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**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE  
COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE  
COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**on the results achieved and on qualitative and quantitative aspects of implementation of  
the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals for the period 2007-  
2009 (report submitted in accordance with Article 48 (3) (b) of Council Decision  
2007/435/EC of 25 June 2007)**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

For the period 2007-2013 the European Union established the General Programme ‘Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows’ with a total allocation of €4 032 million, as currently programmed<sup>1</sup>. It consists of four Funds and its aim is a fair share of responsibilities between Member States as regards the financial burden arising from the introduction of integrated management of the EU’s external borders and from running common policies on asylum and immigration<sup>2</sup>.

One of the four Funds is the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals,<sup>3</sup> (hereinafter referred to as the Fund), established for the period 2007 – 2013 with an indicative total budget of €825 million.

The ‘basic act’ establishing the Fund (i.e. the Council Decision referred to above) requires the Commission to submit an interim report on the results achieved and on qualitative and quantitative aspects of implementation of the Fund<sup>4</sup>.

The report presents results achieved by the annual programmes 2007, 2008 and 2009 based on reports from Member States in the first half of 2010,<sup>5</sup> together with information available to the Commission in the first quarter of 2011.

## 2. THE FUND’S OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, PURPOSE AND PRIORITIES

The **general objective** of the Fund is to support the efforts made by the Member States in enabling third-country nationals of different economic, social, cultural, religious, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds to meet the conditions of residence and to facilitate their integration into European societies. The Fund shall primarily focus on actions relating to the integration of newly arrived third-country nationals.

In order to further this objective, the Fund contributes to the development and implementation of national integration strategies for third-country nationals in all aspects of society, taking particular account of the principle that integration is a two-way dynamic process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States.

The Fund’s **scope** encompasses legally residing third-country nationals, i.e. any person who is not a citizen of the EU within the meaning of Article 17(1) of the Treaty, but does not include the European Refugee Fund’s target group.

The Fund shall contribute to the following **specific objectives**:

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise specified, all budget figures in the report are based on the actual appropriations decided by the Budget Authority up to now.

<sup>2</sup> COM(2005) 123 final.

<sup>3</sup> Decision 2007/435/EC, OJ L168, 28.6.2007, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup> Article 48 (3) (b) of the basic act.

<sup>5</sup> A compilation and the country reports are available at [http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/funding/integration/funding\\_integration\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/funding/integration/funding_integration_en.htm).

- (a) facilitate the development and implementation of admission procedures relevant to and supportive of the integration process of third-country nationals;
- (b) develop and implement the integration process of newly-arrived third-country nationals in Member States;
- (c) increase the capacity of Member States to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate policies and measures for the integration of third-country nationals;
- (d) exchange information, best practices and cooperation in and between Member States in developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating policies and measures for the integration of third-country nationals.

The Fund is mainly run by the Member States, in the **shared management method**. By way of annual programmes submitted by the Member States, the EU budget seeks to support activities in Member States in the field of integration of third-country nationals specific to the national or local circumstances, and capacity building in public and private services dealing with third-country nationals.

The actions are co-financed in compliance with **Strategic Guidelines of the Commission**,<sup>6</sup> which provide for four **Priorities**: (1) Implementation of actions designed to put the ‘Common Basic Principles for immigrant integration policy in the European Union’ into practice; (2) Development of indicators and evaluation methodologies to assess progress, adjust policies and measures and to facilitate coordination of comparative learning; (3) Policy capacity building, coordination and intercultural competence building in the Member States across the different levels and departments of government; and (4) Exchange of experience, good practice and information on integration between the Member States. Member States have to implement at least three of these priorities, among which priorities 1 and 2 are mandatory, but many Member States have chosen to implement all four of them.

In addition, the Strategic Guidelines set out five **Specific Priorities**, applicable under any of the aforementioned Priorities. Any project implementing one or more of the Specific Priorities may receive an increased EU funding rate. The Specific Priorities are:

- Specific Priority 1: Participation as a means of promoting the integration of third-country nationals in society (actions involving the participation of third-country nationals in the formulation and implementation of integration policies and measures);
- Specific Priority 2: Specific target groups (Actions, including introduction programmes and activities, whose main objective is to address the specific needs of particular groups, such as women, youth and children, the elderly, illiterate persons and persons with disabilities);
- Specific Priority 3: Innovative introduction programmes and activities (Actions developing innovative introduction programmes and activities, such as enabling third-country nationals to work and study at the same time, e.g. part-time courses, fast-track modules, distance or e-learning systems);
- Specific Priority 4: Intercultural dialogue (Actions aimed at encouraging mutual interaction and exchange, such as developing intercultural dialogue, in an effort in particular to resolve any potential conflict caused by differences in cultural or religious practices, and thus to

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<sup>6</sup> Commission Decision C(2007) 3926 final of 21.8.2007.

improve the integration of third-country nationals in societies, values and ways of life of Member States);

- Specific Priority 5: Involving the host society in the integration process (Actions addressing effective ways of raising awareness and actively involving the host society in the integration process).

Besides the national programmes, up to 7% of the EU resources available annually can be used directly by the Commission for transnational projects, studies or other types of action of EU interest through the ‘**Community actions**’.

For the budget years 2003-2006, there were preparatory actions under the EU budget, namely the ‘INTI Preparatory actions promoting the integration of third-country nationals’. This instrument generated first-hand practical experience with transnational projects and thus helped organisations of various types in Member States prepare for the launch of the Fund in 2007.<sup>7</sup>

### 3. BUDGET RESOURCES

The budget resources of the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals over the period 2007-2013 are set out below.

**Table 1 — EU budget for the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals, 2007-2013**

Amounts in €

Euros	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012 (*)	2013 (*)	Total
<b>MS totals</b>	<b>60.357.000</b>	<b>72.075.000</b>	<b>90.675.000</b>	<b>102.765.000</b>	<b>122.295.000</b>	<b>152.750.000</b>	<b>171.550.000</b>	<b>772.467.000</b>
<b>Community</b>								
<b>Actions</b>	<b>4.543.000</b>	<b>5.425.000</b>	<b>6.825.000</b>	<b>7.735.000</b>	<b>9.205.000</b>	<b>9.750.000</b>	<b>10.950.000</b>	<b>54.433.000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>64.900.000</b>	<b>77.500.000</b>	<b>97.500.000</b>	<b>110.500.000</b>	<b>131.500.000</b>	<b>162.500.000</b>	<b>182.500.000</b>	<b>826.900.000</b>

(\*) Actual appropriations from 2007 to 2011 inclusive. Amounts for 2012 as in the draft budget. Amounts for 2013 are provisional.

All Member States participate in implementing the Fund, with the exception of Denmark, in accordance with the Protocol on the position of Denmark annexed to the Treaty on European Union. The resources available for national programmes are distributed annually among the other 26 Member States, based on two criteria: (i) the average number of legally residing third-country nationals in each Member State over the previous three years and (ii) the number of third-country nationals (excluding some specific categories) who have obtained an authorisation issued by each Member State to reside on its territory over the previous three years; with the applicable weighting coefficients.

<sup>7</sup> An evaluation of the INTI preparatory actions is available at [http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/funding/integration/funding\\_integration\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/funding/integration/funding_integration_en.htm).

The Fund's maximum contribution to projects in Member States is set at 50% of the total costs of an action and at 75% for Member States covered by the Cohesion Fund and for actions reflecting the Specific Priorities set out in the Strategic Guidelines.

#### 4. PREPARING IMPLEMENTATION IN THE MEMBER STATES

The Commission adopted **implementing rules** for the Fund,<sup>8</sup> common to all four Funds with few exceptions, to ensure harmonised application and to establish common templates for programming and reporting. The rules cover such things as selection procedures and criteria for the eligibility of expenditure incurred under the Fund. Another important part of the guidance consisted in the preparation, in close cooperation with Member States, of a **manual on eligibility**, with practical examples and best practices on project management, which has been regularly updated. Information sessions on the rules on eligibility of expenditure were organised. Further general guidance was provided at meetings of the '**SOLID Committee**' and in three **conferences** on the Funds (in 2008 on the Funds in general and in 2009 for audit authorities and on programming and evaluation).

