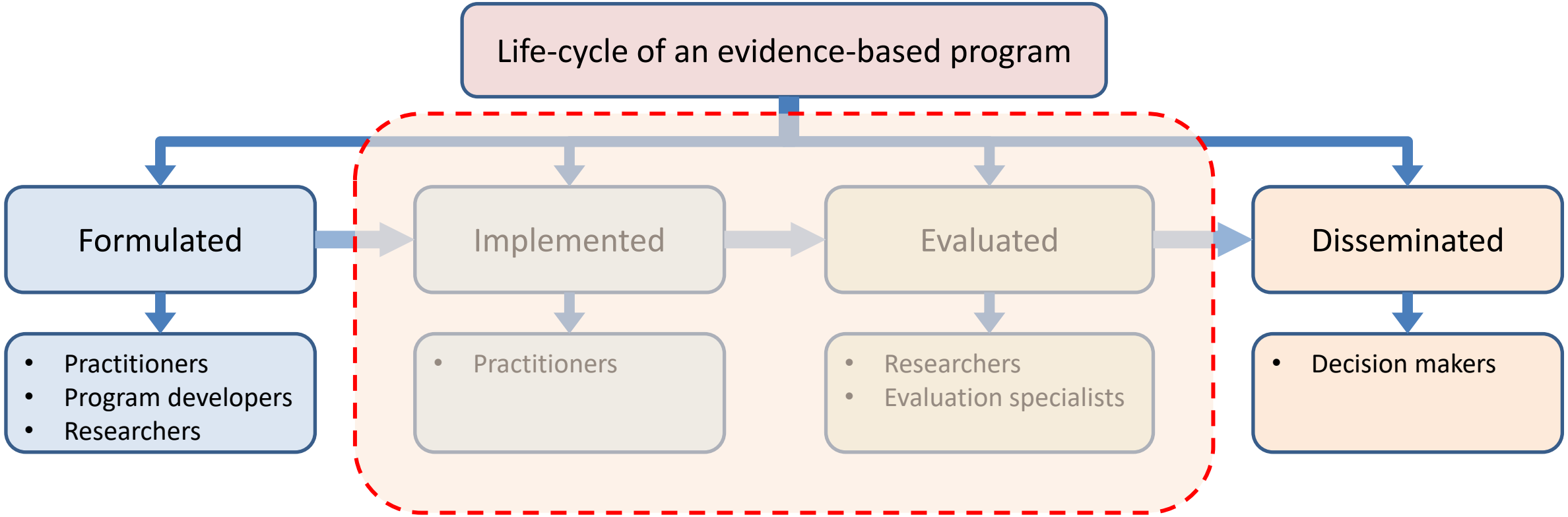


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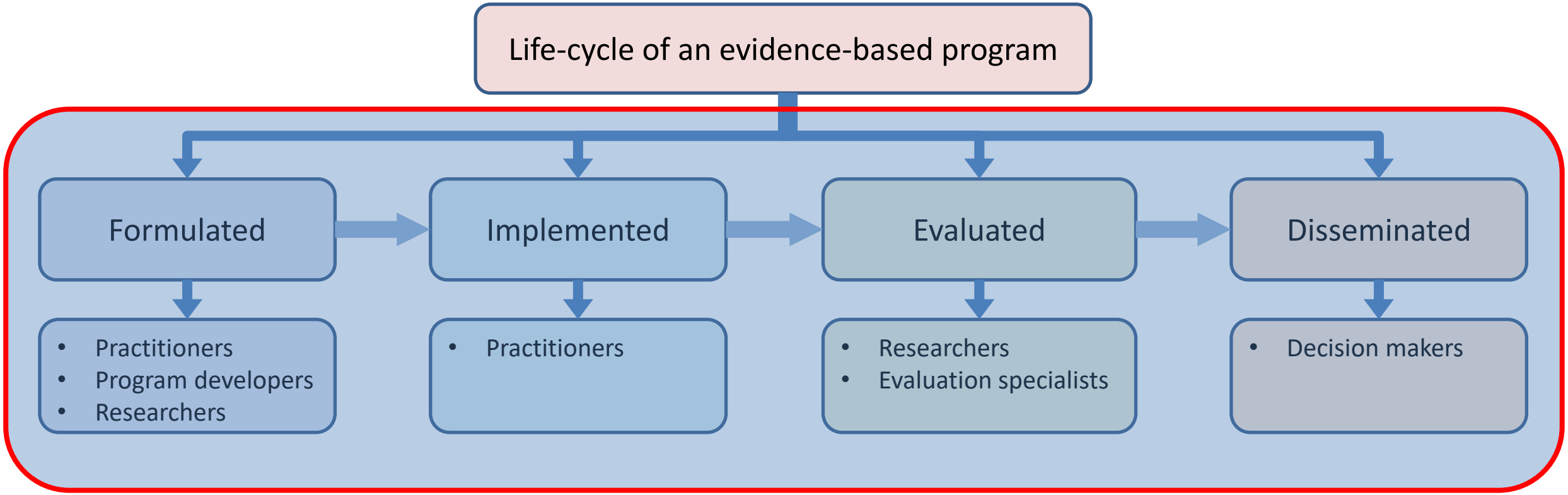


