

Second edition

# Handbook on Integration for policy-makers and practitioners

Directorate-General  
Justice, Freedom and Security



European Commission



# Handbook on Integration for policy-makers and practitioners

Second edition, May 2007



This Handbook has been written by Jan Niessen and Yongmi Schibel of MPG on behalf of the European Commission (Directorate General for Justice, Freedom and Security)

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## Preface

I believe that this Handbook will be a source of inspiration and new ideas for all grappling with the challenges and opportunities that immigration brings. The first Handbook on Integration was received with great interest by practitioners and policy-makers alike when it was launched in November 2004. The first edition was distributed throughout the EU and the feedback to the Commission confirmed that it was meeting a real need for sharing information and good practice at national, regional and local level. It became one of the key components of the common European framework for integration, which was based on the Common Basic Principles on Integration agreed by the Justice and Home Affairs Council, also in November 2004.

This second edition of the Handbook, produced in collaboration with the network of National Contact Points on Integration, deals with housing and economic integration, both of which are vital if immigrants are to feel welcome and to be able to use their skills and knowledge to contribute to economic growth and development in the EU. This Handbook also examines the role of mainstreaming in the delivery of integration policies. Fostering dialogue and participation can help migrants and Europe's citizens to get to know one another better, thereby breaking down harmful "barriers of distrust". Therefore, we must successfully co-ordinate the structures and mechanisms used by the many different stakeholders involved in integration, especially at local level. We have the financial backing for integration: after consultation of the European Parliament, the Council has approved my proposal for a substantial and specific Integration Fund (825 million euros for 2007-2013).

The importance of local stakeholders, in particular in cities, cannot be overstated. The local level is currently undergoing further radical changes: Europe's cities are growing, and their populations are becoming ever more diverse, as people from all over the world come to take up jobs, which our ageing population and workforce cannot fill. City governments are closest to the citizens and best placed to provide faster and more effective policy responses through subsidiarity. This is why I launched a new initiative on "Integrating Cities" in October 2006, with a conference, hosted by the Mayor of Rotterdam, which started a review of European policies and local practice. It has long been the position of the Commission that providing third-country nationals with every opportunity to participate in society fosters the integration process.

Integration can be complex for host countries and for those currently immigrating into Europe. Sharing ideas and successful solutions is therefore vital. As a key part of the European framework, I hope that this Handbook, like its predecessor, will help us to find the solutions needed to secure social cohesion and active participation in society by every single member.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Franco Frattini".

Franco Frattini  
Vice-President  
European Commission

Brussels, May 2007



## Introduction

The Handbook on Integration contains good practices and 'lessons learned' drawn from the experience of policy-makers and practitioners across Europe. By collecting and presenting concrete examples from different areas of immigrant integration, the handbook feeds into a larger policy process in the field of integration in the European Union (EU), notably the development of the European framework on integration.

*The handbook exercise: stakeholder cooperation and exchange*

The handbook is prepared by the Migration Policy Group (MPG) as an independent consultant to the European Commission, in close cooperation with the National Contact Points on Integration and on the basis of the outcomes of technical seminars hosted by ministries responsible for integration in different Member States.

The seminar agendas are formulated by the hosting Member State in cooperation with the consultant and the European Commission. The National Contact Points can suggest appropriate speakers and examples of good practice to be presented in the workshops. They also select up to three participants per Member State according to the topic under discussion. The variety of stakeholders represented at these seminars is considerable, including governmental actors from the local, regional and national levels; social partners; service providers; immigrant associations and support groups; advocacy groups; and others.

The seminar participants can be considered the 'authors' of the handbook, since the knowledge and examples presented in the chapters are largely based on their (written and oral) presentations and discussions. The European Commission, the National Contact Points on Integration and MPG can be seen as 'editors', preparing a conceptual framework for the seminars, taking stock of the information gathered at each seminar, selecting practices, and supplementing them with additional research. The building blocks for the handbook chapters are the Issue Papers, which define the topic and set out discussion questions before each seminar, and the Concluding Documents, which present preliminary recommendations as well as initial ideas for examples of best practice.

The first edition of the handbook contained chapters on the introduction of newly arrived immigrants and refugees, civic participation, and indicators for measuring integration. It was presented at the Ministerial Conference on Integration held in Groningen on 9-11 November 2004 under the Dutch Presidency. It was based on a series of technical seminars held in Copenhagen (February 2004), Lisbon (April 2004) and London (June 2004).

As in the first handbook, the second edition includes a mixture of 'methodological' and 'substantive' topics: chapters on mainstreaming and on integration infrastructure examine

the structures and mechanisms used for implementing successful integration strategies across all policy fields, whereas chapters on housing and on economic integration present practices and lessons learned in these specific areas. The second edition is based on a series of technical seminars hosted by ministries responsible for integration in five different Member States, taking the handbook exercise from Tallinn (May 2005) to Rome (July 2005), Dublin (October 2005), Berlin (December 2005) and Madrid (April 2006). Seminar participants came from the 25 Member States, as well as Norway and Switzerland.

### *The policy context: the emerging European framework on integration*

The second edition of the Handbook on Integration provides a critical input to a core element of the European framework on integration, namely the implementation of the Common Basic Principles (CBPs). The CBPs aim to assist Member States in formulating integration policies and to serve as a reference for the implementation and evaluation of current and future integration policies. The eleven principles are further developed in the Commission Communication on 'A Common Agenda for Integration', which makes proposals for concrete measures to put the CBPs into practice. The Communication suggests actions to be implemented at EU and national level, taking into account existing EU policy frameworks.

Along with the transposition and implementation of the relevant instruments of Community law, the continuous strengthening of instruments for cooperation and exchange of information is at the heart of the developing European framework on integration. In this context, the Justice and Home Affairs Council of 1-2 December 2005 'invite[d] the Network of National Contact Points on Integration, supported by the Commission, to continue developing the 'Handbook on integration for policy-makers and practitioners'. In order to utilise fully the successful exchange of experience and best practice, the Council call[ed] for a wide and accessible dissemination of this Handbook, adapted to the intended audience.' (p. 37). For this reason a decision was taken to translate the handbook into the Union's official languages.

### *Practical debates at technical seminars*

A thriving Europe needs active citizens, living together in integrated societies. As immigrants continue to arrive and settle in European countries, they form a part of these societies and shape their futures through a variety of social and economic contributions.

Immigrant integration unfolds across a range of complicating factors. Member States have different governance structures, welfare systems, and state-civil society relations, as well as diverse migration histories. Immigrant populations vary not only from country to country, but also locally. Moreover, European societies themselves are in a process of



transformation. Family life, education, voluntary work, political parties, trade unions, organised religion, social dialogue, and other mechanisms and institutions are changing shape under the influence of rapid socio-economic change. Rather than integrating into static societies, immigrants and refugees in Europe engage with the fluid societal arrangements that surround them.

Integration is not easy to plan: it is a long-term process, and it is non-linear. An international political event or a criminal act can set back the integration process significantly. Integration is also multi-faceted, demanding a capacity for adaptation from a wide variety of actors including immigrants themselves. European societies need to become 'learning societies', familiarising themselves with new types of interaction and communication and with new and diverse groups of people, including immigrants and refugees.

What does integration mean? The question might be expected to trigger familiar debates about assimilation or multiculturalism, but participants at the technical seminars preparing the handbook hardly used these terms. As policy-makers and practitioners working with immigrant integration on a day-to-day basis they took a rather more practical approach, focusing on outcomes in terms of social and economic mobility, education, health, housing, social services, and societal participation.

Two processes are critical to improving immigrants' outcomes: the elimination of inequalities, and the acquisition of competences. These challenges are at the heart of integration policies in Europe.

Confronting inequalities in economic life, education, and other areas is a task for all governmental and non-governmental actors, although those shaping the legislative framework have a special responsibility. Elements of 'civic citizenship' such as security of residence, support for family life, facilitated naturalisation and anti-discrimination are of central importance, as are concepts associated with the term social citizenship: participation, social mobility and customised services. These concepts can be put into practice through standard-setting at national and European levels, codes of conduct concerning administrative practices, and the removal of unnecessary legal barriers.

Acquisition of competences, the second challenge, is directed at the overall population including immigrants and calls upon each individual to engage in a process of lifelong learning. Language acquisition is part of the undertaking, as is continuous training and education. Over time, individuals not only gain new information but also develop the capacity to learn: 'learning to learn'. Empowerment also reinforces knowledge, and vice versa.

Individuals are not alone in benefiting from increased competences. Organisations also help themselves and the integration process by acquiring intercultural knowledge, be

they small or big, professional or voluntary, mainstream or immigrant-led. By constantly adapting to their environment and its changing patterns of diversity, they become 'learning organisations' that strengthen social cohesion in the societies of which they are a part.

What is loosely called 'integration' thus encompasses Justice and Home Affairs aspects linked to the legal framework of admission and residence, naturalisation and anti-discrimination, as well as aspects that are more closely related to the policy fields of social affairs, labour market, education or culture. This variety is reproduced at each level of government, with different Commission Directorates-General, ministries, and municipal departments all involved in integration activities. It also extends to non-governmental actors of different kinds. It requires coordination between ministries and various levels of governance as well as between governmental and non-governmental actors.

Addressing inequalities, adapting services to a diverse client base, and modifying organisational practices can generate tensions. Immigrant and non-immigrant residents may find that they have competing interests, and that there are losers as well as winners in the integration process among various immigrant groups and the native population. Societies dealing with diversity need to live with this potential for conflict and learn to resolve differences through mediation and negotiation. The commitment to engage in such exchanges can be fostered through personal interaction and contact. Open channels of communication are the foundation for sustained dialogue and cooperation.

#### *Contents of the second edition of the Handbook*

The Handbook has in addition to this introduction four chapters. They are preceded by a general overview of steps to be taken that make the exchange of practises a meaningful exercise from which useful lessons can be learned. The annex is based on practices of learning organisations as well as on the developing European exchanges of integration practices.

Chapter 1 on mainstreaming looks at how immigrant integration is becoming an integral part of policy-making and implementation, service delivery and organisational culture across a wide range of fields. It illustrates how governmental and non-governmental actors are engaged in the mainstreaming of immigrant integration and suggests tools that can help them to adjust policies and practices to the changing realities of a diverse society.

Chapter 2 on housing in an urban environment describes practices that aim to broaden the housing choices of immigrants by lowering barriers to access and improving housing quality. While such measures are mostly small-scale and targeted, they are implemented against the backdrop of broader urban policies and structures. Cities are pioneers in the



development of measures relating to urban regeneration, mixed ownership and tenancy, inclusive institutions and services, and communication and participation. This chapter gives examples of practices in these areas.

Chapter 3 on economic integration discusses immigrants' economic integration, encompassing both employment and self-employment. It explores how immigration policies can match supply and demand on the labour market thus facilitating immigrant integration. It then deals with the assessment and acquisition of skills throughout the labour market career of immigrants, making reference to formal qualifications, other occupational or language skills, and knowledge of working life and the job search process. The chapter also explores how anti-discrimination and diversity strategies can promote equality in the workplace, encourage job retention and promotion and create a climate in which diversity is valued. Lastly, the chapter describes ways of supporting ethnic entrepreneurs through advice, facilitated access to financial services, or involvement in supplier networks.

Chapter 4 on integration governance looks at the structures, mechanisms, processes and forms of collaboration that make up the framework for integration policies and practices. It shows how the different actors involved in immigrant integration can jointly define relationships that capitalise on each stakeholder's strengths and assets. The chapter describes ways of coordinating integration activities at the local level. It then looks at evaluation as a key aspect of good policy and programme design. Lastly, it addresses the management of resources and considers the roles of various public and private actors in funding integration policies and practices.

The examples and lessons learned presented in this chapter relate closely to those of Chapter 1. They offer additional perspectives on some of the questions raised in the mainstreaming context: what is the right balance between leadership and ownership, coordination and flexibility? What funding models are successful in responding to real needs and opportunities? How can one learn from positive and negative experiences and adjust policies accordingly?

Annex I makes suggestions for the translation of the outcomes of integration programmes and projects into policy recommendations. This would make policies more praxis-based, which in turn enhances the sustainability of integration practices and increases support for integration policies.