While Member States are in charge of managing the funds under the programmes in shared management, the Commission bears ultimate responsibility for the implementation of the EU budget. Therefore, Member States are responsible for setting up a **national management and control system for the Fund** including a 'Responsible Authority', responsible for the management of the programme, supported where appropriate by a delegated authority; an Audit Authority, responsible for verifying the effective functioning of the management and control system; and a Certifying Authority, to certify the declarations of expenditure before they are sent to the Commission. Jointly, these authorities are in charge of the **sound financial management of the funds allocated to the Member State**.

Each Member State submitted a description of its management and control system to the Commission so that the Commission could check on compliance with the applicable provisions. At the end of 2010, nearly all the Member States' descriptions of their management and control systems for the Fund had received an 'unqualified' opinion from the Commission. In addition, on-the-spot audits of the Fund's management and control systems (which may be common with other Funds of the General Programme) were completed in 17 Member States by the end of 2010, with a further seven Member States to be audited in 2011. Most systems appeared to function adequately, but in some cases improvements were necessary. At this stage of the audits, which will continue throughout the programming period 2007-2013, this concerned, in particular, the selection procedures, staff resources available to the Authorities and documentation on the procedures and the tasks performed. In general, most of the Member States would seem to have robust systems in place.

#### 5. THE MULTIANNUAL PROGRAMMES 2007-2013

Approval of the Fund's multiannual programmes was completed by the end of 2008 for most Member States, and for the rest at the very beginning of 2009. In order not to delay implementation, which is via annual programmes, the Commission arranged for approval, at

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<sup>8</sup> Decision No 2008/457/EC, OJ L167, 27.6.2008, p. 69.

the same time, of the multiannual programme and of the two first annual programmes, for 2007 and 2008 respectively.

The multiannual programmes, which do not entail any financial decision, represent the **strategic framework** agreed upon by the Commission and each Member State for the joint use of the national and the Fund's resources during the full programming period, 2007-2013. At EU level, they will support a significant amount of actions in support of the integration of third-country nationals, totalling nearly €1 400 m during the period 2007-2013.<sup>9</sup>

Table 2: Total cost of all multiannual programmes and sources of funding

2007 – 2013

(Consolidation of all Member States' multiannual programme financial plans over the seven-year period)

All amounts are in million euro and are indicative.

Source of funding		Indicative amounts	%
European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals	A	€769 m (*)	55.6 %
National public resources	B	€456 m	32.9 %
<b>Total public funding</b>	C = A + B	<b>€1 225 m</b>	<b>88.5 %</b>
Private allocations	D	€159 m	11.5 %
<b>Total cost of all multiannual programmes, 2007-2013</b>	E = C + D	<b>€1 384 m</b>	<b>100 %</b>

(\*) The Fund's allocations included in the Member States' multiannual programmes, which were drafted in 2008, were based on the budget appropriations decided by the Budget Authority for 2007 and 2008 and on budget estimates for the remaining part of the programming period. This is why the overall amount of €769 m differs slightly from the overall amount of €772. 467 m in Table 1, which is based on the Fund's actual budget appropriations from 2007 up to 2011 and estimates for 2012 and 2013.

Based on information concerning the introduction of national legislation in the field of integration, implementation of national integration programmes and Member States' own statements in the multiannual programmes, it is apparent that some Member States did not have any great experience with measures intended specifically for the integration of third-country nationals when the programmes were launched. These countries included e.g. Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania and Romania. Conversely, several Member States, such as France, Austria, the Netherlands or Spain, could already build upon their own national experience, including significant funding programmes.

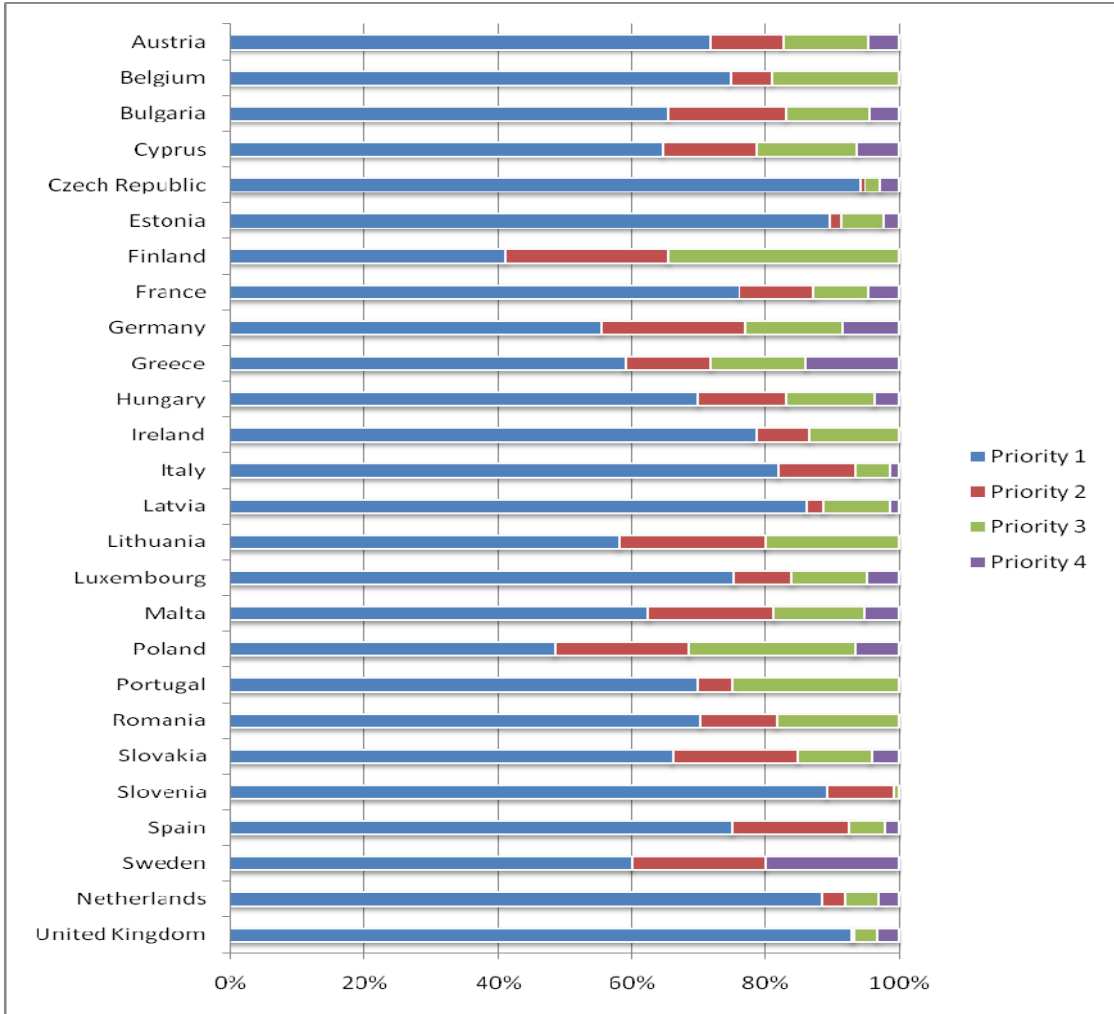
Priority needs for the effective integration of third-country nationals differed from one Member State to another, depending on the respective immigration history, the share of third-country nationals in the total population, the current migration flows, the economic and social

<sup>9</sup> A synthesis of all multiannual programmes will be available at <http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/index.cfm>.

situation and conditions, the availability of structures and services in support of integration and the institutional set-up. In spite of these differences, **several intervention priorities were common to a majority of Member States**. First comes the ‘two-way approach’, which reflects the principle that both newcomers and the receiving society should be involved in the integration process (21 Member States concerned), including improving tolerance, raising awareness about and combating discrimination against migrants and promoting inter-cultural dialogue. The second key challenge (15 Member States) concerned the need for civic orientation and the provision of information to third-country nationals on the history, institutions, fundamental norms and values of the receiving country. The third major challenge (13 Member States) was to adapt public and private services to a multicultural society and capacity building for organisations interacting with third-country nationals. Finally, improving language proficiency was also an obvious priority need (12 Member States).

