

## THE EUROPEAN FUND FOR THE INTEGRATION OF THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS

### Policy context

The European Integration Fund is one of the four financial instruments of the General Programme on Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows addressing the issue of a fair share of responsibilities between Member States arising from the introduction of integrated management of the EU external borders and from the implementation of common policies on asylum and immigration.<sup>1</sup> The objective of the Fund is to support the efforts made by Member States in enabling third-country nationals to fulfil the conditions of residence and to facilitate their integration into European societies in accordance with the Common Basic Principles for immigrant integration policy in the European Union.

European Fund for the Integration of Third-country Nationals						
Total amount over the 2007-2013 period: €825 million (National programmes: €768 million; Community Actions: €57 million)						
2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
€65 m	€78 m	€98 m	€106 m	€132 m	€163 m	€183 m
Multi-annual programmes and lists of beneficiaries are available on <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/funding/intro/funding_solidarity_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/funding/intro/funding_solidarity_en.htm</a>						

### How it works

The Fund shall contribute to the development and implementation of national strategies for the integration of third-country nationals in all aspects of society, taking into account that integration is a two-way process of mutual accommodation by both immigrants and residents of Member States. The Fund also aims at enhancing exchange of information, mutual learning and Member States' capacity to evaluate integration policies. It complements the European Refugee Fund and the Structural Funds, in particular the European Social Fund. All Member States participate except Denmark.

### **Shared management: national programmes**

The overall budget for 2007-2013 is 825 million €. 93% of this (768 million €) are distributed among Member States according to the number of legally staying third-country nationals, taking into account both recent flows and stocks.

In accordance with the opinion of the common Committee "Solidarity and Management of migration Flows", the Commission adopted Strategic guidelines which identified four priorities that Member States should target when developing their multi-annual programmes for the period 2007-2013. Member States should target at least three of the following priorities, among which the first two are mandatory.

- Implementation of actions designed to put the 'Common Basic Principles for immigrant integration policy in the European Union' into practice;
- Development of indicators and evaluation methodologies to assess progress, adjust policies and measures and to facilitate co-ordination of comparative learning;
- Policy capacity building, co-ordination and intercultural competence building in the Member States across the different levels and departments of government;
- Exchange of experience, good practice and information on integration between the Member States.

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<sup>1</sup> Council Decision 2007/435/EC of 25 /VI/2007 establishing the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals for the period 2007 to 2013 as part of the General programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows'. The other three financial instruments are the European Refugee Fund, the Return Fund and the External Borders Fund.

Examples of co-financed measures are: intercultural training, dialogue platforms; networks and tools for comparative learning; and activities to enable third-country nationals to acquire basic knowledge of the host society's language, values, cultural life and socio-economic features.

According to the partnership principle, Member States are requested to organise a partnership with the bodies which are involved in the implementation of the multiannual programmes or are able to make a useful contribution to their development. Such bodies may include civil society organisations.<sup>2</sup>

### **Direct management: Community Actions**

€ 57 million (7% of the Fund's available resources) are allocated to Community Actions concerning immigration and integration policy. To be eligible for funding, Community actions are expected to foster cooperation in implementing Community law and good practices in the field of immigration and integration, for example by supporting the setting-up of transnational cooperation networks and the development of transnational awareness-raising campaigns and studies.

The Community Actions annual work programme lays down the priorities to be pursued through the actions financed, building on past experiences of the pilot projects and preparatory actions for the integration of third-country nationals (INTI).

In 2007 the following three priorities were pursued:

- Enhance interaction between third-country nationals and Member State citizens and promote integration measures and best practices targeted at society as a whole;
- Promote integration strategies and measures targeted at different immigrant groups;
- Reinforce the complementary linkage between migration and integration policies.

In 2008 the following three priorities were pursued:

- Promote the development of common indicators and indexes to assess integration policy outcomes;
- Developing common European modules for migrants' integration addressing specific integration related issues;
- Explore the links between admission policies and integration processes and the impact of new patterns of immigration and mobility on integration of third country nationals.

In 2009 the following three priorities are pursued:

- Gather public and migrant perceptions and develop a more comprehensive understanding of the integration processes;
- Promote integration measures targeting young population and addressing specific gender issues;
- Promote the role of civil society organisations and the local authorities in shaping integration strategies.

### **Questions for debate**

- What experience and suggestions do you have after the two first years of the implementation of national programmes?'
- In your view which priorities should be targeted by the Community Actions for 2010?

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<sup>2</sup> Council Decision 2007/435/EC of 25 /VI/2007 establishing the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals for the period 2007 to 2013 as part of the General programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows', art. 10.