Annex II provides a contact list of the National Contact Points.



## Exchanging and learning from good practices

Organisations can learn from each other, whether they are governmental or non-governmental agencies, working at the same or different governance level, when they design and implement policies or when they carry out concrete programmes and projects.

The process includes the following steps:

- Describe in some detail the policy areas and integration programmes on which the exchange will take place and what the expected outcomes are;
- Decide whether the aim is to replicate practices of the partner organisation, to adapt its practices to their own situation, or to change and develop new practices together with the partner;
- Identify one or more potential partners and negotiate and agree on principles governing the exchange process (for example, by adhering to the European Benchmarking Code of Conduct of the European Foundation for Quality Management);
- Allocate human and other resources to the exercise, create commitment among the organisation's staff and demonstrate this commitment to partner(s);
- Decide on a programme and timeframe, designate staff, agree on an internal and external communication strategy, bring own staff and that of the partners together and build an exchange team based on competence and trust;
- Identify data sources and agree on how information will be generated, handled (especially where it concerns confidential data) and exchanged. Determine and bridge or deal with data gaps;
- Engage in in-depth exchanges through site visits, preparing general background material on integration policies, giving detailed presentations on programme implementation and formulating learning points;
- Establish to what extent situational differences influence not only expectations of outcomes of policies and practices, but also their actual impact. Develop common criteria to measure effectiveness and efficiency;
- Compare policies and practices and formulate strengths and weaknesses. Highlight critical success factors and identify hurdles. Establish lessons learned and make recommendations on how to apply them;
- Evaluate the exercise, share the outcomes with stakeholders and adapt policies and practices accordingly.



# Chapter 1

## Mainstreaming immigrant integration



**This chapter looks at how immigrant integration is becoming an integral part of policy-making and implementation, service delivery and organisational culture across a wide range of fields. It illustrates how governmental and non-governmental actors are engaged in the mainstreaming of immigrant integration and suggests tools that can help them adjust policies and practices to the changing realities of a diverse society.**

The term 'mainstreaming' originated in the gender field and is not as yet applied in integration policy across Europe. However, it usefully groups together a number of points that have been part of the integration debate for some time:

- An immigrant integration perspective should be incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy making;
- Organisations addressing the needs of society as a whole should ensure equal access to their programmes and services for all members of an increasingly diverse population;
- Sometimes general measures can be adapted to meet immigrant needs. Sometimes targeted measures are necessary on a temporary or permanent basis. Organisations can learn how to balance these types of measures, ideally in consultation with stakeholders including immigrants.



Gender mainstreaming has been defined in a number of documents, such as the 1998 Council of Europe publication *Gender mainstreaming: conceptual framework, methodology and presentation of good practices: final report of the Group of Specialists on Mainstreaming*.

The goal of 'mainstreaming immigrant integration' is formulated in Common Basic Principle Nr. 10, which affirms that 'mainstreaming integration policies and measures in all relevant policy portfolios and levels of government and public services is an important consideration in public-policy formation and implementation'. A complementary principle is CBP Nr. 6, which states that 'access for immigrants to institutions, as well as to public and private goods and services, on a basis equal to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way is a critical foundation for better integration'.

Mainstreaming implies adjusting policies that have a different impact on people, in such a way that inequalities and underrepresentation are addressed. In other words, it is an instrument to promote equality. As the 2005 Commission Communication on 'A Common Agenda for Integration' notes, the promotion of fundamental rights, non discrimination and equal opportunities for all is a key integration issue.



EU legislation provides a framework for robust national anti-discrimination laws. It prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, instruction to discrimination and harassment, but allows positive action. Relevant initiatives are developed at all levels of government and supported by programmes such as the European Action Programme against Discrimination. Good mainstreaming practices build on anti-discrimination law but also illustrate how less legal mechanisms such as mediation and complaints procedures can be used for identifying problems and providing redress in individual cases.

Policy-makers, service providers and non-governmental organisations active in a wide range of fields need to look critically at their own activities. To what extent do programmes recognise, respond to, and plan for immigrants' particular needs and circumstances? Can processes and structures be adapted to improve accessibility to immigrants on the basis of equality?



General programmes can promote immigrant integration as an integral part of activities that are geared towards society as a whole. At the same time, there are specific needs that will demand additional and targeted measures. This chapter explores the dynamics of mainstreaming as a constant navigation between generalised and targeted measures. Ideally, they are complementary and work together in creating an environment that facilitates access and participation by immigrants. Actors in different sectors of society can look at the numbers of people affected, at the timing, and at their own capacity to decide when to apply which type of measure. These criteria are further explored below.

## 1.1 Government

The challenge for government is to introduce a concern for immigrant integration into the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies across all relevant portfolios. Such a task depends crucially on political commitment and leadership from the top. At the same time it depends on ownership by those actors that need to change to take on board immigrant integration.

At the national level, leadership can come from a designated ministry or a strong specialised agency. For instance, Spain has a Secretary of State for Immigration and Emigration within the Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs; the Netherlands has a Minister for Immigration and Integration within the Ministry of Justice; Denmark has a Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs; and Portugal has a High Commissioner for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities. At the local level, a designated mainstreaming unit can also be created within the municipal administration.





In the city of Vienna, well over a quarter of the population has an immigrant background. In 2004, the Vienna city council set up a municipal department on Integration and Diversity (MA17). The MA17 supports other municipal departments and divisions in implementing diversity-oriented policies, working e.g. with the district offices to improve front-office services for the diverse population. For instance, the MA17 encourages mutual assistance between district offices to meet demands such as the handling of complex issues, from applications for trade licences to questions regarding pension rights, in migrant languages.

The MA17 team of 48 persons includes 20 staff members working in decentralised offices in seven different parts of Vienna. This proximity reinforces the MA17's knowledge of local communities and associations and of the concrete situation in the different districts of the city. Almost two thirds of MA17 staff have an immigrant background; many of them are first-generation migrants. They come from 14 countries and speak more than 23 languages.



Website: [www.wien.gv.at/integration/](http://www.wien.gv.at/integration/) (in German)

The ministry or unit promoting mainstreaming can use a variety of techniques to engage other parts of government on immigrant integration. By way of example, these techniques are illustrated below with reference to a generic 'Integration Agent' (that is the person or organisation that actually undertakes a particular action).



Experience demonstrates that mainstreaming practices are more effective if they are based on a coherent political message, namely that considering immigrant integration is not a 'luxury' but simply an element of an institution's mandate when its clients, members or stakeholders are becoming increasingly diverse.



Integration focal points: In each individual government department, an administrative unit or a person can be given responsibility for pushing mainstreaming forward. These integration focal points ideally rely on political backing at the highest level and interact regularly with the Integration Agent.



The UK government promotes action on diversity by making each Permanent Secretary personally responsible for ensuring his or her department delivers fully on its diversity commitments (a Permanent Secretary is the most senior civil servant of a British government ministry, charged with running the department on a day-to-day basis). In addition, a number of new specialist posts and roles have been created to help advance the diversity management agenda. For example, various senior civil servants have been given designated roles as Diversity Sponsors and Diversity Champions to lead the diversity work within and across departments.



Review of policy proposals: The Integration Agent can look at proposed policies across all fields and intervene with the relevant departments if proposals raise concerns with regard to immigrant integration. Such reviews can also take place in the framework of an interministerial committee or working group. Denmark, Ireland, Poland and France are examples of Member States with such committees.



In Poland, the Interdepartmental Team for Aliens' Integration was appointed by the Prime Minister in March 2005. Its tasks are to prepare proposals on modification or maintenance of current competences in the field of immigrant social integration, to coordinate interdepartmental cooperation concerning immigrant social integration, to give opinions on legislative projects modifying provisions on immigrant social integration, to cooperate with non-governmental agencies in the field, and to exchange opinions on trends and strategies taken up in the individual departments concerning different groups of immigrants.

The chairman of the team is the Secretary of State in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, who supervises the Department of Social Assistance and Integration. Members are representatives of nine ministries ranging from culture to health and including the Representative of the Governmental Plenipotentiary on the equal status of women and men.



The German federal office for migration in 2005 published the volume 'Integration activities at the federal level – inventory produced in the framework of the interministerial working group on integration'. This compendium lists all activities carried out by the different ministries and agencies at federal level on integration, together with an index.

The activities include broad programmes as well as individual projects, campaigns, events, research projects or publications. They are listed in the form of a table including information on budget lines and amounts, aims, partners, target groups, time frame, regional spread, implementing organisations, evaluations, etc. Contact persons are also listed for each activity.



Reviews of policy proposals can also include formal prospective impact assessments, which seek to anticipate the potential impact of measures on certain groups such as immigrants. For instance, by looking at the spatial distribution and mobility patterns of immigrants an impact assessment can help to determine whether these groups will benefit proportionally from a new investment in public transport. The Integration Agent can use its expertise to advise other departments on how to carry out such assessments, particularly in areas where policies are complex and where consequences may be unintended and difficult to quantify.

'Impact assessments' have been developed by the European Commission as a tool to consider the effects of policy proposals in their economic, social and environmental dimensions. When an impact assessment analyses the effect of policies on a particular field or a particular group one speaks of 'partial impact assessments'.





Examples are equality assessments which measure the impact of legal and other measures in all kinds of policy areas on equality (EQIA's). Other examples are gender and immigrant integration impact assessments that analyse the impact of general policies on the position of women and immigrants, respectively.

☒ Indicators: The Integration Agent can develop indicators on diversity and immigrant integration that involve the competences of different ministries. These indicators can be subject to regular reporting. Rather than engaging in detailed planning, the Integration Agent should set overall targets, offer advice and expertise, and monitor the process. The indicators used to measure progress can therefore be quite general in order to leave the main responsibility and choice of methods to the ministry concerned.

☒ Budgeting: Reporting mechanisms on integration indicators can be tied in with the budgetary cycle, in such a way that further budget allocations become conditional upon satisfactory performance. Parliamentary committees could be given oversight in such a process.

Funding can also be used as an incentive to promote mainstreaming. For instance, additional resources can be allocated to health or education departments for making policies more responsive to immigrant needs. Co-financing arrangements can be helpful in highlighting the shared responsibility for integration, keeping in mind that meeting immigrant needs is part of all departments' core mandates.

☒ The issue of funding criteria illustrates that there is sometimes a fine line between general and targeted measures. For instance, Member State governments use both 'general' (socio-economic) and 'specific' (targeted at immigrants) criteria when it comes to funding support measures in schools.

In the UK, the Excellence in Cities programme grants additional funding to schools in deprived areas using deprivation indicators to assess need. Due to the overlap of ethnic minorities and deprivation in urban areas the Excellence in Cities programme funds 70% of ethnic minority pupils. Another programme, the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant, funds Local Education Authorities according to the number of pupils with English as a second language, the number of ethnic minority children and the number entitled to free school meals (an indicator of deprivation).

In the Netherlands, schools with 'vulnerable' pupils receive additional funding from the Ministry of Education. The measure of 'vulnerability' was recently changed from 'ethnic background' to 'level of education of the parents' because of research indicating that educational performance was affected more by parental level of education than by ethnic background, and also to make special support measures available to Dutch children with weak educational performance.



Overall, spending choices should reflect declared policy priorities and commitments. Chapter 4 on integration governance discusses resource management in more detail.

Raising awareness: Migrant associations and migrant-assisting NGOs have direct experience of inadequate policies and their consequences. They can draw attention to problems in areas such as health care, housing or education, and make suggestions for improvements to the relevant ministries. The Integration Agent can support the advocacy work of such organisations.



The Integration Agent can also commission research that highlights service gaps and makes other departments more aware of immigrant needs. For instance, in Norway the Department of Integration and Diversity commissioned a study on interpreters used in court. The findings showed problems with the interpreters' quality and independence, and the Ministry of Justice took action to improve standards.

Where there is a Parliamentary committee or caucus on immigrant integration, it can contribute to the mainstreaming effort by holding public hearings and enquiries, soliciting evidence from outside experts, and calling upon all departments to spell out their commitment to integration.