Priority 1 (see chapter 2) will receive by far the largest share of the Fund’s resources during the period 2007-2013 (a planned 75 % share at EU level, ranging from 94 % (Czech Republic) to 41 % (Finland)), well ahead of Priorities 2 (12 % at EU level), 3 (9 %) and 4 (4 %). Finland, which has put comparatively more emphasis on Priority 2, is the only Member State where Priority 1 is expected to receive less than 50% of the Fund’s resources.

**Graph 1: Distribution of EU resources between the four Priorities in the multiannual programmes**





The Fund's basic act requires each Member State to organise, in accordance with current national rules and practices, a **partnership** with the authorities and bodies involved in running the multiannual programme, or which are able to make a useful contribution to its development. It is mandatory for the Fund's partnership to include the authorities responsible for the management of the European Social Fund and the European Refugee Fund.

The multiannual programmes provide a description of the partnership's organisational set-up in each Member State. Partnership committees often consist of several ministries, the aforementioned implementing authorities of the European Social Fund and the European Refugee Fund and, to a lesser extent, local authorities and NGOs. In some Member States, partnership committees work on two levels, i.e. a general committee and specific task forces or groups of experts. In addition to formal committees, most Member States have arranged regular meetings (e.g. yearly or twice yearly) with all project implementing organisations, to take stock of achievements and shortcomings and to discuss funding priorities for the next annual programmes.

**Complementarity of Fund with other EU funding instruments** is ensured in Member States, firstly, through close cooperation between the managing authorities responsible for the different funds in the framework of the partnership. Typically, this involves consulting the authorities concerned at the planning and programming stage and on the list of actual projects selected for funding. This is simple when the same Authority is responsible for several Funds under the General Programme (e.g. the Responsible Authority for the Fund is the same as for the European Refugee Fund in the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom). Moreover, in many Member States applicants for funding are required to declare possible further sources of EU or national funding, or to justify the Fund's relevance in relation to other EU funds available, or to commit themselves not to utilise any other EU funding for projects supported by the Fund.

In addition to avoiding any overlap between the Fund and other EU funding instruments, several Member States have arranged for the Fund to complement the actions of under the European Social Fund, for instance by using the Fund to raise third-country nationals' skills to the level required to participate in labour market integration measures, funded by the European Social Fund. Genuine synergies between the Fund and the European Social Fund have been developed in several Member States, notably when the Fund's Responsible Authority is shared with the European Social Fund, for instance in Belgium, Spain or Sweden.

Beside this situation, the Fund's Responsible Authority is also a member of the partnership of the European Social Fund in several Member States. This is the case, for example, in Austria, Hungary and Ireland.

## **6. BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN FUND FOR THE INTEGRATION OF THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS IN THE PERIOD 2007 – 2009**

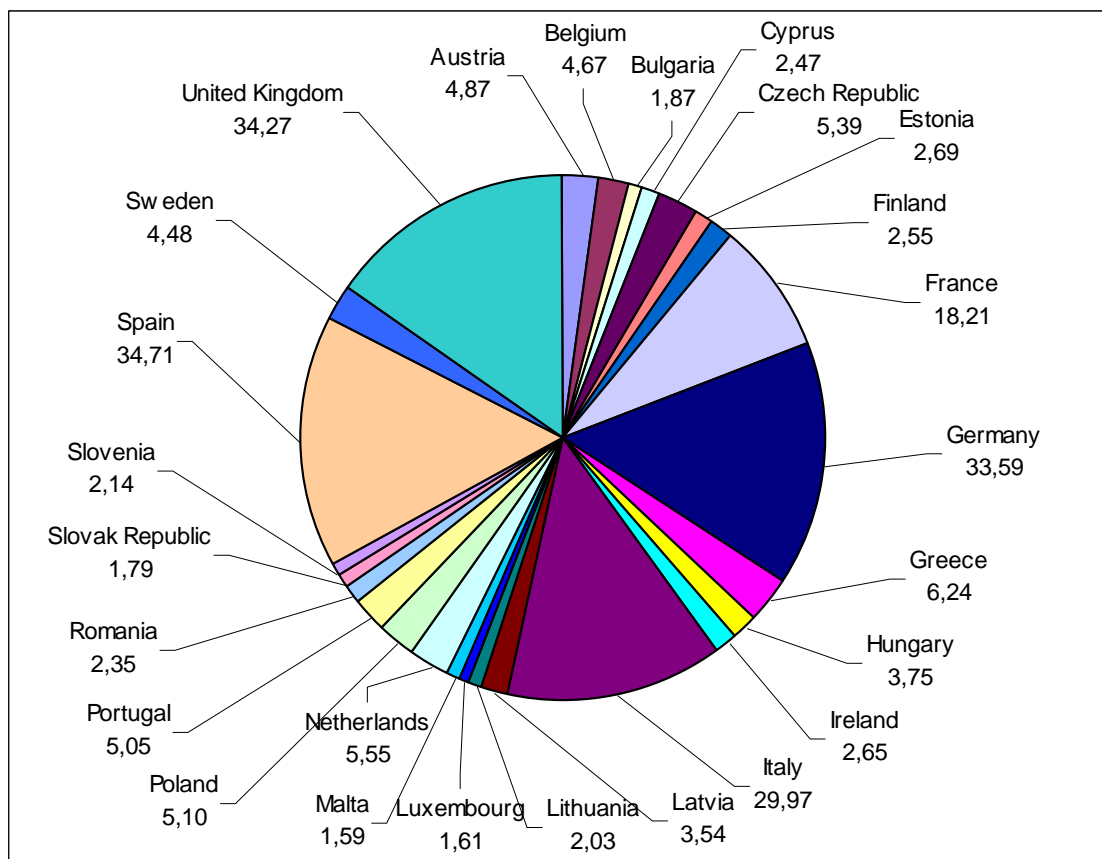
The reporting period 2007-2009 covers **29% of the overall reference amount of the Fund**, with a total of **€ 239.9 m** in EU appropriations available for both shared and direct management actions.

## 6.1. National programmes run under shared management

For the first three years of the Fund's implementation, **78 annual programmes** were approved, committing a total of some **€223.1 m**. The distribution of the Fund's resources among the Member States, in application of the distribution key set out in the legal basis, is set out in Graph 2 below.

**Graph 2: Distribution of EU resources committed on national programmes, 2007-2009**

Amounts in million €(rounded figures)



For the period 2007-2009, the **five main beneficiaries** were Spain (€34.7 m), the United Kingdom (€34.3 m) Germany (€33.6 m) and Italy (€30 m) (each from 13% to 15% of the total EU resources allocated to national programmes), followed by France (€18.2 m, or 8% of the total). Together, they received about 68% of the total amounts allocated to national programmes in the reporting period.

Next followed, at some distance, **eight Member States**, each with 2% to 3% of the Fund's resources allocated during the period 2007-2009; that is, an allocation between €4.5 m and €5.5 m (Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Greece, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Sweden).

All **other Member States** received each between 0.7% and 1.7% of the available Fund's resources. For the period 2007-2009, the allocations for these 13 Member States ranged from €1.59 m (Malta) to €3.75 m (Hungary).

For the period from 2007 up to 2011, the five main beneficiary Member States have remained the same, but their ranking has changed slightly: first comes, as of 2011, Italy, then the United Kingdom, Spain, Germany and France in that order. This reflects the respective immigration flows and the population of legally staying third-country nationals during the reference period used for distributing the Fund's resources among the Member States.<sup>10</sup>

When the resources provided under the annual programmes by the national budgets and by the beneficiaries are added to the contribution from the Fund, the total costs of all operations to be funded amounted to about **€371 m over the three-year period 2007-2009**. The Fund's contribution accounted for 60% of that amount, Member States' national public funding provided for slightly less than 35% (€128.7 m) and finally the beneficiaries themselves contributed some 5% of the planned total costs (€19.5 m). These percentages are broadly in line with those set in the multiannual programmes (see Table 2 in chapter 5), taking into account the fact that, by definition, the expected beneficiaries' contribution could only be 'planned' at the beginning of the programming period 2007-2013.

For each annual programme, Member States could use up to 7% of their annual allocation + €30000 to fund technical assistance for the management of the Fund. Resources earmarked for technical assistance in the Member States amounted in total to €5 m; €5.8 m and €7.1 m in 2007, 2008 and 2009, respectively.