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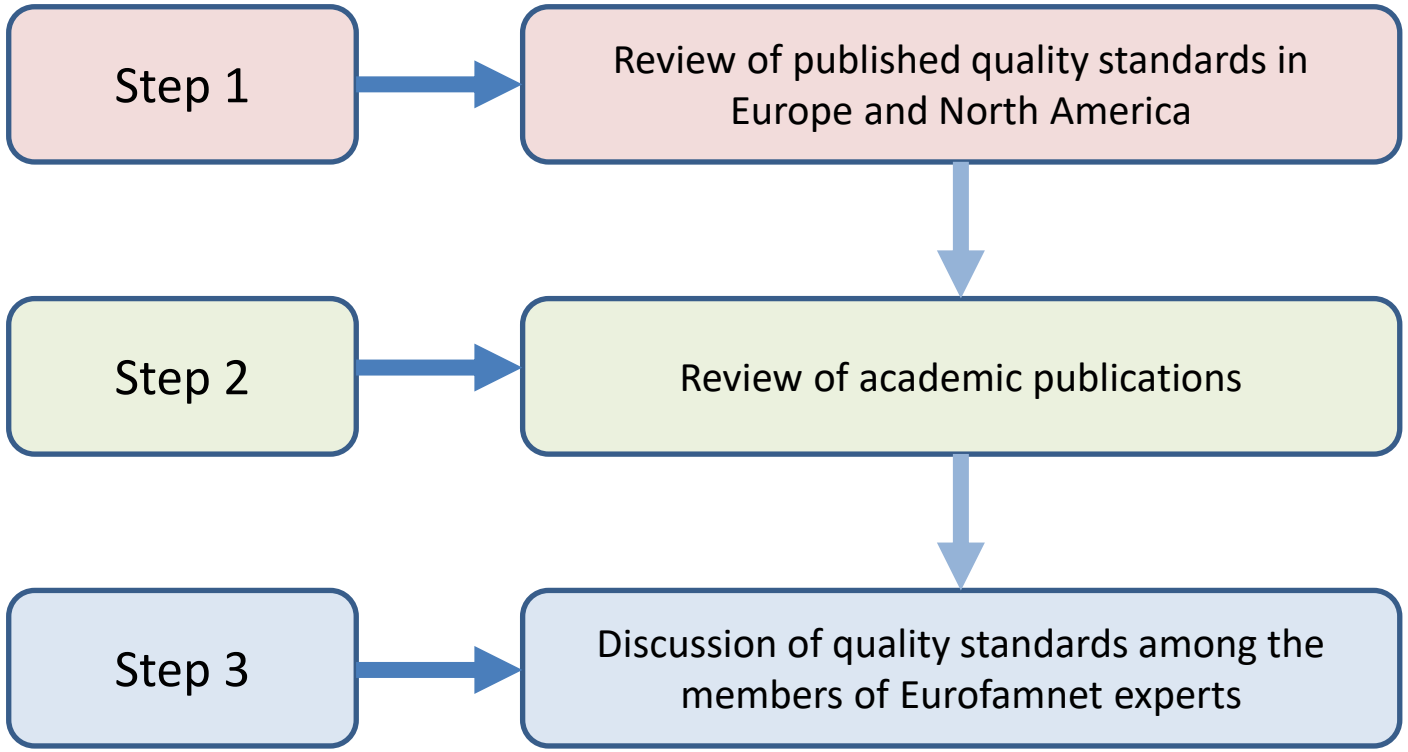
# Quality standards for family support programs