In the German city of Stuttgart, the Department for Integration reports directly to the mayor, bringing integration issues to the top of the political agenda. The Department for Integration has a technical monitoring role vis-à-vis the administration's departmental units and the city-owned companies, ensuring that (for instance) job centres actively take into account the diversity of their clients. On the level of departments, the heads of department and deputy mayors are responsible for the implementation and evaluation of integration policy and projects.



The Department for Integration has its own budget and initiates model projects in cooperation with a large number of partners. These model projects emphasise the transfer of intercultural competencies into the regular structures, and good practice is made visible through endorsement by the mayor. This technical monitoring is supplemented by the political monitoring of the city council's International Committee, a consultative committee that includes 13 elected Members of the city parliament and 12 expert residents. The residents are competent in the following fields:

- Language training, education, sports: 3 seats
- Urban development, cohesion, security: 3 seats
- Social affairs, youth, health: 2 seats
- Vocational qualification, employment, economy: 2 seats
- Culture, interreligious dialogue: 2 seats

The International Committee is not primarily a representation of foreign nationalities but rather an expert group looking at all fields of action relevant for integration. Starting in 2005, the administration also submits biannual integration reports to the City Council.





## 1.2 Service providers

Mainstreaming is also about equal access to services in conditions of diversity. Public and private providers recognise diversity by offering services that reflect the existence of new and different needs. These needs are not only of a cultural or linguistic nature: the increasing diversity of the population often goes hand in hand with the emergence of densely populated urban areas whose socio-economic make-up places special demands on public service provision. Needs for childcare or health services will be different in a diverse and densely populated area than in a diverse but less populated area. Services thus need to be tailored to their target population bearing in mind *all* of its characteristics including the presence of immigrants or refugees.

### 1.2.1 Identifying needs and barriers



Service providers use different instruments to determine whether existing services adequately serve all parts of the population. One way of making such an assessment is by looking at the services themselves: are they used in the manner that they were designed for, or are they used inappropriately, suggesting that there are communication gaps or mismatches between needs and offers?



The 'Regional Health Strategy for Ethnic Minorities', developed by the Irish Eastern Region Health Authority in 2003, identified priority issues with regard to ethnic minority clients by looking at evidence on the inappropriate use of health services.

High demand experienced by Accident and Emergency departments suggested that information about the system of referrals, waiting lists, appointments, and processes related to using health services was not accessible to many immigrants. Low uptake of antenatal and postnatal care programmes suggested that the delivery of health promotion programmes and materials was insufficiently adapted to immigrant users. As a result, the Health Strategy called (among other measures) for the development of an interpretation service and the establishment of an outreach maternity clinic.



Website: [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie) (the Eastern Region Health Authority was subsumed into the Health Service Executive in 2005)

Feedback by service users is another way of learning about existing barriers to services. At a minimum, complaints and grievances related to service delivery should be tracked and appropriately addressed. Immigrant and refugee users can also be involved through participation in surveys or research projects, keeping in mind that it will be difficult to reach some persons without an intermediary. Working with migrant associations, engaging community leaders, or training certain members of the community in identifying (e.g.) health needs can be helpful in this respect. At the same time, providers should be aware



that members of an ethnic or cultural group do not necessarily have the same experience of services. Socio-economic class, language ability, legal status and other factors can play an equal or even larger role.

The SEEM project (Services for Elders from Ethnic Minorities, 2003-2006), funded by the European Commission under the Community Action Programme to Combat Social Exclusion, looked at ethnic minority elders' access to services in the fields of health and social care. The project produced a booklet with examples of good practice as well as a checklist for local authorities and service providers.

One of the good practices presented by SEEM is the Leeds Older People's Forum, a grouping of 110 voluntary organisations representing and working with older people. The Forum has appointed a BME (black and minority ethnic) support worker and established a focus group of minority ethnic elders and their organisations. Representatives of the focus group have met, for example, with the Director of Leeds Social Services to discuss the new Social Services Business Plan and changes in home care service delivery. In this way, the focus group empowers the elders and their organisations to contribute to service development, as well as strengthening self-help.

Website: [www.leeds.gov.uk/seem/](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/seem/) Contact: [seem@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:seem@leeds.gov.uk)



The emergence of targeted services, often provided by NGOs and self-help organisations of immigrants or refugees, is one of the clearest indicators of unmet needs.

Targeted services are sensitive to the specific circumstances even of small groups. They respond quickly as needs arise, and they are flexible in the way they are implemented. Once mainstream providers become aware of service gaps, the challenge is to find a good balance between targeted services and general ones. A clear division of roles and tasks can help to avoid service overlaps and lack of coordination.



## 1.2.2 Balancing general and targeted measures

In the light of the constant inflow of information about their target audience, service providers need to make judgments about whether the usual organisational processes, policies, practices and structures can be adjusted or whether additional measures are needed.



In taking these decisions, they can usefully consider the following factors: timing, numbers and capacity.





## Timing

Timing is a key component of a successful mainstreaming strategy. The first period after arrival is typically the time when immigrants and refugees are most likely to require specific programmes. In some Member States, the greater part of the immigrant and refugee population consists of recent arrivals.

Targeted measures such as language courses for newcomers and introduction programmes are likely to play an important role in policy towards immigrants and refugees. However, general services are not unaffected as newcomers will equally use 'mainstream' services such as hospitals. Recent immigration countries can therefore benefit from making an early start with mainstreaming efforts. Specific programmes can successfully address certain problems in the short term but in the longer term such problems can be tackled by general programmes.

## Numbers

Numbers are important in deciding to what extent existing services should be modified. Should an organisation change significantly to accommodate a small group of immigrants or refugees with very specific needs (for instance members of a language group which is very small in the host country or local area)? Maybe targeted measures could be developed instead. These measures could then be fully responsive to the needs of the group, rather than settling for a perhaps unsatisfactory compromise. On the other hand, where a change is of great importance for a large number of migrants, the mainstream provider should make a considerable effort to bring it about.



Various criteria can be used to decide between general or targeted measures in a given situation. Timing is important, as is the number of people affected by a certain measure. In considering these factors, those involved should be guided by a concern for proportionality.



Education is one of the principal areas of integration and has a central function in improving the life chances of immigrant children. Many examples of mainstreaming can be found in the education field, for instance collected in the Eurydice Network's 2004 publication 'Integration of Immigrant Children into Schools in Europe'.

The Eurydice report notes that in the French Community of Belgium, Germany, France, Sweden, and the UK (England) between 5% and 12% of pupils attend schools in which over 40% of the intake consists of immigrant pupils. Many of these schools adapt in terms of school menus, dress codes, swimming and sports classes, religious holidays, and other questions of daily life. Many also employ counsellors and/or home-school liaison officers, and use "intercultural mediators" to develop links between home, school and the community more generally. Schools may offer or facilitate mother tongue teaching, and include diversity in the curriculum by teaching pupils about other cultures and respect



for differences. In Sweden and Finland, immigrant parents also have a statutory right to an interpreter when meeting with the school.

Report: [www.eurydice.org/Documents/Mig/en/FrameSet.htm](http://www.eurydice.org/Documents/Mig/en/FrameSet.htm)



## Capacity

Capacity and competence are key considerations when deciding whether to use more general or more specific measures. They act as quality measures: are the mainstream organisation and its staff capable of accommodating immigrant needs effectively? Do they still need to develop their intercultural competence? Are the time and the budget available to do this, or should targeted measures be used instead?

The project 'Migrant-friendly hospitals', supported by DG Health and Consumer Protection, has developed the 'Migrant Friendly Quality Questionnaire' as an assessment instrument for hospitals.

The questionnaire assesses migrant-friendly structures such as interpreting services, information material for migrant patients, culturally sensitive services (religion, food), as well as components of a (quality) management system to enable and assure the migrant-friendliness of services, e.g. the integration of migrant-friendliness into mission statements, budgeting, and staff development programmes.

Website: [www.mfh-eu.net/public/home.htm](http://www.mfh-eu.net/public/home.htm)



In some cases, targeted assistance can be offered to certain groups while at the same time increasing the intercultural competence of mainstream services.

The Policesol project is an educational training programme devised in partnership by the Cardiff Police Community Safety Department and the Cardiff County Council's Leisure and Lifelong Learning department. Policesol (ESOL stands for English for Speakers of Other Languages) provides language support to individuals unable to speak English. The project combines lessons given by ESOL teachers with interventions by Community beat officers and probationer members of staff. The police staff members speak to participants about issues such as leaving children alone at home or in parks, driving without documents, domestic violence, or racial harassment.

As a result of the project, ethnic minority participants have developed greater trust in the police and have also gained opportunities for volunteering or working as Police Community Support Officers. This has improved the ethnic profile of the police force. At the same time, police officers involved in delivering sessions have indicated that the practical experience of engaging with multi-ethnic groups has been very valuable for them. They have developed a greater appreciation of the difficulties faced by immigrants, and have found the experience to be more effective than formal 'diversity training'.

Website: [www.cardiff.gov.uk](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk)





The first edition of the Handbook on Integration (Chapter 2) offered a number of examples on how to develop intercultural competence, becoming an 'open and inclusive organisation' in the process. The examples in the first edition and in this edition highlight that service provision needs to be underpinned by good knowledge about immigrant customers or clients: their settlement history, age and gender profile, language needs, cultural and religious practices, and any barriers faced in terms of access to and/or experience of services. This may help immigrants to access mainstream services.

- ✘ Knowledge about immigrant and refugee clients can be gained in different ways: by analysing and generating data, by making intercultural competence a priority in the selection, training and evaluation of staff, by involving outside experts, by consulting with community groups or individual citizens, and by learning from targeted initiatives.

### 1.2.3 Connecting people and institutions

Mainstreaming is about people changing the institutions they interact with as workers, clients or other stakeholders. Institutions that are open towards participation and feedback will be more capable of identifying areas where equal access is not being achieved, and providers aiming to give personalised and responsive services will find it easier to accomplish the transformation of attitudes that goes with successful mainstreaming.

Conversely, where service providers are distant from their users they may be slow to identify immigrant needs. Immigrants may not be aware of available offers, assuming that the mainstream provider will be inflexible or hostile. Changes may take place but not be publicised effectively.

- ✘ NGOs can act as intermediaries and help to change perceptions that service providers and users have of each other. For instance, community support groups can have an effect on what immigrants know and expect from service provision.

Mainstreaming has a social-justice side and an efficiency side. Both should be reflected in the way that mainstreaming is defined and implemented. In other words, efficient policy delivery should go hand in hand with careful attention to equality issues. Although some of the mechanisms involved are fairly technical, mainstreaming is essentially about 'changing hearts and minds' and about building a society that is aware of and responsive to diversity.

- ✘ Of particular importance are the attitudes of staff members in service providing institutions that have to adapt their working processes to accommodate diversity. Can they be motivated to listen to users, review their methods and work on their competences?



Sometimes, work pressure on staff leads to a deterioration of customer relations. 'Front-desk' staff especially may be less able and willing to spend additional time with immigrant clients during busy periods. In Belgium, the federal government has established a programme of intercultural mediation through which it subsidises intercultural mediators or coordinators in approximately fifty Belgian hospitals. The programme builds on a service provided by twenty volunteer organisations across the country.

Website: [www.cofetis.be](http://www.cofetis.be)



Political will is one of the drivers of mainstreaming. The more connected political organisations and bodies are with immigrants, the more active they will be in pushing for mainstreaming.



The issue of voting rights for immigrants at local level can be raised here, since much of service provision takes place at the local level. Frequently services are municipality funded, and decisions on how they are delivered are taken at the local level. As Common Basic Principle Nr. 9 notes, the participation of immigrants in the democratic process, including involvement in elections, the right to vote and membership in political parties, supports integration and should be promoted wherever possible.

### 1.3 Non-governmental organisations

In the dynamic relationship between general and targeted services, NGOs and mainstream providers develop changing patterns of interaction. They can be characterised by complementarity or competition, by co-ordination or duplication, by transparency or inefficiency. The challenge is to build on common interests and relative strengths to create a relationship in which an equal partnership is possible.