According to the **spending rate as reported at the end of 2010**, commitments in the Member States have been fairly high for 2007 (82% of the appropriations) and for 2008 (83%) and reached nearly 100% for 2009. For 2007, six Member States reported commitments close to 100% and in four additional Member States the rate was 90% or more. For 2008, four Member States attained a commitment rate of close to 100% and seven others committed at least 90% of their allocation.

Commitments during the period 2007-2009 reflect the overall implementation pattern of national programmes. In most Member States, the programmes were significantly influenced by delays in the start-up phase, for 2007 and 2008 (see chapter 7.4), but many Member States managed to tackle these issues along the way, resulting in relatively smooth implementation of the 2009 annual programmes in the majority of Member States.

## 6.2. Community actions

For each of the years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011, the Commission adopted an annual Work Programme which set out the priorities and objectives of the Fund's Community actions as well as the actions planned for support. Community actions always focus on transnational projects and on actions in the interest of the Union in the field of integration of third-country nationals.

During the aforementioned period, grants were awarded following calls for proposals open to any type of organisation, with the requirement, for each project, of participants from at least three to five Member States. The priorities laid down in the calls for proposals included:

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<sup>10</sup> For further information see COM(2011) 448 and SEC(2011) 940 on the application of the criteria for distribution of resources among the Member States under the External Borders Fund, the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals and the European Return Fund .

promoting integration strategies and measures targeted at specific groups, such as migrant women and children; integration measures at local level, such as diversity management in neighbourhoods; gathering public and migrant perceptions on the integration process; exploring the links between admission policies and integration processes etc. In total, from 2007 to 2010, the Commission grant-funded 37 transnational projects, which were allocated €17.85 m.

In addition to grants, which used up the majority of the available EU resources, Community actions funded several public procurements. Of particular interest in this context are:

- the support provided to the *European Integration Forum*,<sup>11</sup> an exchange and discussion forum on integration set up by the Commission with civil society, which has met twice yearly since 2008;
- the *European Web Site on Integration*:<sup>12</sup> this is an interactive website accessible to any stakeholder in the field of integration, providing extensive documentation, news, good practices from all EU Member States, and allowing for exchange of information;
- the *Handbook on Integration for policy-makers and practitioners*,<sup>13</sup> three successive versions of which have been published; the Handbook's purpose is to compile and disseminate good practices on various integration issues, such as 'the mass media and integration', 'awareness-raising and migrant empowerment', 'acquisition of nationality and practice of active citizenship', 'immigrant youth, education and the labour market'.

## **7. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2007, 2008 AND 2009 PROGRAMMES IN THE MEMBER STATES**

In compliance with the basic act,<sup>14</sup> Member States had to submit to the Commission, by 30 June 2010, an evaluation report on the implementation of actions co-financed by the Fund; all used a common template supplied by the Commission. At this early stage of the multiannual programmes' implementation (in June 2010, the only final data on projects completed available to the Member States were for the 2007 annual programme, while implementation of the 2008 annual programme had just finished and the 2009 annual programme was still running), the Member States' reports necessarily focus on implementation aspects, more than on results and impacts. These will be reported in the national evaluation reports on the results and impact of actions co-financed by the Fund for the period 2007 to 2010, which Member States are required to submit to the Commission by 30 June 2012.

This chapter presents and compares the facts and figures on the implementation of the 2007, 2008 and 2009 annual programmes as reported by the Member States. It should be stressed that the collated figures are average values which do not always reflect deviations from the trend. Wherever possible, variations or divergences from average results have been flagged.

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<sup>11</sup> For further information on the European Integration Forum, see <http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/policy/legal.cfm>.

<sup>12</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/index.cfm>.

<sup>13</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/resources/detail.cfm?ID\\_ITEMS=12892](http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/resources/detail.cfm?ID_ITEMS=12892).

<sup>14</sup> Article 48(2)(a) of Decision 2007/435/EC.

## 7.1. Overview

By 30 June 2010, a total of **1949 projects** had been funded by the Fund in Member States under the first three annual programmes 2007, 2008 and 2009. This is equivalent to an average, at EU level, of 75 funded projects in each Member State for the three annual programmes, albeit with significant differences from one Member State to another (see Table 4 below).

**Table 4: Projects funded under the three annual programmes 2007, 2008 and 2009**

Member State	Programme 2007	Programme 2008	Programme 2009 *	Total 2007-2009
Austria	34	31	39	104
Belgium	13	14	21	48
Bulgaria	13	14	0	27
Cyprus	3	10	8	21
Czech Republic	2	27	17	46
Estonia	17	76	72	165
Finland	10	18	12	40
France	2	3	29	34
Germany	162	148	59	369
Greece	7	11	0	18
Hungary	19	22	20	61
Ireland	8	0	0	8
Italy	54	48	59	161
Latvia	13	17	0	30
Lithuania	16	12	12	40
Luxembourg	3	12	14	29
Malta	0	1	3	4
Netherlands	3	9	6	18
Poland	35	36	0	71
Portugal	12	10	3	25
Romania	1	7	4	12
Slovak Republic	11	5	10	26
Slovenia	3	2	0	5
Spain	169	241	120	530
Sweden	9	19	0	28
United Kingdom	8	11	10	29
<b>Total EU</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>804</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>1949</b>

\* Under the 2009 annual programme, project selection and funding was still ongoing at 30 June 2010.

Although the Member States with the largest allocations are generally also those with the largest number of funded projects (Spain 530 projects, Germany 369, Italy 161) and, at the other end of the scale, Member States with the smallest allocations are those with the smallest number of funded projects (Malta 4, Slovenia 5 and Ireland 8), the number of projects does not always follow the size of the allocation. For instance, Estonia, with a comparatively small allocation, funded broadly as many projects as Italy. Conversely, the United Kingdom, one of the Fund's main beneficiaries, concentrated its resources on a limited number of larger projects (around 30). So the number of projects in Member States reflects a funding strategy (wide project support vs. concentration), which is also apparent in the average amount of EU funding per project.

**Projects funded under the national programmes were generally small to medium-sized, with an average amount of EU funding of about €76 000 per project.** In 16 Member States (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden), it was even smaller, i.e. between €18 338 and €68 952. Member States with the lowest average EU funding per project are Estonia, Bulgaria, Luxembourg and Poland (see Table 5 below).

Conversely, in ten Member States, the average EU funding per project was higher than the overall EU average (Cyprus, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovenia and the United Kingdom). The Member State with the highest average EU funding per project was France, followed at some distance by the United Kingdom, Slovenia and the Netherlands.

**Table 5: Average amount of EIF funding per project for the two programming years 2007 and 2008\***

	EIF committed by the MS (2007 and 2008)	Number of projects funded by the MS (2007 and 2008)	Average EIF funding per project
Austria	2 783 852,60	65	42 828,50
Belgium	1 339 531,31	27	49 612,27
Bulgaria	810 365,32	27	30 013,53
Cyprus	1 264 842,72	13	97 295,59
Czech Republic	1 449 221,39	29	49 973,15
Estonia	1 705 466,37	93	18 338,35
Finland	1 534 600,00	28	54 807,14
France	10 937 000,00	5	2 187 400,00
Germany	20 509 937,00	310	66 161,09
Greece	3 313 557,43	18	184 086,52
Hungary	1 897 256,02	41	46 274,54
Ireland	722 187,00	8	90 273,38
Italy	14 616 895,28	102	143 302,89
Latvia	1 767 214,93	30	58 907,16
Lithuania	1 351 598,09	28	48 271,36
Luxembourg	530 569,73	15	35 371,32
Malta	99 155,20	1	99 155,20
Netherlands	2 425 961,57	12	202 163,46
Poland	2 580 226,27	71	36 341,22
Portugal	1 068 431,68	22	48 565,08
Romania	712 732,35	8	89 091,54
Slovak Republic	1 042 788,25	16	65 174,27
Slovenia	1 171 612,58	5	234 322,52
Spain	19 947 890,57	410	48 653,39
Sweden	1 930 664,44	28	68 952,30
United Kingdom	11 341 023,28	19	596 895,96
<b>European Union</b>	<b>108 854 581,38</b>	<b>1 431</b>	<b>76 068,89</b>

\* At 30 June 2010, project selection and funding was not yet completed for 2009, so calculation of the average EU funding per project is based only on the first two annual programmes.