Development of EurofamNet Quality Standards

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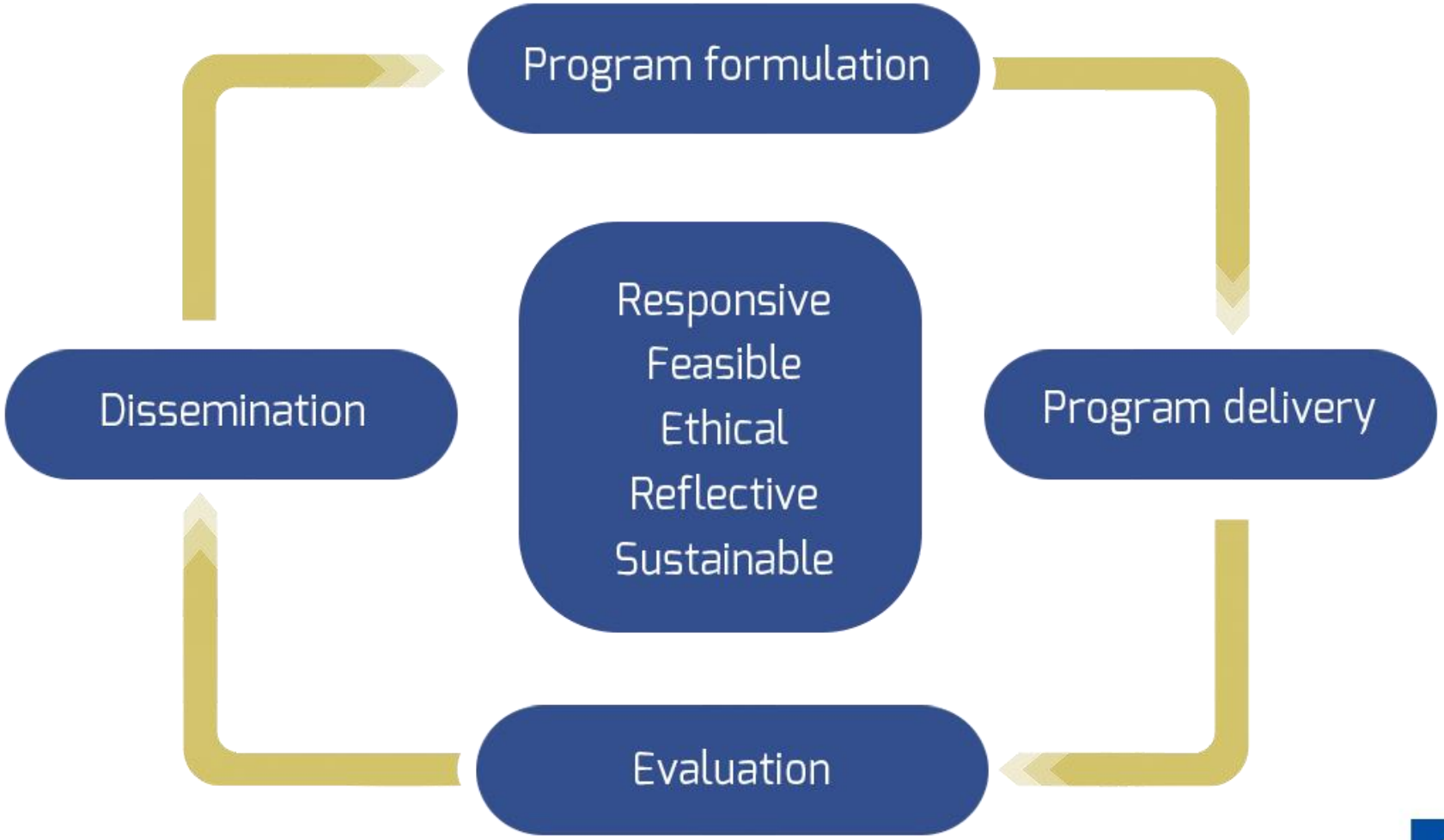
# Quality standards for family support programs