NGOs are usually established for a particular cause or interest, for example when there is felt to be a gap in government policy or service provision. They often deliver targeted services to specific immigrant or refugee groups. Such services are sometimes seen as short-term 'stop gap solutions' because they are typically project-based and dependent on time-limited donor funding. However, sustainability is a key concern for NGOs. Can targeted activities lead mainstream providers to apply lessons? Will the concerns of immigrants and refugees be integrated into long-term planning?

The following case study illustrates the importance of the 'terms of co-operation' between NGOs and mainstream services. How can organisational bridges be built in a way that provides the best service to users and allows organisations to maintain their identity?





#### Social counselling for refugees in Hungary

- The NGO Menedék – the Hungarian Association for Migrants - was established in 1995 as a civil initiative with funding from UNHCR.
- In 1998, Menedék launched a UNHCR-funded project whose aim was to mediate between users and governmental or municipality service providers. In the course of the project, Menedék found that many cases were not effectively taken up by the mainstream services. It therefore started its own counselling service for refugees.
- The counselling service became known among mainstream agencies, and refugee users were referred to it in growing numbers.
- In 2002-2003, UNHCR withdrew its funding. Menedék then tried to interest mainstream providers in the service without success. In particular, the suggestion that mainstream agencies should themselves work with refugees and immigrants while retaining Menedék as a 'resource centre' was not taken up.
- In 2005, Menedék developed a system of 'case-management' where it plays a co-ordinating and mediating role between refugee users and service providers. One of its aims has been the recognition of Menedék's position and expertise at the policy level.



Targeted activities geared towards immigrants are a key source of knowledge for mainstream organisations. Policy-makers should be proactive in soliciting information from voluntary and community organisations directly in touch with particular groups.

Information can be gathered through commissioning qualitative studies or through direct consultation of the practitioners involved. Best practice seminars for targeted initiatives can be organised which bring together those carrying out targeted measures and staff from agencies not yet involved with mainstreaming immigrant integration. Where targeted activities are State-funded, the implementing organisations could be asked to gear their evaluation reports towards sharing experience. Reports could, for instance, include a section on 'lessons learned for mainstream agencies'. Evaluations should be seen as helpful learning opportunities in this context. They are further discussed in Chapter 4 of this handbook.

Independently of specific projects, NGOs, including migrant associations, can become 'centres of expertise' and capitalise on their knowledge of communities by becoming trainers and advisors for mainstream providers or governmental authorities. They can also develop materials to be used in mainstream curricula for public administration staff, social workers, etc. Demand for such activities is likely to grow further as intercultural competences are increasingly valued.

NGOs can also be advocacy and campaigning organisations. By focusing attention on specific aspects of immigrant integration, they help to sustain the profile of the issue. Good practice suggests that governments should recognise the varied roles of NGOs as advocacy organisations, as providers of services such as interpretation or information



provision, and as facilitators of dialogue. Funding all aspects of their activities can support the autonomy of NGOs and express governments' commitment to communication and active involvement as key elements of immigrant integration.





## Chapter 1: Conclusions

1. Policy-makers, service providers and non-governmental organisations active in a wide range of fields need to look critically at their own activities. To what extent do programmes recognise, respond to, and plan for immigrants' particular needs and circumstances? Can processes and structures be adapted to improve accessibility to immigrants on the basis of equality?
2. Experience demonstrates that mainstreaming practices are more effective if they are based on a coherent political message, namely that considering immigrant integration is not a 'luxury' but simply an element of an institution's mandate when its clients, members or stakeholders are becoming increasingly diverse.
3. Service providers use different instruments to determine whether existing services adequately serve all parts of the population. One way of making such an assessment is by looking at the services themselves: are they used in the manner that they were designed for, or are they used inappropriately, suggesting that there are communication gaps or mismatches between needs and offers?
4. Targeted services are sensitive to the specific circumstances even of small groups. They respond quickly as needs arise, and they are flexible in the way they are implemented. Once mainstream providers become aware of service gaps, the challenge is to find a good balance between targeted services and general ones. A clear division of roles and tasks can help to avoid service overlaps and lack of coordination.
5. In the light of the constant inflow of information about their target public, service providers need to make judgments about whether the usual organisational processes, policies, practices and structures can be adjusted or whether additional measures are needed.
6. Various criteria can be used to decide between general or targeted measures in a given situation. Timing is important, as is the number of people affected by a certain measure. In considering these factors, those concerned should be guided by a concern for proportionality.
7. Knowledge about immigrant and refugee clients can be gained in different ways: by analysing and generating data, by making intercultural competence a priority in the selection, training and evaluation of staff, by involving outside experts, by consulting with immigrant groups or individual citizens, and by learning from targeted initiatives.
8. NGOs can act as intermediaries and help to change perceptions that service providers and users have of each other. For instance, community support groups can have an effect on what immigrants know and expect from service provision.
9. Of particular importance are the attitudes of staff members in service providing institutions that have to adapt their working processes to accommodate diversity. Can they be motivated to listen to users, review their methods and work on their competences?



10. Political will is one of the drivers of mainstreaming. The more connected political organisations and bodies are with immigrants, the more active they will be in pushing for mainstreaming.
11. Targeted activities geared towards immigrants are a key source of knowledge for mainstream organisations. Policy-makers should be proactive in soliciting information from voluntary and community organisations directly in touch with particular groups.





## Chapter 2

# Housing in an urban environment



Housing is vitally important for individuals, families and communities and it is a critical factor in promoting integration. This chapter describes practices that aim to broaden the housing choices of immigrants by lowering barriers to access and improving housing quality. While such measures are mostly small-scale and targeted, they are implemented against the backdrop of broader urban policies and structures. In some European cities today, more than half the residents have an immigrant background, leading to new conditions of diversity. Such cities are often pioneers in the development of measures relating to urban regeneration, mixed ownership and tenancy, inclusive institutions and services, and communication and participation, which can contribute to a better living environment for an increasingly diverse population.



Common Basic Principle Nr. 7 provides the context for situating housing policies within the framework of immigrant integration. It reads: 'Frequent interaction between immigrants and Member State citizens is a fundamental mechanism for integration. Shared forums, intercultural dialogue, education about immigrants and immigrant cultures, and stimulating living conditions in urban environments enhance the interactions between immigrants and Member State citizens.'

## 2.1 Broadening immigrants' housing choices



Immigrants, like all residents, develop housing strategies based on their needs and on the opportunities offered by the environment. Policies should seek to broaden their choices by ensuring equal opportunities in the housing market, in terms of access as well as quality.

### Access to housing

Many immigrants experience direct and indirect discrimination in the housing market. Home owners may be unwilling to sell or rent to immigrants altogether. Others may ask for excessive rents and advance deposits, refuse to accept guarantors, or require unnecessary documentation and references. Because of the difficulties in accessing private housing, the demand for social rented accommodation is often high among immigrants. However, social housing is a scarce resource and waiting lists are long. Disadvantage and discrimination affecting immigrants and minorities across the EU15 are documented in the 2005 EUMC publication *Migrants, Minorities and Housing: Exclusion, Discrimination and Anti-Discrimination in 15 Member States of the European Union*, which is based on national reports by the EUMC focal points.



Community law provides for equal treatment of long-term residents with nationals with regard to access to goods and services and protects against discrimination on the basis of race and ethnicity in the supply of goods and services (including housing).

More intensive use can be made of legislation banning discrimination in the field of service provision, including housing.



Using anti-discrimination law in France

Case: Hamida and Audrey Brahmia, Grenoble Criminal Court, 14 September 2004

In this case the court convicted a landowner of racial discrimination based on Article 225-2 of the Penal Code for refusing to sell a piece of land on grounds of race. After having accepted an offer for the sale of a piece of land, the owner refused to complete the transaction, arguing that he was afraid of provoking problems with the neighbours because the buyer was 'Arab'. After requesting a copy of the buyer's marriage certificate in order to verify his 'good behaviour', photographs of the wedding to evaluate his demeanour, and asking for a higher price and reducing the surface to be sold, he still refused to complete the transaction, raising technical problems and estate and property law problems preventing the completion of the sale.

The landowner was sentenced by the Grenoble Criminal Court but appealed the decision. On 27 October 2005, the Court of Appeal increased the verdict to a six-month suspended sentence, together with a 6000 Euro fine and the requirement that the conviction be published in the real estate sections of the two major local papers and the most important publication of the real estate industry 'la Revue Bleue'.

European Anti-discrimination Law Review, Issue No. 3, April 2006, p.66

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/fundamental\\_rights/policy/aneval/legnet\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/fundamental_rights/policy/aneval/legnet_en.htm)



Provisions pertaining to housing are usually dispersed over a great many laws and define, often in complex language, what the rights and obligations of house owners and occupants are.

Housing codes of conduct can explain in practical terms what housing legislation means in practice.



Codes of Practice on Equality in Housing can have four broad aims:

- a. To set standards for achieving equality and provide practical guidance on how to prevent unlawful racial discrimination and achieve equality of opportunity in the field of housing and services related to housing;
- b. To help housing organisations and others who have duties under the housing and planning provisions of various national laws to understand their responsibilities and rights;





- c. To help lawyers and other advisers to advise their clients, and to assist courts and tribunals in interpreting legal concepts; and
- d. To make sure anyone contemplating bringing legal proceedings has a clear understanding of both legislation and good practice in the field of housing and services related to housing.

There is a range of measures that can be applied to support immigrants directly and indirectly. Practical help can be given in the form of references to landlords, advance deposits or rent guarantees. In Spain, most regional plans for immigration and integration now include programmes under which a public institution provides a guarantee to the landlord that the rent will be paid and possible damages repaired. The Catalan government has created the Network of Social Housing (Red Bolsa de Vivienda Social), which provides technical and legal guarantees, a comprehensive insurance policy and a loan for deposits.

A list of instruments that have been successfully tested at local level in providing support to immigrants in the process of renting or purchasing a home is presented in a study by the Italian CENSIS institute, commissioned by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies in the framework of the Community Action Programme to Combat Discrimination. The study singles out 99 services and groups them into several categories: information and guidance; mediation; property management or purchase of homes; construction or restoration of properties; guarantee funds and loans. Four examples are presented as best practices: the programme for the recovery of the Stadera District in Milan, Perugia's 'Un tetto per tutti', the 'Nuovo Villaggio' Cooperative of Padova, and the house-rental agency of Rimini. The Italian government and other actors are engaged in disseminating these practices at the national and European levels.



**Example: 'Un tetto per tutti'**

The project 'Un Tetto per Tutti' was developed in the Umbria region and was then extended to the region of Lombardia.

Future owners, immigrants and Italians, build or restore houses on land provided by municipalities. Experts and local associations coordinate the project and provide logistical and technical support, including access to credit.

Since 2001, 52 new houses have been built and 72 families, of which half are immigrants, have participated in the project. In the future, bank loans and rents paid by immigrant workers can help to make the project more self-sustained.

CENSIS, Housing Policies and Services for Immigrants in Italy, English Summary, Rome, November 2005, pp. 38-40



Immigrants and non-immigrants with low and irregular incomes face restricted choice and barriers to mobility in the housing market. This situation is sometimes aggravated by the question of immigrants' legal status. For instance, those with temporary residence permits may find themselves unable to fulfil the 'adequate housing' requirement that is a prerequisite for a more long-term residence status because landlords refuse to rent without a guaranteed residence permit for the full contract period. Similarly, authorities may require an applicant for family reunion to provide evidence of accommodation regarded as normal for a comparable family in the same region and which meets the general health and safety standards in force.

Residence requirements should be assessed on their consistency with housing policies and on their impact on the position of immigrants on the housing market.



### Quality of housing

Affordable housing is sometimes of poor quality. For instance, some of the post-war housing estates that were built in several Member States suffer from water damage, insulation problems, poorly operating lifts or other problems associated with the materials used in construction. Smaller properties can also be poorly maintained, especially where landlords renting to immigrants do not carry out necessary repairs. Some immigrants and refugees depend on precarious housing that may be in a neglected or even dangerous condition.

National and local authorities should seek to identify serious problems with housing quality and base initiatives on reliable data about the housing situation of immigrants. Surveys can be used for that purpose. These surveys could be designed in such a way that they allow European comparison and enable European standard setting to take place.