## 7.2. Implementation methods, project selection and funding

Under the General Programme, Member States may choose between two implementation methods:

- the Responsible Authority acting as ‘awarding body’, where, as a general rule, projects are implemented on the basis of open calls for proposals (in duly justified cases, grants may be awarded without a call for proposals); or
- the Responsible Authority acting as ‘executing body’, where the Responsible Authority decides to implement the projects directly, alone or in association with any national authority competent on account of its technical expertise, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative powers; this is because the characteristics of the projects leave no other choice for implementation, such as *de jure* monopoly situations or security reasons.

As expected given the Fund’s purpose and the variety of stakeholders in this area, **the ‘awarding body’ method, with 95 % of all projects funded (1852 projects in total), was by far the most important implementation method.** Indeed, all Member States implemented their programmes, in totality or in part, in the ‘awarding body’ method.

Only nine Member States (Cyprus, Estonia, France, Italy, Latvia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom) used the ‘executing body’ method, for a total of 97 projects. Moreover, the majority of projects in the ‘executing body’ method were funded at the beginning of the multiannual programming period and their number subsequently decreased.

Under the ‘awarding body’ method, only eight Member States (Austria, France, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Slovenia) organised only one call for proposals for each annual programme. In all the other Member States, at least for one of the annual programmes, several calls were necessary, because one call was not enough to use the allocation fully, or in order to cover separate programme intervention areas.

**Calls for proposals attracted an impressive total of 5234 proposals** over the three-year period. Proposals were submitted by all kinds of organisations: national, regional or local authorities; NGOs of any status; education and research institutions etc. **Under the 2009 annual programme alone, close to 2000 proposals were submitted** (see Table 6).

As a result of the very high response, **only 47 % of the proposals received were selected, 73 % of which were funded.** Some Member States mentioned available funding as a limiting factor (e.g. Bulgaria, Estonia, Italy and Lithuania), but it was not the only reason for rejecting proposals, or for not funding all the proposals selected. For instance, further analysis of the selected proposals, carried out by the Responsible Authorities, might eventually lead to non-funding either because the implementing organisation’s situation had deteriorated, or it was no longer able to put up the expected matching funds, or important technical details could not be provided for the grant agreement etc. Responsible Authorities, therefore, took seriously their task of funding projects with the Fund’s resources.

**Table 6: Projects received, selected and funded during 2007-2009 in the ‘awarding body’ method following calls for proposals**

Member State	Programme 2007			Programme 2008			Programme 2009			Total 2007-2009		
	Proposals received	Projects selected	Projects funded	Proposals received	Projects selected	Projects funded	Proposals received	Projects selected	Projects funded	Proposals received	Projects selected	Projects funded
Austria	48	34	34	70	31	31	119	40	39	237	105	104
Belgium	14	14	13	14	14	14	25	23	21	53	51	48
Bulgaria	40	22	13	56	31	14	0	0	0	96	53	27
Cyprus	2	0	0	18	7	7	17	5	5	37	12	12
Czech Republic	2	2	2	48	28	27	27	19	17	77	49	46
Estonia	31	5	5	134	72	71	110	81	69	275	158	145
Finland	47	10	10	23	18	18	48	12	12	118	40	40
France	0	0	0	0	0	0	135	30	27	135	30	27
Germany	336	162	162	236	148	148	305	59	59	877	369	369
Greece	56	8	7	46	11	11	0	0	0	102	19	18
Hungary	34	19	19	45	22	22	45	20	20	124	61	61
Ireland	41	10	8	0	0	0	29	0	0	70	10	8
Italy	405	171	41	373	145	28	523	350	38	1301	666	107
Latvia	14	11	11	21	15	15	0	0	0	35	26	26
Lithuania	17	16	16	14	13	12	27	16	12	58	45	40
Luxembourg	7	3	3	19	12	12	20	15	14	46	30	29
Malta	9	0	0	1	1	1	4	3	3	14	4	4
Netherlands	5	3	3	12	9	9	16	6	6	33	18	18
Poland	45	37	35	57	36	36	53	0	0	155	73	71
Portugal	13	12	12	12	12	10	3	3	3	28	27	25
Romania	5	3	1	15	8	7	16	4	4	36	15	12
Slovak Republic	14	10	10	7	5	5	18	10	10	39	25	25
Slovenia	2	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	3	3	3
Spain	437	126	126	331	233	233	258	115	115	1026	474	474
Sweden	74	9	9	0	19	19	38	0	0	112	28	28
United Kingdom	34	12	7	29	11	11	84	36	10	147	59	28
<b>Total EU</b>	<b>1732</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>1582</b>	<b>902</b>	<b>762</b>	<b>1920</b>	<b>847</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>5234</b>	<b>2450</b>	<b>1795</b>

NB Only proposals/projects submitted, selected and funded in by the ‘awarding body’ method following calls for proposals are included (not projects funded without a call for proposals, by way of exception, or projects funded in the ‘executing body’ method). Where more than one call for proposals was organised for an annual programme, the figures aggregate the total number of proposals received, projects selected and projects funded for all calls under this particular annual programme.



### 7.3. Project areas — implementation of Priorities and Specific Priorities

Given the very high number of funded projects and the variety of organisations running them, a wide range of issues was covered during the period under review. Projects funded can be broadly classified in three categories according to their main ‘target’, i.e. projects targeted at: third-country nationals primarily; public and private services dealing with third-country nationals; the receiving society (see Table 7). A detailed description of the types of actions funded is provided in the following pages.

The most common topics supported by the Fund in Member States are **measures where primarily third-country nationals were targeted, more particularly projects on information and training, including language proficiency, practical information and civic orientation**. The ‘two-way’ approach was nearly as important.

While ranking only second, **capacity building** measures in the broader sense (adaptation and coordination of public and private services), **cooperation between Member States** and **measures targeted at the receiving society** to promote intercultural dialogue were funded in the majority of Member States, and are of equal importance. Interestingly, **cooperation** between Member States, along with **research, studies, monitoring and evaluation**, have developed more than foreseen at the beginning of the programming period.

Projects implementing Priority 1 accounted for about 80% of all projects, well ahead of projects under Priority 3 (10%), Priority 2 (6%) and Priority 4 (4%). **Priority shares are consistent with the overall amounts planned at the beginning of the programming period**. Of all four ‘Specific Objectives’ of the Fund (see chapter 2), ‘development and implementation of the integration process of newly-arrived third-country nationals in Member States’ **is clearly predominant**, with nearly 70% of all projects funded. This is in line with the provision in the basic act that *‘the Fund shall primarily focus on actions relating to the integration of newly arrived third-country nationals’*.

**Member States made extensive use of the possibility of a higher EU co-financing rate for projects implementing one or several Specific Priorities**, with 62% of all projects concerned. The largest share is for projects implementing more than one Specific Priority, followed by those implementing Specific Priorities 2 and 5. There are, however, significant differences between Member States. For instance, Italy, Latvia and Spain implemented projects under each of the five Specific Priorities. Conversely, only one of the Specific Priorities was implemented in Austria, Cyprus and Slovenia (Specific Priority 4), as well as in France and the United Kingdom (Specific Priority 2). In Malta, Spain and Sweden, all projects funded in the ‘awarding body’ method implemented one or more Specific Priorities.

Overall, the **priority needs identified at the planning stage in the multiannual programmes have been broadly confirmed**, with the main changes resulting from the actual proposals submitted by implementing organisations in response to calls for proposals.