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# Quality standards for family support programs

## Responsive

- A quality service addresses the need that exist in the target group using proper measures and means that fit to the social, cultural, and/or economic characteristics of the target group.
- A responsive service takes into account the unique aspects of the community/target group such as the characteristics that are related to *social and economic conditions* and *cultural characteristics*.

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# Quality standards for family support programs

## Feasible

- *Complexity*, *contextual fit*, f*inancial resources* and *human resources* are some of the key aspects relating to feasibility of a family support programs.
- A quality family support program seeks balance between complexity of the initiative, conditions and available resources.

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# Quality standards for family support programs

## Ethical

- An utmost priority of the quality family support programs shall be following the current principles and standards of ethical practice established by the respective professional organizations as well as European and national policies.

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# Quality standards for family support programs

## Reflective

- A quality family support program is respectful of the participants and stakeholders' rights, views, and uniqueness.
- Participatory planning, management, implementation, and evaluation aims to ensure accounting for the unique needs and expectations of ethnically, culturally, socially, and economically diverse groups.

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# Quality standards for family support programs

## Sustainable

- Family support programs, unless they are embedded in service delivery systems of established agencies, are heavily dependent on availability of financial and human resources.
- Integrating effective high-quality family support programs into the regular practice of existing service systems should be ultimate goal to ensure sustainability of programs.

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# Quality standards for family support programs