Owners can be encouraged to improve the quality of their properties while at the same time opening them to immigrants. For instance, the Italian municipality of Scicli (province of Ragusa, Sicily) offers a contribution of up to 50% of the expenses for renovation and repairs to landlords who agree to rent out these properties to immigrants at agreed low prices for at least five years. The initiative benefits approximately 15 family groups and constitutes an investment of 50,000 Euros for the municipality.



The 'fit' of a housing option with immigrants' needs is one of the aspects of housing quality. In several Member States, affordable housing does not cater for the fact that immigrant or refugee families may be larger than average. For instance, in Sweden large apartments are almost only found in old, private-rental buildings that are expensive to rent or buy. In some cases, this mismatch between housing needs and supply leads





to overcrowding, associated with respiratory and other health problems as well as social difficulties. In the UK, a study on 'Muslim housing experiences' was carried out on the basis of census data. It shows that nearly 42% of Muslim children are living in overcrowded accommodation, compared with 12% overall.

Newly constructed social housing can take into account the diverse needs of immigrants or refugees, for instance by providing apartments for larger families. Existing housing units can also be modified in consultation with immigrant tenants, and additional services such as communal laundry rooms, roof gardens or communal satellite dishes can be provided. For instance, the Sozialbau AG in Vienna, a housing estate whose occupants are mixed half-and-half between foreigners (from all countries) and native Austrians, supports communal life through such initiatives.



Housing companies that proactively seek to improve service to immigrant clients will be more successful in meeting their needs and preferences. Housing companies can provide training to their employees for this purpose or employ staff with an immigrant background.



In the UK, numerous 'Black and Minority Ethnic' (BME) housing associations specialise in providing housing services to their target group. For instance, the Ashram Housing Association is the largest BME association in the West Midlands. It owns and manages 727 homes with the majority (543) being located in Birmingham. Forty-nine per cent of the Association's tenants are Asian, 27 per cent are white, 13 per cent are black and 8 per cent are of mixed heritage. The Association defines its core aim as meeting the needs specifically but not exclusively of BME groups.

Over 20 per cent of the Association's stock is large family accommodation with four or more bedrooms (the maximum up to seven bedrooms). Ashram has also developed a range of specialist supported housing to meet the needs of older Asians and women fleeing domestic violence, as well as a mental health project for Asian women.

As a recent report of the Audit Commission notes, 75 per cent of Ashram's board members and 71 per cent of senior staff are from BME groups. Overall, the Association's staff of 100 reflects the demographic profile of its community, and the organisation maintains a list of staff language skills to meet demand for interpretation. Forty per cent of the Association's contractors are also from BME organisations.



Ashram Housing Association Limited, [www.ashramha.org.uk](http://www.ashramha.org.uk)  
Housing inspection report, [www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk).

## 2.2 Integration in the urban environment

Many European cities have areas of concentrated poverty that are often isolated from the rest of the city. In many cases, they have a high proportion of immigrant residents.



Immigrants, like other residents, are affected by the distance from the formal labour market, the absence of private sector facilities like shops and banks, the high demands on public services and their poor quality, the level of crime and anti-social behaviour, and the poor reputation that characterise such deprived areas. In addition, spatial concentration can have the effect of isolating immigrants from society more broadly and providing few opportunities to learn the language, especially for children.

Policies and practices seek to counteract the social exclusion and segregation that is a feature of deprived areas. At the same time, they can reinforce the positive aspects felt by many immigrant residents: support through social, family and ethnic networks, the possibilities provided by the ethnic labour market, quick help for new arrivals, and the presence of ethnic associations.



In the following sections examples will be given of urban regeneration, mixed ownership and tenancy, inclusive institutions and services, and communication and participation. Good practice suggests that although physical infrastructure is important, policies should also highlight social, economic and cultural aspects. Shops, health clinics, religious and cultural centres, and other institutions and services are necessary parts of a functioning urban area. Gender relations are important in shaping interactions in the urban environment, and gender-specific initiatives can have a significant impact.

Policy targets for deprived areas should be compatible with citywide planning, and urban concepts should privilege the building of 'bridges' between city districts. Any inequality in service provision across different areas should be addressed as a priority.



### **Urban regeneration**

Regeneration programmes typically target clearly demarcated areas of cities. They often represent a significant financial investment, renovating and modernising the physical infrastructure. The well-being of residents may be considerably enhanced by such measures, since dirt, rubbish and noise pollution can often be attributed to the architecture. Improvements in housing estates may include balcony and terrace arrangements which ensure privacy, elimination of echoes in courtyards and entranceways, outdoor lighting, ample rubbish disposal zones with frequent collections and regular bulky refuse pickups. Unused gaps between buildings can be given a structure and the living area, including entrance zones, playgrounds and other semi-public areas, can be clearly marked.

Infrastructure programmes can also include an investment in transport links, for instance through extending metro lines or providing an area with its own train station. Access to mobility is crucial for the inhabitants of poor areas and can connect them to the flow of resources, goods and services in the city.





Urban regeneration programmes often bring about significant changes in the living environment of a district's population. Ideally, planning takes place in a participatory way and attention is paid to the involvement of immigrant residents. Housing company staff can interact directly with inhabitants by seeking personal contact at everyday communication spots such as groceries, cafés, childcare centres or places of worship. More structured participation often involves a significant investment in preparation and capacity building.



#### FORUM Netherlands: 'Social Olympics'

The 'Social Olympics' initiative has been used in areas where long term building plans are being made, including the demolition of houses and mandatory moving of people. 'Social Olympics' is a conference method which has been developed to make sure that certain groups have an equal role in decision making.

At the 'Social Olympics' participants are divided into five groups or 'rings': policymakers, professionals (such as community workers), residents, politicians, and non-involved experts (e.g. academics or persons from another city/area). At the conference each group first forms an opinion in their own ring. They are then informed of the opinions of the others and get a chance to alter their opinion. After that they all come together to try and seek consensus on priorities for long term building plans. This method gives residents, who may have less experience in public discussions, a chance to form an opinion before they have to 'compete' with the others. In FORUM's experience, the possibility of giving input in a more protected and small-scale environment is a proven way of increasing the participation of certain groups.

Such extensive consultations require significant preparation and investment and highly-qualified chairpersons. However, in urban planning the stakes are often high and the resources involved justify the consultation effort, which is likely to make solutions more appropriate, accepted and in the end more cost-effective. For instance, FORUM organised a 'Social Olympics' conference in the city of Arnhem, (Malburgen), where redevelopment of segregated neighbourhoods was taking place and where the budget for the 'flanking' social methods was 1 million Euros.



Website: [www.forum.nl](http://www.forum.nl)

### Mixed ownership and tenancy

In several Member States, the principle of mixed ownership plays an important role in housing policies. Tax and other incentives may be given to private developers or owners who invest in areas dominated by social housing. New construction may be used to group together various types of housing at different prices and with various ownership arrangements. Existing social housing stock may also be demolished in order to build private housing. Where owner-occupied and social rented housing are mixed, it is good practice to keep architectural differences between them to a minimum. This is the case



in Helsinki, where the mixing principle has been used in planning housing areas since the 1960s.

In the UK, planning authorities can use Section 106 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act to require developers to make a contribution towards affordable housing or other public facilities such as schools or parks, reflecting the wider impact of the new private housing development. This has led to the creation of new housing developments incorporating both market-rate and affordable housing.



There is some evidence that private housing in mixed urban areas is attractive to middle-class immigrants, as it is typically more affordable than housing in other areas and allows them to stay close to their families. By offering a range of housing options through the life cycle, such mixed-ownership communities can contribute to broadening immigrants' housing choices.

Another type of mixing policy concerns the composition of tenants in public rented housing. The degree to which municipalities (or other governmental actors) can influence these processes depends on governance and ownership structures. Incentives can be helpful: for instance in Hamburg, rent subsidies are granted to students who move to an area inhabited mainly by immigrants. Practices that seek to achieve mixed residency structures in social housing need to be careful to avoid discrimination. For example, the goal of avoiding concentrations of immigrants can lead housing associations to treat the origin of candidates as one of their selection criteria.

Because housing issues directly affect the personal lives of individuals and families, interventions in this field must be particularly careful to respect privacy, to consult with those affected and to avoid discrimination.



### **Inclusive institutions and services**

Many of the practices that aim to promote integration in areas of high concentration of immigrants focus on the accessibility and responsiveness of local institutions and services. Especially in cities with a high percentage of immigrant residents, administrations often maintain neighbourhood presences that combine various functions in one location. Such practices bring municipal services closer to the citizen and allow administrations to directly take up concerns as they emerge.

In many diverse districts, schools have become community institutions with multiple links to other local actors from the public, private or non-governmental sectors. Charities or NGOs may offer evening classes on school premises, including childcare facilities. Residents associations or migrant clubs may likewise use the school as a meeting space.





Municipal administrations can achieve 'proximity management' by using schools as a point of contact with residents. Local businesses can also become involved, for instance by giving pupils the opportunity to visit them in the course of career guidance activities.



The Karlschule in the German city of Hamm is closely involved in the life of the neighbourhood. For instance, pupils helped to restore a local playground, and the school sports club arranges discos for local youths. The school also participated in the parades celebrating the district's 750<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Sewing courses for Turkish women take place in the home economics lab. Outside partners are also active in the school: for instance, project managers from the welfare organisation *Arbeiterwohlfahrt* provide career guidance, the *Caritas* runs the Karlschule afterschool childcare, and the municipal garden office assists in greening the school's roof.



Website: [www.karlschule.schulnetz.hamm.de/](http://www.karlschule.schulnetz.hamm.de/)

The Karlschule is one of the best practice examples identified in the Schader Foundation's publication 'Immigrants in the City', which is part of a broader project looking at the sociospatial integration of immigrants in Germany. The project is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and runs from January 2004 to August 2006. Other partners are the German Association of Cities (DST), the German Head Federation of Housing and Real Estate Associations (GdW), the German Institute of Urban Affairs (Difu) and the Institute for Housing, Real Estate, Urban and Regional Development at Ruhr-University Bochum (InWIS).

The best practice collection on 'Immigrants in the City' looked at 232 projects in total and compiled 136 extensive project descriptions. Out of these 136 projects 28 were identified as best practices.

The collection describes 'project types' because of the many similarities between initiatives. For instance, many projects are concerned with creating meeting points with low access barriers, referring residents to the appropriate services, or giving space to local associations.



Website: [www.schader-stiftung.de/docs/immigrants\\_in\\_the\\_city.pdf](http://www.schader-stiftung.de/docs/immigrants_in_the_city.pdf)



Neighbourhood schools can be used as integration sites and education venues for the district as a whole – adults included.

Public libraries can likewise become focal points for the community by offering additional activities and programmes.



Under the URBAN programme, two public libraries in the Danish city of Aarhus offered IT courses targeted at neighbourhood residents without home computer access. A special focus was placed on migrant women and other groups that may not have the time or the resources to acquire a basic knowledge of IT.



The 18-month programme, which started in May 2003, offered PC training and introductions to the Internet but also trained selected participants as 'IT-Guides' able to teach others. The Association of IT-Guides was established in June 2004. For the residents, the project brought about increased participation opportunities in addition to the IT skills themselves.

Website: [www.urbanbydel.dk](http://www.urbanbydel.dk)



Municipalities can complement the outreach activities of individual organisations and play a part in linking immigrants with local groups and associations.

The German town of Münster assists ethnic German (Aussiedler) families with finding accommodation after they leave the collective reception centre, and supports them in integrating into community life in their new neighbourhoods.

Families first meet with a municipality outreach worker. Together they draw up individual profiles on educational and occupational background, community activities before migration, knowledge of local facilities, professional and social goals and interests. Based on these profiles, a list is made of relevant local institutions and organisations that should be contacted. These include sports clubs, parishes, youth clubs, etc. The immigrants conclude an Integration contract with the municipality and pledge to attend biweekly meetings with the outreach worker. In fact, the frequency of meetings has been higher especially in the initial period.

During 2004, 21 families were accompanied in finding accommodation. A recent evaluation showed that the group of immigrants involved in this project was, after almost two years, close to 2.5 times more active on the labour market than the control group. Individuals in the project group also appeared to be more invested in the integration process and have less desire to return. Münster is now considering extending the project to other (more heterogeneous) migrant groups.