**Table 7: Summary of operations funded by the Member States under the annual programmes 2007-2009**

'Target group'	Type of operation	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Total Member States
<b>Third-country nationals</b>	Improvement of <b>language proficiency</b> (and capacity-building in this respect)	20: AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, EE, FR, EL, HU, IE, IT, LV, LT, LU, PL, RO, SK, SI, ES, UK		2: BE, CY	1: MT	21: AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, EE, FR, EL, HU, IE, IT, LV, LT, LU, MT, PL, RO, SK, SI, ES, UK
	Dissemination of general and practical information (rights and obligations, services available, etc.) as well as <b>civic orientation</b> (culture, history, institutions of the host Member State)	22: AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, EE, FI, EL, HU, IE, IT, LV, LT, LU, PL, PT, RO, SK, SI, ES, SE, UK	1: IT	6: BE, EE, FI, HU, IT, LV	2: BE, MT	23: AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, EE, FI, EL, HU, IE, IT, LV, LT, LU, MT, PL, PT, RO, SK, SI, ES, SE, UK
	Access to other forms of <b>education</b>	6: BE, EE, EL, LV, SE, UK	1: CZ			7: BE, CZ, EE, EL, LV, SE, UK
	Preliminary actions to facilitate subsequently access to <b>labour market</b> , participation in employment, economic life and self-sufficiency	12: AT, BG, DE, EL, LT, MT, PL, PT, RO, SK, ES, SE	1: CZ	3: FI, LV, LT		15: AT, BG, CZ, DE, FI, EL, LV, LT, MT, PL, PT, RO, SK, ES, SE
	Social and legal guidance and <b>counselling</b>	11: BE, CZ, FI, FR, HU, LV, PL, PT, RO, SK, ES		3: CZ, FI, LV		11: BE, CZ, FI, FR, HU, LV, PL, PT, RO, SK, ES
	Two-way approach: facilitation or promotion of <b>participation</b> of third-country nationals in civic life, services and exchanges with the host society	14: AT, CY, DE, EE, EL, HU, IE, IT, LU, MT, NL, SK, ES, SE		3: FI, LV, SK	1: MT	15: AT, CY, DE, EE, FI, EL, HU, IE, IT, LU, MT, NL, SK, ES, SE
	<b>Health</b>	3: CZ, ES, SE		2: CZ, PL		4: CZ, PL, ES, SE
	Operations specific to <b>vulnerable groups</b>	10: AT, BE, DE, CZ, FI, FR, IT, ES, SE, UK			1: IT	10: AT, BE, CZ, DE, FI, FR, IT, ES, SE, UK
	Upgrading <b>reception</b> services, including facilities and legislation	5: BE, CZ, IE, LV, UK	1: BE			5: BE, CZ, IE, LV, UK
	<b>Housing</b>	2: PL, ES				2: PL, ES
<b>Pre-departure</b> measures (measures targeted at third-country nationals before they arrive in the host Member State)	3: BE, FI, EL				3: BE, FI, EL	

Table 7: Summary of operations funded by the Member States under the annual programmes 2007-2009 (continued)

'Target group'	Type of operation	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Total Member States
Policy-makers, staff of public and private bodies dealing with integration, and other people in contact with third-country nationals or integration issues	Adaptation of public and private services to a multicultural society through training, <b>capacity-building</b> and awareness raising	10: AT, CZ, EE, FR, HU, IT, LV, LT, PT, RO	1: EE	16: AT, BG, CY, CZ, EE, FI, EL, HU, LV, LT, LU, MT, PT, RO, SK, ES	1: HU	18: AT, BG, CY, CZ, EE, FI, FR, EL, HU, IT, LV, LT, LU, MT, PT, RO, SK, ES
	<b>Research</b> on the situation of third-country nationals in the Member State in particular, including on the attitude of society towards thirdcountry nationals, in order to better tailor integration measures and processes to their needs	6: BG, HU, IT, LV, RO, SE	15: AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, FI, EL, HU, IT, LT, LU, PL, RO, SK, UK	4: AT, IT, PT, RO	1: IT	18: AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, FI, EL, HU, IT, LV, LT, LU, PL, PT, RO, SK, SE, UK
	Analysis and <b>evaluation</b> of integration measures and processes in general and in the Member State in particular, past and present, in order to increase efficiency	4: MT, NL, SK, SE	12: BG, CY, CZ, EE, FI, EL, IT, LV, LU, PL, PT, ES	2: IT, RO	1: IT	17: BG, CY, CZ, EE, FI, EL, IT, LV, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK, ES, SE
	Development of monitoring and evaluation <b>methodologies and tools</b> , including indicators		13: AT, BG, CY, DE, EE, FI, EL, HU, IT, LU, PL, SK, UK	1: IT	1: SK	13: AT, BG, CY, DE, EE, FI, EL, HU, IT, LU, PL, SK, UK
	<b>Coordination</b> of services and policies and exchanges between the different actors within the Member State	3: EL, IT, PT	6: LV, LT, PT, RO, SK, ES	11: AT, BG, CY, DE, EL, HU, LT, LU, PL, PT, ES	6: HU, LV, LU, NL, SK, ES	16: AT, BG, CY, DE, EL, HU, IT, LV, LT, LU, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK, ES
	Coordination and <b>cooperation</b> between Member States		1: LT	2: LT, SK	11: AT, CY, CZ, EE, EL, HU, IT, LU, MT, NL, SE	13: AT, CY, CZ, EE, EL, HU, IT, LT, LU, MT, NL, SK, SE
	Involvement of the <b>media</b>	5: CZ, EL, HU, LT, SK		1: CY		6: CY, CZ, EL, HU, LT, SK
Receiving society	Improve tolerance, awareness-raising and <b>intercultural dialogue</b>	12: AT, CZ, DE, EE, EL, HU, IT, LT, LU, MT, PT, SK	2: BG, PT	6: AT, BG, CY, DE, LU, MT	1: MT	14: AT, BG, CY, CZ, DE, EE, EL, HU, IT, LT, LU, MT, PT, SK

The main area where projects were funded under **Priority 1** ('Actions designed to put the 'Common Basic Principles for immigrant integration policy in the European Union' into practice'), related to the **provision of general and practical information and civic orientation** to third-country nationals, which was implemented in most Member States. Projects included:

- the dissemination of information material on paper, in electronic form (web portals, etc.) or through e-learning;
- orientation through introductory training courses, workshops, seminars, etc.;
- the development of networks of information centres or reception services;
- the organisation of study visits for third-country nationals, to State institutions, historical sites, museums;
- mentoring or coaching by the local population, with a view to guiding third-country nationals through their integration in the receiving society.

Second came the area of **language training**, either as training courses and other learning material for third-country nationals, including e-learning, or as the development of specific language teaching techniques adapted to third-country nationals.

**The promotion of the 'two-way approach to integration'** was funded through a large range of activities, often of an innovative nature, such as festivals, art contests and exhibitions, the introduction of third-country nationals' parents to schools or summer camps for both third-country national children and locals. Projects to **improve tolerance, raise awareness and promote intercultural dialogue** involved such activities as sports and cultural events, a TV series intended for the receiving society, etc.

**Preliminary actions to facilitate access to the labour market and participation in economic life** included access to education other than language or vocational training, or the provision of skill assessment and re-training courses.

**Adaptation of public and private services to a multicultural society**, through awareness-raising and capacity building, involved the organisation of specific training sessions, workshops and seminars and the dissemination of information material.

**Operations specific to vulnerable groups** focused on women and children. Projects provided special support upon leaving reception centres, arranged for housing, supplied first-level assistance with jobseeking, helped with access to health and social services etc.