Eurofam-Net quality standards proposes a statement that is

- comprehensive
- inclusive
- easy to communicate
- practical
- unifying

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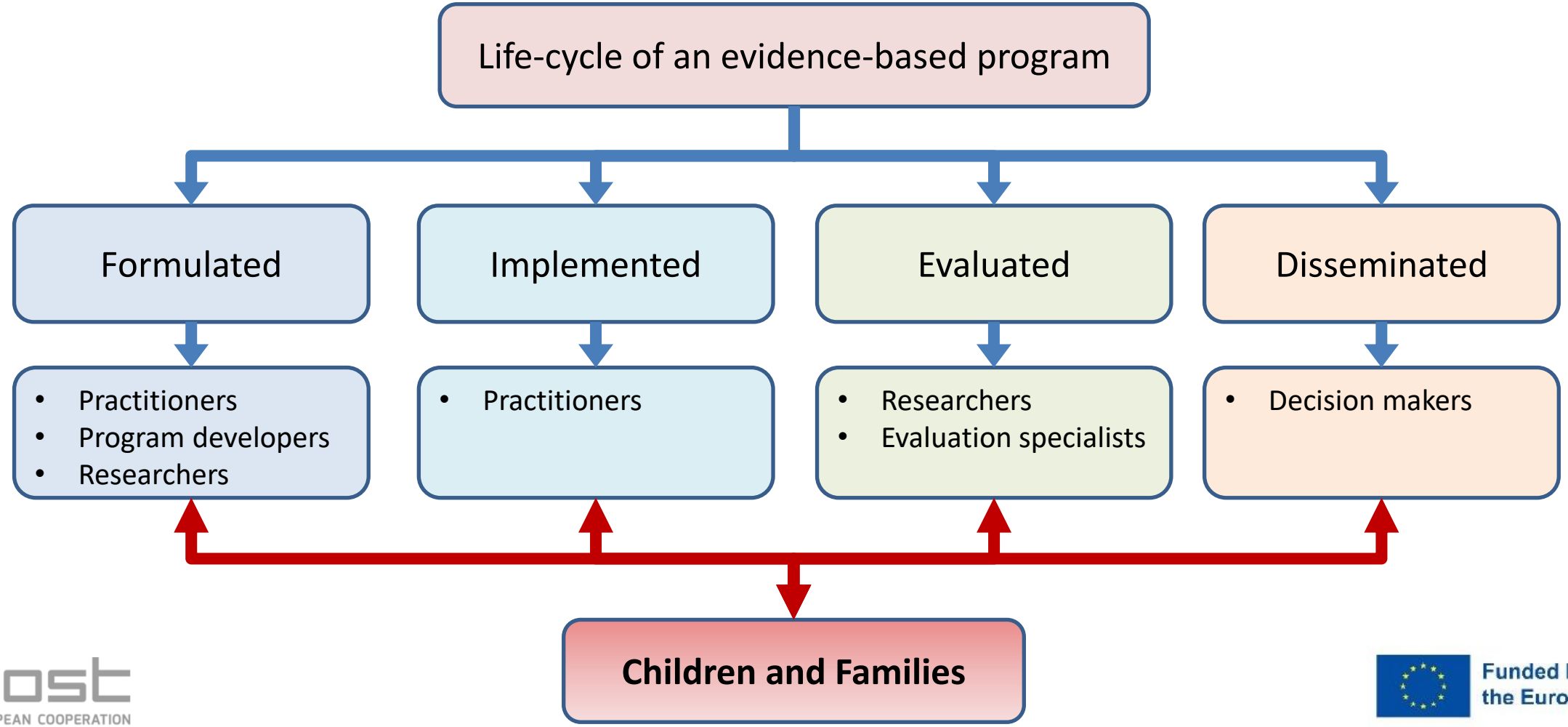
# Eurofamnet Quality Standards for Family Support Programs

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# Implementing evidence-based practices as a model for professional practice for quality family support

## *A comparative survey study*

**María José Rodrigo**

University of La Laguna (Spain) - Coordinator of the Spanish Advisory Committee in positive parenting

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# Current situation in Europe

- The European policy is placing a strong emphasis on adopting EBP approach, as a principle for investment, informed decision-making, and transferability of best professional practices in child and family care.
- However, there is not much information about the actual incorporation of EBP into services and professional practice across countries, leaving unnoticed the potential existence of inequalities in quality family support.
- We examine to what extent the adoption of EBP is taking place in support provision systems in Europe.

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# Complexity and diversity in the provision of family support in Europe

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# Complexity and diversity in the provision of family support in Europe

**Systemic transformation at national, regional and local levels to guarantee the adoption of EBP**

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# Strategies for the adoption of EBP

*Collaborative* schema between policymakers, researchers, and practitioners/stakeholders

*Translational bidirectional* efforts from science to practice leading to agreed EBP guidelines

Services, work with families, EBP programmes

*Official recognition* to EBP guidelines application in *multiagency* and *cross-sectoral* settings