The initiative is part of an Interreg – IIIa project in which Münster is cooperating with Enschede and Twente in the Netherlands. The Dutch and German project partners are developing their programmes in parallel and exchanging experiences on a continuous basis.

Website: [www.muenster.de/stadt/zuwanderung/interreg.html](http://www.muenster.de/stadt/zuwanderung/interreg.html)



## Communication and participation

Frequent interaction between immigrants and Member State residents is a fundamental mechanism for integration. Many local practices have the aim of making this interaction more fruitful and less conflictual, fostering a sense of belonging to the neighbourhood and changing perceptions both inside and outside of deprived neighbourhoods. Across





European towns and cities, smaller or larger projects are implemented to stimulate communication and resolve tensions. For instance, mediation can be offered between migrant and non-migrant tenants on questions such as deterioration of buildings, violence and threats of violence. Residents including youths can also be trained in conflict resolution techniques.



In Portugal the project 'Escolhas' on the integration of second and third generation youth was set up in 2001 in response to incidences of violence in fifty difficult neighbourhoods including robberies that involved many second and third generation migrants.

After a review in 2003, the focus of the project was changed from repression of violence to inclusion, addressing issues such as feelings of belonging, the consequences of the nationality law and valuing the culture of family/origin. The target age now includes 6-19 year olds, with a possibility to include youth up to 24. The projects do not have to be targeted towards migrants but all project leaders receive training in interculturality through an e-learning course. This was set up to create a community of practice, and to prepare project leaders in communities where there is not yet an immigrant presence but where this might occur in the future.

At least three partners, including schools and other organisations, have to cooperate in order to submit a project proposal. In its second phase, the programme received 500 applications, of which 80 were chosen with funding of about 60,000 Euros/year. The project will run until 2009.



The city of Rotterdam seeks to strengthen the bond of Rotterdammers with each other and with the city with a variety of initiatives.

- The project 'Mixen aan de Maas' links new and old residents of the city and supports them in carrying out common activities. The project team provide the 'matches' with suggestions for activities and reimburses minor expenses.
- The action plan 'Islam and Integration', developed by the Project Bureau Social Integration, is a process that has already involved around 8000 persons since October 2004. 'Islam and Integration' evolved through expert meetings, a series of 'internal' debates among Muslims (mainly Turkish, Moroccan and Somali) in Rotterdam, information meetings about Islam directed at all Rotterdammers, and 9 public debates open to all. The subjects of the debates were based on the internal debates and expert meetings and included:
  - The 'us and them' feeling amongst Muslims and non-Muslims
  - Values and norms in the constitutional state and Islam
  - Position of women/equality of the sexes/homosexuality
  - Islam as new religion in Rotterdam/Church and state
  - Education and economic situation
  - Safety and terror



The debates produced building blocks for a Rotterdam 'social charter', which is now being drafted by the municipal executive. Discussions at neighbourhood level with both Muslim and non-Muslim citizens of Rotterdam will be organised to rally support for the charter.

- The Mensenbieb ('people's library') project was developed to stimulate contact between different groups of people, and to get people talking about their own prejudices. A group of volunteers with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds come together to be 'lent out' to interested persons. Meetings can take place in diverse settings: in a mobile library, a café, a school etc., depending on the exact target group. Through boards and stickers labelled with prejudices such as 'foreigners don't want to integrate' and 'Muslims are extremists', the general public is encouraged to enter into dialogue about prejudices and to meet with different volunteers to test their ideas. More than 1000 visitors to the 'library' have been counted during five festivals. The project has been marketed in a creative and cost-effective way, resulting in widespread media interest and dissemination of the idea.

Website: [www.mensenbieb.nl](http://www.mensenbieb.nl).



Some projects look specifically at the interactions taking place in public spaces like streets, squares and parks. Immigrants in European cities often revitalise public spaces such as parks, but their use of these spaces may also be perceived as being different. In Vienna, the municipal administration has responded by training and paying for 'park barbeque attendants' with a migrant background, who are present in parks on Sundays and public holidays to help with communication between migrant and non-migrant users.

Common activities can help in promoting contact between residents and the growth of a 'neighbourhood identity'. For instance, in housing estates or densely populated neighbourhoods space for 'integration gardens' can be made where residents can work together on shaping the grounds and caring for plants.

Participation in associations and support groups can contribute to the empowerment of immigrant residents. For instance, tenant associations typically deal with renovation issues and common rules. They are open to all residents against a small fee. Existing community institutions, such as schools, can also serve as focal points for self-organisation.

The Nytorpsskolan in the Hammarkullen suburb of Göteborg has 450 pupils aged 6-16. Most of them do not have Swedish as their mother tongue. The restless and chaotic environment in the classrooms prompted some parents to become more involved in the school. After a one-year preparatory phase, the district board decided in 2001 that Nytorpsskolan could establish a 'parental board' – a school board where the majority is held by parents.

The board has formal responsibility for decisions concerning Swedish as a second language, mother tongue teaching, creating a good working environment for pupils, forms of cooperation between home and school, and other topics. However, the board has no right to take decisions about the school's personnel or finances.





The parental board has had a large effect on the school. Parents have been able to influence what is happening in the school, and the parental board works well with the council of pupils that is also active. Some parents feel that their participation has allowed them to grow in respect in the eyes of their children, since they have better knowledge about the Swedish school and can have an impact on it. On the other hand, the fact that financial decisions are off-limits for the board is seen as an important limitation.

This is an URBACT project. Based on the theme of 'Cities, immigrants and ethnic minorities', this URBACT thematic seminar, which was held in Palermo in October 2005, assembled 16 representatives of European cities, bringing together 13 URBACT projects.



Websites: [www.urbact.org](http://www.urbact.org), <http://hem.passagen.se/nytorpsskolan>



Experience suggests that immigrants are more likely to get involved as members of a group (e.g. parents) than as individuals. Groups based on ethnic background can also facilitate involvement, raising individuals' self-confidence by giving them the opportunity to discuss issues with peers and come to a consensus.

Since a high proportion of immigrants or refugees in a neighbourhood often provides the 'critical mass' needed for establishing an ethnic association, spatial concentration can sometimes have a positive influence on participation and involvement especially of women migrants.

## 2.3 Exchanging good practices on housing



Because so many practices on housing and integration in cities are local, it is particularly important to establish good mechanisms for the exchange of local experiences and ideas.

National policymakers, local government officials and other stakeholders from all sectors of society can draw on the knowledge contained in best practice collections, research programmes, or formalised networks on these issues.

Handbooks can be useful especially where the experience of diversity in a local area is relatively recent, or where integration has not so far been a priority.



In Estonia, the Non-Estonians' Integration Foundation in 2003 initiated a project to improve local governments' administrative capacity for coping with integration issues at the local level. The project responded to a situation where few local governments had long-term integration-related action plans. The Foundation put together a handbook for local civil servants, who were also interviewed as part of the research.



Local governments were divided into three subgroups:

- (a) those where the share of non-Estonians is higher than the average;
- (b) those where the share of non-Estonians is lower than the average yet over 5%, and
- (c) those where the share of non-Estonians is less than 5%.

The handbook included practice examples from different local authorities as well as from other countries, namely Lithuania, Sweden, Denmark, Italy and Germany.

Expertise may also be gathered in specialised organisations, which can advise local actors according to need.

In the Netherlands, the Broad Initiative on Social Cohesion includes a focus on urban policy and integration.



In this context, the organisation FORUM receives governmental funding to maintain a 'Service Desk for Municipal Integration Policy'. This service desk supports civil servants in local government administrations in developing and executing integration policy. Experts provide advice on specific problems arising at the local level. At the same time, an interactive website provides a platform for civil servants to discuss the difficulties they encounter.

Networks provide an opportunity for ongoing exchange of good practices. At the European level, they also allow for an effective link between local experiences and EU policy mechanisms such as the Social Inclusion Process and other policy or funding programmes.

A number of networks are focusing attention on the link between immigrant integration and housing. Their members include regions (ERLAI); regions and municipalities (CEMR); municipalities, local public authorities and NGOs (Quartiers en Crise); major urban centres (Eurocities) or social housing organisations (CECODHAS), among others.



In 2004-2006, CECODHAS and Eurocities jointly organised a series of three seminars on integration and housing. The seminars were hosted by Amsterdam, Stockholm and Aarhus respectively. For instance, the Stockholm seminar in April 2005 looked at 'Integration through improved housing and empowerment' and brought together participants from social housing organisations as well as city administrations and other stakeholders.

Websites: [www.eurocities.org](http://www.eurocities.org), [www.cecodhas.org](http://www.cecodhas.org)





## Chapter 2: Conclusions

1. Immigrants, like all residents, develop housing strategies based on their needs and on the opportunities offered by the environment. Policies should seek to broaden their choices by ensuring equal opportunities in the housing market, in terms of access as well as quality.
2. More intensive use can be made of legislation banning discrimination in the field of service provision, including housing.
3. Housing codes of conduct can explain in practical terms what housing legislation means in practice.
4. Residence requirements should be assessed on their consistency with housing policies and on their impact on the position of immigrants on the housing market.
5. National and local authorities should seek to identify serious problems with housing quality and base initiatives on reliable data about the housing situation of immigrants. Surveys can be used for that purpose. These surveys could be designed in such a way that they allow European comparison and enable European standard setting to take place.
6. Housing companies that proactively seek to improve service to immigrant clients will be more successful in meeting their needs and preferences. Housing companies can provide training to their employees for this purpose or employ staff with an immigrant background.
7. Policies and practices seek to counteract the social exclusion and segregation that is a feature of deprived areas. At the same time, they can reinforce the positive aspects felt by many immigrant residents: support through social, family and ethnic networks, the possibilities provided by the ethnic labour market, quick help for new arrivals, and the presence of ethnic associations.
8. Policy targets for deprived areas should be compatible with citywide planning, and urban concepts should privilege the building of 'bridges' between city districts. Any inequality in service provision across different areas should be addressed as a priority.
9. Because housing issues directly affect the personal lives of individuals and families, interventions in this field must be particularly careful to respect privacy, to consult with those affected and to avoid discrimination.
10. Neighbourhood schools can be used as integration sites and education venues for the district as a whole – adults included.
11. Experiences suggest that immigrants are more likely to get involved as members of a group (e.g. parents) than as individuals. Groups based on ethnic background can also facilitate involvement, raising individuals' self-confidence by giving them the opportunity to discuss issues with peers and come to a consensus.
12. Because so many practices on housing and integration in cities are local, it is particularly important to establish good mechanisms for the exchange of local experiences and ideas.





# Chapter 3

## Economic integration



This chapter discusses immigrants' economic integration, encompassing both employment and self-employment. It looks first at admission and considers how immigration models can encourage the matching of supply and demand on the labour market. It then deals with the assessment and acquisition of skills throughout the labour market career of immigrants, making reference to formal qualifications, other occupational or language skills, and knowledge of working life and the job search process. The chapter also explores how anti-discrimination and diversity strategies can promote equality in the workplace, encourage job retention and promotion and create a climate in which diversity is valued. Lastly, the chapter describes ways of supporting ethnic entrepreneurs through advice, facilitated access to financial services, or involvement in supplier networks.



This chapter builds mainly on Common Basic Principle Nr. 3, which notes that 'employment is a key part of the integration process and is central to the participation of immigrants, to the contributions immigrants make to the host society, and to making such contributions visible'. Common Basic Principles Nr. 5 on education, Nr. 6 on access to institutions, goods and services, and Nr. 9 on participation also set the framework for a discussion of economic integration.

European governments consistently identify the labour market integration of immigrants as one of their key priorities in the integration field. This is because in many countries immigrants, including and especially young immigrants and women, have disproportionately unfavourable outcomes concerning employment rates, unemployment rates, wages, or employment according to qualification. At the same time, immigrants also form part of the labour force with which Europe and its Member States seek to attain the 'Lisbon goals'. Immigration and immigrant integration have a place on the Jobs and Growth agenda not only because they pose particular challenges to the set goals, but also because they can contribute to achieving them.