## Examples of projects under Priority 1

*Greece, in cooperation with the IOM, set up a **pre-departure education and information programme in Moldova**, targeted at candidate migrants. For four months, the programme offered formal and informal information on the language, institutions and values of Greek society, Practical information on migrants' rights and obligations and the necessary procedures to legally enter and stay in the Greek territory, and vocational guidance in order to obtain a better match between the third-country nationals' skills and the actual demand on the Greek labour market.*

*The project targeted a group that is usually difficult to reach. It is also expected to have a positive impact on migration by facilitating regular — and therefore discouraging irregular migration to Greece.*

*In Italy, a project carried out by the Venice municipality focused on **language and civic training targeted at vulnerable categories** such as illiterate third-country nationals, women and newly arrived youngsters. The project provided the participants with flexible and tailored activities, as well as innovative training techniques and support (intercultural mediation and babysitting, use of new technologies etc). A network of public and private partners made it possible to constantly monitor the activities against planning. The closing event of the project was a convention during which the participants were given their certificates of attendance related to the various project's activities.*

*In Portugal, a project developed **intercultural mediation in public services** through a partnership involving public services, mediators and higher education. It is now possible to see preliminary results: training initiatives, integration of mediators in institutions and the practice of intercultural mediation. Mediation offered by public services will be maintained and consolidated. A level III profile in the Catalogue of National Qualifications and a training reference system will emerge, and they could be adopted at a higher level by universities.*

*In a project run in the **Czech Republic, third-country nationals' families are paired with local families** residing in the same region. The project covers the whole territory. This may be seen as a complementary operation to the establishment of integration centres in every region of the country; putting families in pairs, so that locals can help third-country nationals, fills the gap between the needs of third-country nationals and the services that the integration system in the Czech Republic is progressively able to provide. The project is backed by an extensive media campaign.*

*Hungary supported a project aimed at **raising the awareness of people in Budapest** of the presence of migrant communities living in the capital and of their contribution to multiculturalism in Budapest. Four festivals were organised in a popular cultural institution situated in the heart of Budapest. Each festival showed a wide range of cultural aspects (such as handicraft, music, dance, films, photo exhibitions) from different groups of third-country nationals. The events were backed by a number of communication activities. The project was successful in raising awareness among residents of Budapest of the presence of third-country nationals in the city and in promoting intercultural dialogue.*

Projects under **Priority 2** ‘Development of indicators and evaluation methodologies to assess progress, adjust policies and measures and to facilitate coordination of comparative learning’ funded **research activities** on the situation of third-country nationals in Member States and on the attitude of society towards third-country nationals, in order to adapt integration measures to needs. They included data collection on third-country nationals in the Member State, qualitative research such as discussion groups with representatives of NGOs and of the educational system, interviews with third-country nationals and experts. More specific studies were also funded, for example on the integration of third-country national children in the educational system.

In addition to the above, **analyses and evaluations of integration policies and measures** were supported, including analysis of the legal framework and administrative practices, developing indicators or evaluation methodologies, coordination of services and players to share information, statistical data and news on integration.

#### **Examples of projects under Priority 2**

*In Poland, a research project surveyed **discrimination against third-country nationals**, mainly through advocacy activities and information campaigns targeted at decision-makers. The project took account of a recent and important survey on the situation of third-country nationals in Poland — in particular with regard to employment. Activities included: a sociological survey involving 360 third-country nationals and 30 officials and experts on the issues of integration and discrimination against foreigners in Poland; an analysis of the social and legal aspects of discrimination, encompassing 30 legal acts; a survey of the willingness of employers to hire different categories of third-country nationals, publication and distribution of two essays on issues in this area with recommendations addressed to decision-makers and to third-country nationals in Poland; and seminars to promote the results.*

*In Lithuania, a feasibility study was carried out on **third-country nationals' access to the labour market**, to improve knowledge about their needs. Now that the most important problems and difficulties third-country nationals are facing have been identified, the project's results are being used extensively by many social groups and by Lithuanian institutions.*

*In Slovakia, a study project focused on **the integration of migrant children into the educational system at elementary school**. Beyond the assessment of needs, challenges and constraints, it generated teaching modules and materials relevant to migrant children, something which did not exist previously.*

*In France a large-scale statistical survey investigated, for the first time, **the integration process of several thousand third-country nationals over several years**, i.e. in the few months following arrival, one year later and three years on. Questions address the situation prior to and the administrative process after arrival and, later on, the acquisition of language skills, access to employment, housing and further on, access to education, health services, social life etc. The survey should provide decision-makers and integration services with an in-depth knowledge of the integration process and suggest ways of improving integration policy.*

Under **Priority 3** ('Policy capacity building, coordination and intercultural competence building in the Member States across the different levels and departments of government'), Member States funded operations regarding the **adaptation of public and private services** to a multicultural society by way of training, capacity-building and awareness raising, in particular for staff of governmental or non-governmental bodies and other people in contact with third-country nationals. This included training courses and seminars for public and private institutions to raise awareness and tolerance of diversity, the coordination of services and policies within the Member States, dissemination of handbooks, setting up partnerships with local authorities etc.

### **Examples of projects under Priority 3**

*In Austria, a project based on an **Integration and Monitoring Centre** collects data on migration and integration. The Centre has set up a website and a specialised library and produces a quarterly newsletter. It provides integration stakeholders with data and tools for integration purposes, information on integration projects and also supports networking. The monitoring aspect will make it possible to gauge the effects of integration activities and will, in the long term, feed into the social and political debate on integration matters.*

*In Cyprus, seminars were specifically organised for teachers, including special **training seminars on intercultural education and the teaching of Greek as a second or foreign language**. The purpose was to make teachers better at dealing with integration problems. In particular, the seminars provided teachers with the necessary knowledge and information on new teaching methods and best practices to be used in teaching third-country nationals. The teachers were enthusiastic about these seminars, as they considered them to be very useful in understanding the viewpoint of third-country nationals' children and gave them essential information and practices on handling this target group.*

*A project in Finland was geared to **raising awareness among authorities** in a regional area about nationals of the Thai community, one which is in an especially vulnerable position as it easily falls outside the scope of official measures. The project highlighted problems from the third-country national's point of view and generated cooperation networks, as well as mutual awareness and knowledge. A lot of information has been gathered about the target group, and this can be utilised in the planning of public services and in organising cooperation with the third sector. The project results are used for training the Police Force and for the design and implementation of municipal integration policy and measures. They can also be used in relation to other target groups.*

Finally, under **Priority 4** ('Exchange of experiences, good practices and information on integration between the Member States'), projects were concerned not only with the coordination and cooperation of public authorities between Member States, but also supported non-governmental organisations of Member States exchanging information and practices.

#### **Examples of projects under Priority 4**

*Estonia's administration organised study visits to and seminars with other Member States, to share information and exchange experience and good practices on the integration of third-country nationals. In Italy, the Ministry of the Interior started a cooperation project with other Member States' administrations on various integration issues. Among the topics covered are: integration statistics; good practices in dealing with vulnerable groups; a Convention on Integration; comparative analysis of the Italian and other Member States' law on citizenship.*

*Several Member States (Austria, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, the Slovak Republic, Spain and Sweden) funded seminars, conferences, networks and study visits proposed by governmental and non-governmental to exchange experience and good practices with organisations from other Member States.*

*Luxembourg funded several projects involving cooperation with organisations from the neighbouring Member States: Belgium, France and Germany. One of the projects started by collecting exhaustive information on third-country nationals' organisations in these Member States. This led to cooperation between them on various integration topics. In another project, a Luxembourg-based organisation built upon the expertise of a French organisation to set up, and improve, intercultural interpretation services (interpreters trained in the cultural values of third-country nationals of different origins).*

#### **7.4. Assessment of implementation and preliminary results**

The majority of Member States encountered implementation problems for the two first annual programmes, 2007 and 2008: either delays, or difficulties in implementing the programmes fully. The delay in approving the programmes (a not unusual situation at the start of any new EU financial instrument) was the most frequent reason, as it was often a prerequisite for launching calls for proposals, or for funding selected projects. Other frequent reasons were the need to finalise organisational and administrative arrangements within the Member State before the programmes could actually be implemented; lack of experience amongst Responsible Authorities and beneficiaries; the need to organise more than one call for proposals where eligible projects were not sufficient to make full use of the Fund's allocation; and, importantly, the difficulty for implementing organisations in securing matched funding in a very difficult economic context. In a bid to catch up, a number of Member States initiated the 2007 and 2008 annual programmes simultaneously, for example by launching calls for proposals covering the two together. Nevertheless, implementation was rushed. This resulted in a tight timeframe for implementing organisations and an administrative burden for Responsible Authorities, and it prevented some Member States from reshaping their annual programmes if their calls for proposals were unsuccessful.

However, the situation improved markedly with the 2009 annual programme, where only nine Member States reported implementation delays.

In spite of these problems, the majority of Member States still expect to complete the planned actions and meet the objectives set out in the annual programmes. At this stage, the



assessment in Member States is based on the types and number of projects funded, judged against the indicative targets set in the programmes for each Action, and on the actual outputs available at the time of reporting to the Commission. Detailed information on the results and impacts will be available in the ex-post evaluation in 2012.