Motivation, coordinated improvement

*Professional training* and *inclusive evaluation* of the quality family support

Alliance, child and family participation

*Dissemination* of results among professionals, families, and society at large

Accountability and information to society

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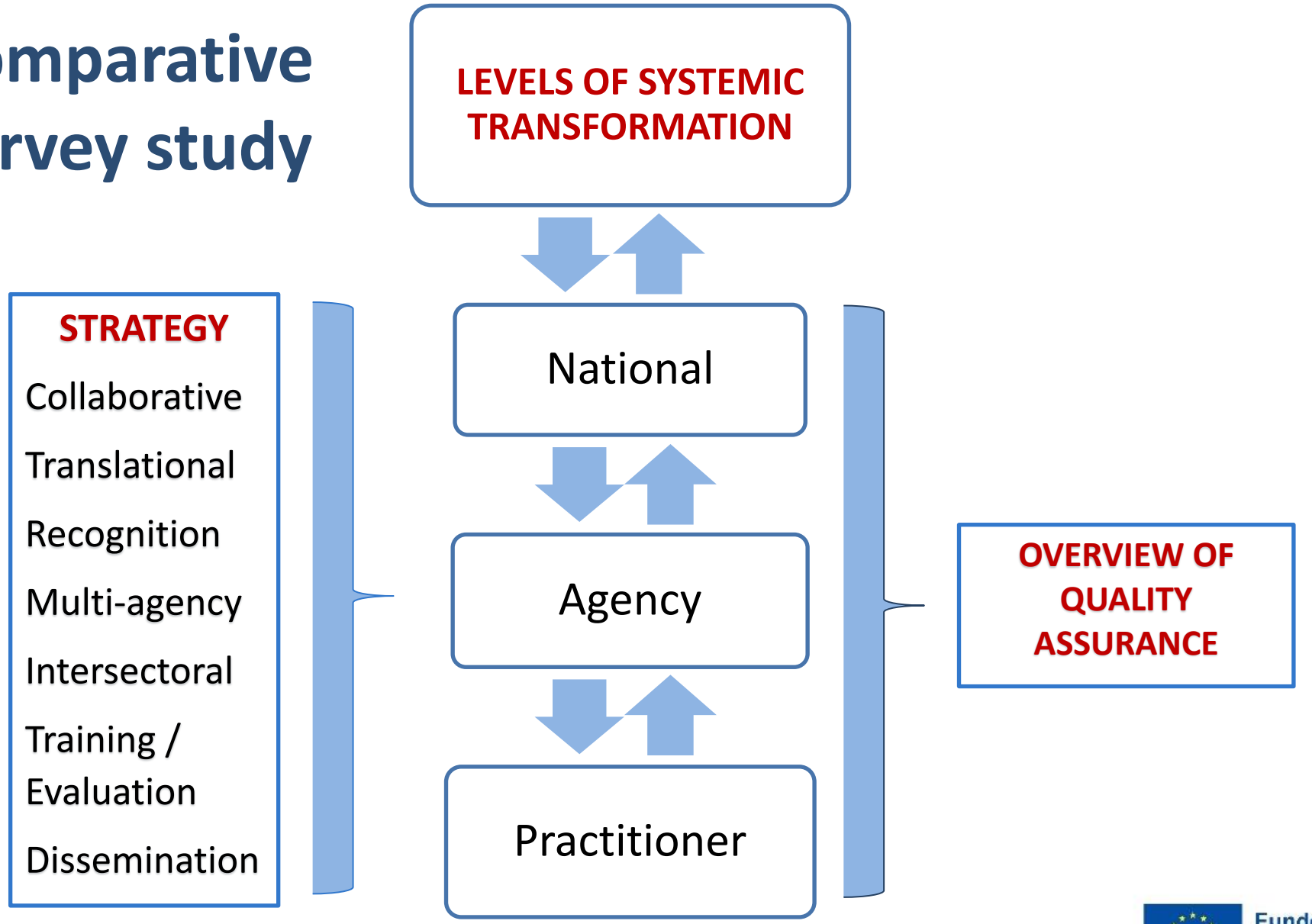
# Comparative survey study

***18 questions***

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# Formative protocol based on self-directed assessment (20 EurofamNet countries)

- EU members: Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.
- EU candidates: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Serbia.
- Non-EU: United Kingdom, Israel.
- Consensual responses were provided by members of *Eurofam-Net National Supportive Networks* made up of services and social entities at national, regional and local levels in social, education, health, and community sectors.