### 3.1 From admission to labour market integration: matching supply and demand



Rules concerning admission can be seen as integration starting points which set crucially important conditions for the integration process.

Different admission rules currently apply in the 25 Member States. Several countries are giving increased attention to economic migration, using a mixture of different selection models:



- The 'human capital' model involving the assessment of prospective immigrants on criteria which governments take to be good predictors of long-term economic success
- The 'employer-led' model which looks at actual rather than prospective employment and matches employer needs with a specific immigrant candidate.
- The 'shortage' model which identifies certain areas or occupations for which employers are allowed to recruit from the global labour pool.

The Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs runs the managed migration programme 'Active Selection of Foreign Workers'. Citizens of Bulgaria, Croatia, Kazakhstan, Byelorussia, Moldova, Serbia and Montenegro, Canada and Ukraine can apply. Foreign graduates of Czech universities and secondary schools are also eligible.

Applicants must show that they have already obtained a visa for more than 90 days for employment purposes. They are selected through a points system based on seven criteria: having a job, work experience, education, age, experience living in the Czech Republic, language abilities and family members. After 2.5 years, they can apply for a permanent residence permit.

The quota for the programme has been increased from 300 (2003-2004) to 700 (2004-2005) and then 1000 (2005-2006). However, quota ceilings have so far not been reached.



Experience in several countries suggests that early employment significantly enhances immigrants' long-term labour market success. In order to facilitate the match between immigrants and potential employers in the process of economic migration, Member States are using a variety of measures including pre-selection in countries of origin or job seeker visas.

The Spanish managed migration programme is based on the identification of shortages in consultation with trade unions, employers' organisations and regional authorities. Once the list of vacancies is approved by the central government, it is sent to the countries with which Spain has concluded special migration agreements: Ecuador, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Morocco, Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria.

The labour authorities of these countries carry out a pre-selection of possible candidates for the jobs offered. The final selection is made by a bilateral commission with the participation of the employers. Workers receive a visa and a one-year work and residence permit. Renewal is possible subject to proof that the holder has actually worked for at least six months in the sector and region for which the permit was issued.





Direct contact between job seekers and employers is valuable and sometimes indispensable. While large companies have the means to recruit abroad, small and medium enterprises or individuals seeking to employ immigrants (e.g. as caretakers) rarely have the possibility to do so. Often, contact is established because immigrants are already in the country in an irregular situation, or through recommendations of family or community members. Job seeker visas could help to avoid undeclared work situations.



As part of the managed migration programme, Spain grants job seeker visas for three months, during which the person can look for a job in the sector and region assigned to him or her. If the visa holder is successful in finding a job, the visa is converted into a one-year work and residence permit. 98% of entrants find employment in the sector for which the job seeker visa was granted.

Despite the importance of managed migration programmes, it should be noted that a migrant's entry channel is not necessarily an indication of his or her labour market potential. Non-economic immigrants should be given residence and work permits that allow them to take up jobs corresponding to their motivation and qualifications. Permits with greater security of residence encourage immigrants to invest more heavily into their own integration in society and working life. Employers also tend to be more open to hiring persons with longer-term permits. Overall, restrictions on labour market access should be minimised, keeping in mind that the labour market is one of the main pathways to integration for immigrants whether they arrive for economic reasons or not.



Conditions for family reunion are being harmonised at European level, as is legislation relating to refugee status. Access to the labour market is an important component of such legislation. As the Commission Communication on a Common Agenda for Integration notes, Member States transposing the Directive on the right to family reunion should ensure that restrictions in labour market access are minimised, thereby promoting employment for immigrant women.



The legal framework for admission should be examined in view of its impact on the (socio-) economic integration of immigrants, and obstacles to integration contained in immigration rules should be addressed.

### Pre-arrival training

Several Member States are exploring pre-arrival training as a way of improving integration prospects for immigrants. Such training initiatives can also deepen relations with countries of origin and highlight possibilities for legal migration.



Under Italian immigration law, foreign nationals who attend vocational training and education courses in their home countries can gain priority for an entry visa. The courses have to be approved by the Italian authorities. Framework agreements are concluded with certain countries (such as Tunisia and Moldova) and can involve specific regions and employers in Italy.

The pilot project 'From Sri Lanka to Tuscany' was carried out by the Italian government in cooperation with IOM. It provided pre-arrival training to Sri Lankans who wish to immigrate to Italy as personal carers for children or elderly persons.

The pre-selection of candidates made use of a database set up by the Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Bureau. The province of Tuscany first chose 160 of the 250 candidates in the database. The project team then contacted the families seeking personal carers and interviewed 85 candidates who fit the profiles requested. 60 applicants were selected.

They received 60 hours of Italian language training in Colombo and a 25-hour course in the field of personal care. This training was continued in Italy, leading to an Italian 'Personal Care Assistant' qualification.



The Commission's Policy Plan on Legal Migration likewise makes reference to training in countries of origin. It announces that the feasibility of supporting with EU funding the establishment of training structures under the responsibility of the local authorities and/or of non-governmental actors will be closely explored.

### 3.2 Skills and qualifications

The acquisition and assessment of skills is among the key factors shaping the different aspects of a working life: the transition from school to vocational training, and from training to employment; periods of unemployment; promotion or professional reorientation. In the changing economies of Europe, continuous active learning is increasingly required in many occupations and at many skill levels.

New arrivals, long-term resident immigrants and 'next generation' migrants are all faced with the challenge of establishing and maintaining their employability, and should have full access to general and specific support measures.



#### Strengthening the employability of immigrants and refugees

Successful integration depends on a good match between supply and demand. Programmes promoting the professional opportunities of immigrants and refugees





need to look closely at local labour markets and at the specific types of skills that may be needed. This information can help in planning training courses, and can also assist immigrants in targeting their job search.



In the Ida-Virumaa county of Estonia, demand was identified for certain specialties and vocational training in these occupations was offered to unemployed Russian-speakers. The specialty occupations were builder, welder, cook, shop assistant, security guard, computer system administrator, cleaner, and chambermaid.

In the Italian municipality of Forlì, the selection of training courses given under the 'Integra' programme (see Chapter 4.1) included garment maker-seamstress, welder-carpenter, fibreglass worker, and administrative assistant. In Rome, the selection included electrician, carpenter, refrigerator technician, cook and bartender.

Beyond acquiring specific vocational skills, immigrant job seekers also need to know how to write a CV, find a job on the Internet, contact an employer, respond to common questions asked in interviews, etc. 'Job-seeking courses' providing country-specific knowledge of recruitment processes form part of labour market integration programmes in several countries.

Confidence building often plays a role in such courses, particularly where they are targeted at immigrant or refugee women. For instance, the Community Integration Partnership (CIP) in the West Midlands aims to aid refugee women into employment by holding advice workshops, offering confidence building activities, providing information on mainstream employment initiatives, etc. Since 2003, the project has worked directly with over 350 women.



Employability is a key concern of the Belgian SIDE project (Service d'intervention directe sur l'emploi), which the regional employment office of Bruxelles-Capitale has been running for four years. Its target group are newcomers, most of whom have little formal education and have incomplete knowledge of the language. Newcomers joining the project are first referred to NGOs who carry out a skills audit, provide training, and help with obtaining documents such as work permits and certificates of good conduct. They also provide psychological counselling.

Once participants have passed this preparatory stage, SIDE helps to match them with specific vacancies. The project team approaches companies and together with them compiles concrete job descriptions. It then proposes immigrant candidates whose qualifications correspond closely to the job offer at hand. Only one individual is proposed for each vacancy identified. Since December 2002, approximately 30% of SIDE participants have found a job.



## Formal qualifications

The recognition of academic and professional qualifications is an essential part of labour market access and mobility as it allows individuals to find work at an appropriate level. Third country nationals are often not covered by recognition arrangements or have to rely on ad-hoc or bilateral agreements. Because of the time involved, and the frequent setbacks experienced by applicants, the recognition process may give rise to social and other problems. Projects supporting qualified immigrants in the recognition process should therefore take a holistic view of the individual's situation.

Between 2002 and 2005, the JRS (Jesuit Refugee Service) Portugal and the Gulbenkian Foundation carried out a project to support the recognition of qualifications of immigrant doctors.

All participants had jobs in Portugal that did not match their academic qualifications, with many working in the construction sector. They included general doctors as well as paediatricians, surgeons, and other specialists. Most of the participants were of Ukrainian, Russian or Moldavian nationality and had first made contact with JRS through Portuguese classes offered by the organisation.

The recognition process involved courses at a medical school, a hospital internship of 4-9 months, an exam, and enrolment in the Portuguese Medical Council. The project covered the application and translation fees for each participant, who also received a monthly scholarship (maximum 9 months) and a book grant. Continuing Portuguese classes, social and psychological support complemented the offer.

The project started with 10 doctors and ended with 105 doctors officially practicing medicine throughout Portugal. To overcome visa difficulties, the project developed special protocols with the immigration services. Informal contacts with the health ministry and the Portuguese Medical Council also proved to be helpful. Nevertheless, waiting times were considerable. In response, the project extended the period of financial support by means of a loan system, and also identified interim jobs in the medical field (e.g. with the Blood Institute).



## Skills assessment and accreditation

To overcome difficulties associated with the formal recognition of qualifications, employers, professional associations and governments can seek to develop more flexible ways of assessing and validating skills.



Two key challenges can be identified: first, appropriate and innovative measures are needed to identify the skills and competences of immigrants, and second, any form of accreditation must be accepted and recognised by mainstream organisations and employers.





Good assessment methods succeed in making visible all of immigrants' competences: occupational, communicative, social, etc. They look at assets rather than deficits and focus concretely on a person's (potential) performance in the workplace.

To promote the recognition of immigrant skills by employers, a number of strategies can be mentioned:



Heightening the visibility of a new type of assessment or certificate through awareness-raising and high-level political support.

Distinct certificates for immigrants can be valuable in highlighting the specificity of migrant competences and the contribution that they can make to the labour market. On the other hand, raising awareness with employers is likely to be a long-term and resource-intensive effort.



In Denmark, 'Competence Cards' are now being issued by five *Regional Knowledge Centres for the Clarification of Competences of Refugees and Immigrants*. The Centres were established in 2004 to help municipalities and employers match refugee and immigrant skills to the needs of the labour market.

The Centres work with companies to make available competence assessment courses at workplaces. On the basis of the assessment and other competence clarification activities, the immigrant receives a Competence Card spelling out his or her skills. 129 Competence Cards have been issued over a period of four months. They are available online for access by employers. In addition, the Knowledge Centres act as references for immigrants who lack previous work experience in Denmark.

The Centres also maintain an IT-based tool for competence clarification. Further efforts will be made to improve the functioning of this tool, which municipalities have found difficult to integrate into their daily working routines.

Evaluation is needed on whether the Competence Card actually helps its holders to get into employment, but employers appear to be increasingly aware of the initiative due to continuous efforts to raise visibility. The Knowledge Centres have received ongoing ministerial support for their role in achieving the government's objective of "25,000 more immigrants employed in 2010". Their overall budget is approximately 10 million Euros for the period 2004-2007.

In several Member States, certain groups of immigrants participate in introductory courses on a voluntary or compulsory basis. The Commission Communication on a Common Agenda for Integration stresses that the certificates earned in such courses should promote access to the labour market or training opportunities, and that Member States should inform employers and educational institutions about their value and content.



Involving mainstream educational institutions and capitalising on their 'good name' with employers to help place immigrants.



Specialised actors such as immigrant associations or NGOs can work with mainstream educational institutions to make them more accessible to immigrants and refugees.

For instance, additional courses or language programmes can be offered alongside the mainstream curriculum. In this way, migrants can obtain accreditation from an institution that is familiar to local employers.

In Vienna, the EQUAL partnership InterCulturExpress promotes professional opportunities for qualified immigrants or refugees. Specialised NGOs work with mainstream higher education colleges, employers and professional language experts to develop a training programme that builds on migrants' existing competences. Migrants are placed in regular courses supplemented with elements specific to their migration experience, such as language classes or additional occupational training. Formal accreditation may or may not be part of the process.