In fifteen Member States (Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain and the United Kingdom), both annual programmes 2007 and 2008 have, by and large, been fully implemented (in some cases following revision by the Commission). In Belgium, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Luxembourg and Slovenia only the 2008 programme has been fully implemented, while in Bulgaria only the 2007 annual programme was fully implemented. In 19 Member States, (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and the United Kingdom), the projects' targeted results have been or will probably be achieved upon completion. Two Member States (the Czech Republic and Luxembourg) specified that only the 2008 programme was expected to achieve its expected results.

Generally speaking, the Fund enabled several Member States (e.g. Hungary, Slovakia) to design, for the first time, a **comprehensive policy framework** for the integration of third-country nationals, encompassing all of the Common Basic Principles. In other Member States, such as Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia or Greece, where a national framework for integration was already in place, **the Fund provided financial resources for its implementation**. Finally, in more experienced Member States, the Fund, which often complements existing funding resources, has **targeted specific measures or specific groups not normally within the scope of mainstream funding instruments**. In this context, it brought about substantial effects in such areas as language skills, promoting meaningful contact and constructive dialogue between third-country nationals and the receiving society, and tackling third-country nationals' health problems.

#### **7.5. Member States' overall assessments and suggestions for improvements**

In all Member States (except the Netherlands and Poland), the **programme priorities and the actions set in the programmes were considered relevant to national needs and objectives in the field of integration**. In some of the new Member States (e.g. Bulgaria, Cyprus and the Czech Republic), the programmes have been particularly relevant as the number of migrants from third-countries has increased recently. In a few Member States, some actions had to be modified due to the economic crisis (Romania, Spain) or due to changed migrations flows (United Kingdom); nevertheless, overall the priorities and actions continued to be relevant.

In the Netherlands, the Fund's allocation represented a relatively small proportion of the national budget for integration and was not seen as adding real value to national strategies. In Poland, it was observed during implementation that a wider range of actions would have been more effective in supporting national strategies; the original measures had to be reshaped and merged in order to address domestic needs better.

Although seven Member States (Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Malta, the Netherlands and Sweden) were not yet in a position to evaluate whether their respective programmes had met their targets, all the 19 other Member States judged **the programmes to be effective**: projects were successfully implemented and to a large extent the results were consistent with their objectives.

**Opinions on efficiency were mixed.** While most Member States were satisfied that projects had achieved their objectives at a reasonable cost, a requirement for selection, it was felt that **administration costs were high and the management of projects required more personnel and financial resources than expected.**

**Complementarity** between the Fund and other EU financial instruments was achieved through the procedures set out at the beginning of the programmes, albeit **with some difficulties**, the most significant being the need to avoid **overlap with the European Refugee Fund's target group.**

Finally, in nearly all Member States, the Fund was perceived as having a **genuine added value.** It yielded results in the area of integration that could not have been obtained through existing national programmes, policies, budgets and other EU financial instruments. These results included placing projects in the framework of a consistent, specific strategy and policy; complementing, and coordinating with, other Funds, both national and EU instruments, and adding new, important integration aspects to existing programmes; strengthening activities pursued by NGOs and local authorities; and promoting dialogue and exchange of ideas among stakeholders involved in the integration process.

Whereas the range of eligible actions was considered appropriate, **Member States' recommendations focused on simplifying the existing system**, which, in several respects, was considered too complex:

- **The administrative workload associated with annual programmes should be reduced**, by replacing the current system — of a multiannual programme followed by annual programmes — by just one multiannual programme. More flexibility should also be provided during programme implementation, without the need for a revision by the Commission. The eligibility period of annual programmes, if they are continued, could be extended. Reporting requirements should be reduced.

- **Eligibility rules for expenditure should be clarified, simplified and made more flexible** in order to improve effectiveness and reduce the administrative burden, with the option of **letting Member States define and apply their own eligibility rules.**

- **The Fund's scope should be extended** to people belonging to the European Refugee Fund's target group.

- **The EU co-financing rate should be raised to up to 75% for any project** and the percentage of the **EU contribution paid as first pre-financing should increase** in order to give more support to projects at launch time and to facilitate programme implementation. The second pre-financing could then be removed. **The budget for Technical Assistance should also increase** to meet actual administrative costs.

- The Commission could **do more to support implementation in the Member States**, in particular **by increasing knowledge sharing and promoting cooperation between Member States, making available quickly any information of use to all Member States**, etc. In addition to information supplied in the SOLID committee, online databases or a specialised website with all documentation would be useful. Finally, in future, **the legal framework should be finalised before the programming period starts, and the programmes should be approved as early as possible.**

## 8. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following assessment can be made in the light of the Fund's implementation during the three first years of the 2007-2013 multiannual programmes:

- Once the **implementation problems for the 2007 and 2008 annual programmes were cleared up**, the majority of Member States have been able to catch up and have implemented annual programmes from 2009 with no major delays. This does not exclude some residual difficulties, which the Commission is looking into with the Member States concerned. Projects completed so far generally meet their planned targets and, at least from the 2009 annual programme, most Member States expect to achieve the programmes' objectives.
- **The Fund has gained acceptance in most Member States**, and among project implementing organisations especially. This is evidenced, in particular, by the very high response rate to calls for proposals from the 2009 annual programme and the range of organisations involved in the Member States.
- The Fund has **filled a gap**; it is perceived in most Member States as bringing genuine value added, whether Member States had previous experience with the integration of third-country nationals or not.
- On the other hand, the **Fund's programming and implementation framework seems to be too complex** given the types of actions funded, the beneficiary organisations involved and the high number of projects.

In order to meet Member States' concerns, the Commission undertook in 2011 a significant revision of the implementing rules for all four Funds in the General Programme. The largest part consists of a **substantial simplification of the eligibility rules**, with the new rules applicable from the implementation of the 2011 annual programmes (at the latest) and, subject to full compliance with the principles of equal treatment, transparency and non-discrimination, even to projects funded under the 2009 and 2010 annual programmes.<sup>15</sup> Member States have welcomed the revision. Further suggestions for improvement from the Member States will be considered in the context of the proposals which the Commission will make this year on the future financial instruments in the area of Home Affairs, as part of the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework applicable from 2014.

**In the two remaining years of the current programming period**, the Fund's budget appropriations are expected to increase hugely, to reach €162.5 m for 2012 and €182.5 m for 2013 (that is, in total for the two years, 42% of the Fund's allocation for the whole period 2007-2013), compared to € 131.5 m in 2011 and € 110.5 m in 2010.<sup>16</sup> Against this background, the Commission intends to discuss with Member States **the best possible use** of the resources available, in the light of policy and implementation needs in the coming years. In the Commission's view, there are **four main areas** which would merit further action and focus:

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<sup>15</sup> The revision of the Implementing Rules of the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals was approved by Commission Decision C(2011) 1289 of 3.3.2011.

<sup>16</sup> Figures include annual programmes and Community actions.

- **Boosting the active participation of third-country nationals and the receiving society in the integration process, in the context of the ‘two-way process’:** promoting comprehensive integration programmes, and third-country nationals’ involvement in relevant consultative bodies and networks; enhancing third-country nationals’ participation in collective life; enhancing the public’s perception of migration, including knowledge of the contribution made by migration to the receiving society itself etc.

- **Increasing the effectiveness of integration measures which address the specific needs of vulnerable groups** (women, young people and children, unaccompanied minors with a legal status, the elderly, victims of trafficking etc.): enhancing educational opportunities for children; promoting women’s role in integration, fostering their autonomy in society and improving their knowledge of rights and their participation in public life; promoting integration of unaccompanied minors who have been granted a legal status etc.

- **Fostering integration at local level and a bottom-up approach to integration, as well as multilevel cooperation between the different levels of governance involved in devising integration strategies and measures:** supporting integration processes at local level, including partnerships involving all stakeholders concerned; improving local integration of third-country nationals in housing, schools, social assistance, health, education; supporting inclusive neighbourhoods and bottom-up initiatives for local integration etc.

- **Developing, in countries of origin, pre-departure measures supportive of integration,** without making third-country nationals’ admission conditional on participation: information on, for example, visas and work permits, and on the language, institutions and values of the receiving country; vocational training to match skills with the actual needs of the receiving country’s labour market etc.

The Commission will examine with Member States how the aforementioned priority areas could be given more support in the remaining annual programmes, starting with the 2012 annual programmes, which Member States have to submit by 1 November 2011.

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