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# Results

| Initial | Medium | Advance |
|---|---|---|
| • Legal and policy national framework on child rights, protection against violence, and family support 95%<br>• Internat. recommenda-tions on child rights and family support 90%<br>• Internat. National, Local NGO / National, Regional services 92% | • Local services 70%<br>• Stable bilateral collaboration 55%<br>• Acknowledge of EBP guidelines 40%<br>• Recognition of EBP use in services 45%<br>• Professional training in EBP 65%<br>• Cross-sectoral partial adoption of EBP 50% | • Stable trilateral collaboration 15%<br>• EBP guidelines fully adopted 20%<br>• Recognition of EBP in professional teams 20%<br>• Cross-sectoral fully adoption of EBP 11.5%<br>• Formal EBP professional exchanges 30% |

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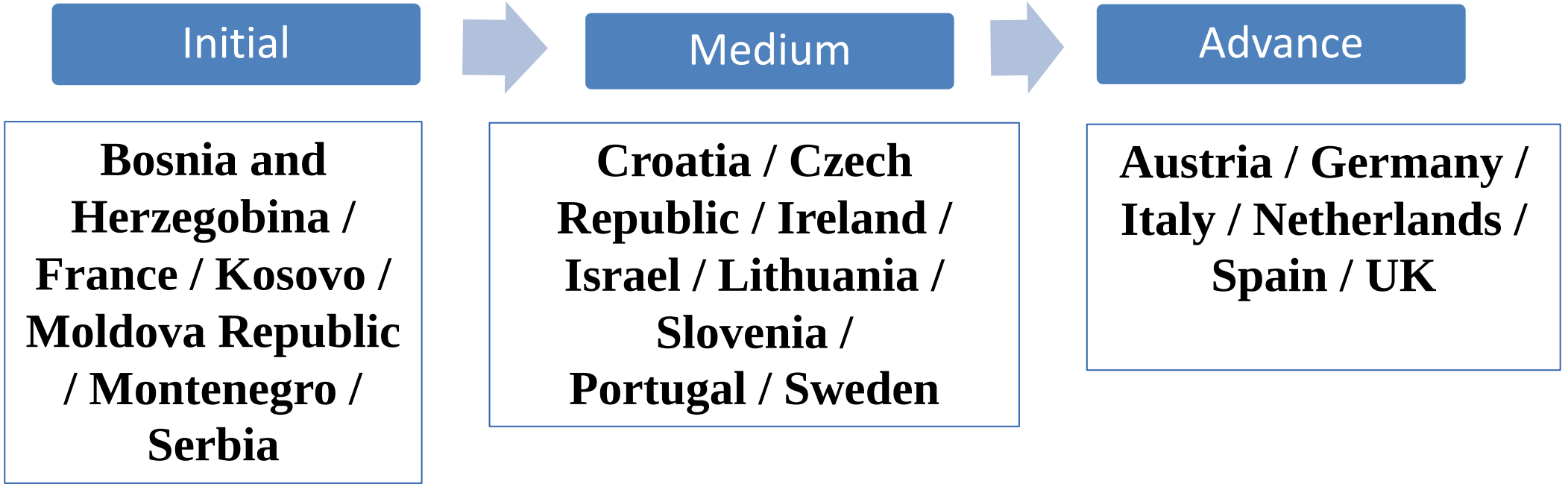
# Progression towards EBP adoption




Great variability in public spending on family benefits, social rights, inclusion, gender equity, child wellbeing, family diversity needs, etc.

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# “Evidence ecology” for quality family support

- Raise national awareness of the need to adopt EBP to promote the cultural readiness of the system to undergo this transformation.
- Engage stakeholders to advocate for quality services and ensure the participation of children and families in the process.
- Disseminate EBP guidelines in social, education, health, and community sectors to facilitate collaborative work in the child and family support
- Provide interprofesional training for the workforce in accordance with competency standards.
- Ensure the sustainability of quality assurance, especially in times of economical and health crisis, to guarantee the child and family wellbeing.
- Promote recommendations at the European policy level to strengthen quality family support in all countries to overcome inequalities in child and social rights.

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