Internships form part of the occupational study programme, and InterCulturExpress has been successful in placing immigrant and refugee participants with local employers. The good standing of the mainstream colleges in the local business community facilitates this task, which typically involves overcoming a degree of reluctance on the part of employers.

Website: [www.interculturexpress.at](http://www.interculturexpress.at)



Supporting models where work placements can lead directly to further work experience or employment within the same company.



Involving employers in skills assessment processes from the start can increase the likelihood of further employment following on from the assessment and accreditation stage.



Employers who may be reluctant to accept certificates given by educational or government institutions are more likely to respond positively where they themselves have control over the assessment process.

Wage subsidies provided by governments can also be useful incentives.

In Sweden, the programme 'skills assessment on the job' offers qualified immigrants a three-week apprenticeship within their profession so that they can demonstrate their skills on the job. At the end of the three weeks, they receive a certificate that can be used in future job applications.





Similarly, the programme 'trial opportunity' involves three-month supervised work placements for immigrants who lack work experience in Sweden. If the placement does not lead to employment, the individual receives a certificate. Private or public employers as well as non-profit organisations can offer 'trial opportunities'.

Both government-funded programmes started in February 2005. In September 2005, 50 persons were enrolled in 'skills assessment on the job' and 450 persons in 'trial opportunity'. Half of the 'trial opportunity' participants had a job six months after the end of the programme. Along with other work place induction programmes, the two schemes will be evaluated in more detail by the Institute for Labour Market Policy Evaluation (IFAU).



The Danish 'project of enterprise-oriented integration' (2003-2006) supports the integration of newcomers into the work place through the so-called 'stair model'. The stair model involves four steps of integration into the labour market:

1. During the 'active start' period lasting for 3-6 months, newcomers receive intensive language training and courses about Danish culture and society.
2. Newcomers begin traineeships, while still receiving social benefits and continuing with language classes. Companies thus have an opportunity to assess their skills and competences.
3. Newcomers receive a work contract with the company but the municipality subsidises their salary. Newcomers can still receive language or vocational training relevant to their work.
4. Newcomers obtain a regular job. The municipality may finance a mentorship, where a fellow employee is paid for a certain number of hours to introduce a newcomer to the work place.

The project builds on a four-party agreement between the government, the local government association (KL), the confederation of Danish Trade Unions (LO) and the Danish Employers' Confederation (DA). Corresponding local partnerships involve 13 municipalities in three regions, companies and other relevant actors such as language schools.



In Lithuania, the territorial labour exchange and municipality provide a first entry point for refugees by employing them in public works. The employment fund also subsidises wages paid to refugee workers by non-state employers. This practice additionally helps to address one of the obstacles to the entry of refugees into the labour market, namely that wages in the low-skilled sector are very low, leading to a lack of incentive for refugees to take up jobs.



Valuing migrant-specific skills.



Some of the characteristics of immigrants, such as multilingualism, intercultural experience, flexibility and mobility, are specific to their migration experience and should be recognised as job-relevant assets.

'Inter-nation' is an ESF-supported programme of the public employment service of Wallonia, FOREM.



The programme is targeted at qualified immigrants who have strong links with their country of origin, including knowledge of the language. It matches them with companies in Wallonia that are interested in developing their international dimension, for instance by accessing new markets or by entering into partnership with companies abroad. These companies have a demand for workers with the relevant national backgrounds to help them make contacts or deal with the authorities.

FOREM prepares immigrants for such a role by offering them training on topics such as international commerce. Participants in the programme also complete internships in Belgium and in a non-EU country (typically their country of origin). Often, contact with the future employer is made during these internships.

Job descriptions in certain professions could be modified to include 'intercultural competence' as one of the qualifications sought in candidates. This involves a reshaping of skills profiles and could also have an impact on formal qualifications in the longer term.



### 3.3 Anti-discrimination and diversity

Education and skills acquisition in themselves are not enough to close the gap between immigrants and natives in the labour market. Racist and xenophobic attitudes and discriminatory practices also play a role. Although employment discrimination is often difficult to identify and document, there are sources of evidence that can be used to make it more visible. For instance, statistical evidence of discrimination comes from data sets that show significant differences in unemployment rates between immigrants and non-immigrants, even when variables such as education level, qualifications, experience or age are held constant. Member States can work together in developing effective systems of measurement, bearing in mind that solid evidence of discrimination increases public support for anti-discrimination measures and programmes.





The transposition of the Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC) and Employment Equality Directive (2000/78/EC) has led to the adoption of visible anti-discrimination legislation in most Member States. On the whole, protection against discrimination on any of the Directives' grounds is not conditional on nationality, citizenship or residence status. Long-term resident immigrants are also protected by the equal treatment provisions contained in Article 11 of Directive 2003/109/EC, which cover access to employment as well as working conditions, vocational training and the recognition of professional diplomas.



Anti-discrimination provisions concern all stages of immigrants' labour market integration. In terms of access, the focus is on directly or indirectly discriminatory recruitment practices. Once an immigrant is employed, harassment or discriminatory barriers to promotion can be tackled.

Mechanisms for combating discrimination should be complemented with positive action measures seeking to improve outcomes for immigrants, for instance by setting targets concerning immigrant recruitment. In the longer term, the organisational culture of an employer can change to become more diversity-friendly. This includes issues of diversity management and dealing with a diverse workforce.

### Recruitment

The first step here is to stimulate applications from immigrants. Some employers attract few immigrant applicants because they are perceived as 'unapproachable' or even institutionally racist. Outreach activities can be successful in changing such perceptions over time. In several Member States, the police, fire fighting departments and other public sector employers engage in outreach towards immigrants and ethnic minorities. However, eligibility requirements for public sector jobs sometimes block immigrants from applying.



Governments should scrutinise their own practices as employers and, where possible, remove obstacles such as nationality requirements.

Some jobs may draw few applications because they are in a field little known to immigrants, including immigrant parents who may influence the professional choices of their children. The Bradford-based NGO QED (Website: [www.qed-uk.org](http://www.qed-uk.org)) therefore sought to raise the profile of 'unusual' career paths through a ten-part series on Yorkshire TV. Identifying immigrant role models or other mentors in a variety of careers can also encourage school leavers to consider a broader range of professional options. This may help to counteract an ethnic stratification of the labour market, where immigrants are often concentrated in sectors with little vertical mobility.



The EQUAL project 'Migrants integrate Migrants' (2002-2004, Ostwestfalen-Lippe in Germany) built up a network of female immigrant mentors to provide professional orientation for young immigrant women leaving school. Mentors included well-established professional women as well as current students. They gave advice to school leavers and jobless young women and also offered to speak to family members. In addition, a group of local professional women offered traineeships or other forms of support to the mentees. The project organised training workshops for the volunteer mentors, covering psychological as well as legal and administrative aspects. Mentors also received a certificate.



In France, the mentoring system is used to open up a greater range of professional prospects for migrant youth. French retired persons act as mentors (or 'parrains') to young migrants who are identified through the 'missions locales' (access points for employment and social services). While the mentors are volunteers, they are given training by the state. 18,000 youths are now in mentoring situations, with an overall goal of 20,000.



Public employment services can also make specific efforts to give better guidance to immigrant clients. For instance, in Italy the project 'Employment Services for Immigrants', funded by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and implemented by Ernst and Young, provided training for employment centre staff in five locations. To improve outreach to immigrant jobseekers, computer information points were placed in public spaces such as railway stations.

Once an immigrant submits an application, he or she can be the victim of discrimination in the recruitment process. Because of evidence of significant direct discrimination (obtained for instance through situation testing) some Member States are considering the anonymisation of the recruitment process up to the shortlisting stage.

Recruitment processes can also be indirectly discriminatory. For instance, the Dutch National Bureau Against Racial Discrimination and the Dutch Institute of Psychologists have analysed the psychological testing methods commonly used by Dutch companies in recruitment. While these tests are designed to be objective, they may disadvantage ethnic minorities by employing abstract and complex language in the instructions, or by using local expressions and proverbs. The analysis argues that language should not be a relevant factor if it is not explicitly the subject of the test. Instructions should be expressed clearly or read aloud to ensure equal conditions.

Positive action measures of different kinds can be used to actively promote diversity in the workforce. They could be voluntary or statutory.





Targets can be set by individual organisations or by government as a whole. For instance, Denmark affirmed in its 2004 National Action Plan on Employment that it seeks to raise the share of state sector employees with an immigrant background to 3.5%. In several countries, public sector agencies are obliged to implement positive action measures. In the private sector, voluntary commitments are more widespread.



In Norway, all government agencies are now required to interview at least one applicant with an immigrant background when making new appointments, provided that the applicant in question is qualified. The measure is part of the government's Plan of Action to Combat Racism and Ethnic Discrimination, and was initially introduced as a trial scheme.

Between 1 June 2004 to 1 June 2005, 1600 individuals with non-Western background were interviewed and 430 (28%) were employed.



In France, more than 300 companies have signed the 'Charte de la Diversité dans l'entreprise', which was launched in 2004. The signatories commit themselves to making non-discrimination and diversity a strategic goal. First to sign were 40 large companies, which have also been active in spreading the initiative further. Efforts are now being made to win the commitment of small and medium enterprises.

### Anti-discrimination and diversity in the workplace

The workplace can be the site of discriminatory actions such as harassment. They are prohibited by anti-discrimination law, which is enforced through a combination of judicial proceedings – according to the type of law, civil, criminal, labour and/or administrative - and non-judicial proceedings which tend to be more easily accessible. Immigrants and refugees can use these mechanisms more effectively when they have good information about them and are supported in bringing complaints or speaking out on discrimination.

Trade unions are one of the key providers of information about workers' rights including the rights of immigrants and refugees. They are often the first point of contact in cases of harassment or discrimination in the workplace. They also carry out training on anti-discrimination issues and address the prejudices and stereotypes that employers or non-immigrant colleagues may hold. For instance, the Irish Trade Union Trust is raising awareness about diversity among workers in the catering industry, which has seen a large influx of foreign workers. For such activities, trade unions can form partnerships with immigrant associations or capitalise on immigrants' active role as members.



Employers can make workplaces more open to diversity by introducing cultural modifications into daily working life. For instance, allowing workers to celebrate religious holidays other than Christian ones, recognising religious restrictions on diet in company canteens, or allowing the wearing of certain items of clothing such as the headscarf for women.

Ideally, such measures are introduced in consultation with immigrant and non-immigrant workers and trade union representatives. They can be formalised in codes of conduct or joint agreements.

Electrolux, the Italian manufacturer of household appliances, in 1998 established an 'Integration Council', the first of its kind in Italy. It is a joint committee with equal representation of company and trade union representatives, and may express binding opinions.

In 1999, Electrolux adopted a collective 'Agreement on Integration' on the basis of a resolution by the Integration Council. As one of several measures, the Agreement grants migrant workers flexibility about holidays, whereby they can use holiday entitlements, 'time saving' accounts and unpaid leave in order to spend extended periods of up to 50 days with their families in countries of origin. This has in turn reduced unauthorised absence.



## Diversity management

Comprehensive diversity management policies include positive action initiatives on recruitment and promotion as well as cultural adaptations at the workplace and a strong anti-discrimination element.



They make diversity a business-wide concern and are based on a clear vision of the benefits that a diverse workforce can bring to the company.

A survey carried out in 2005 by the European Commission (*The Business Case for Diversity: Good Practices in the Workplace*) shows that employers identify a number of tangible benefits including the resolution of labour shortages and the recruitment and retention of high quality employees. The ability to enhance a company's reputation, and its standing within local communities, is another important benefit, as is the opportunity to develop new products and services or tap into new markets.

How can diversity policies be monitored? Some companies have introduced comprehensive monitoring systems including a profiling of the workforce according to ethnicity, nationalities, religions, languages spoken, gender and age mix to enable identification of particular areas of under-representation. Some also establish an employee skills database





to measure staff mobility and progression. Equal pay reviews can be carried out, and diversity issues can be included in all normal business reviews.

Such far-reaching performance management systems can only be used in large, often multinational companies. Goals for diversity policies can also be set in a less comprehensive way. It is important to develop diversity tools for smaller companies, which often lack dedicated human resources or equality specialists. Support can be provided for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to assist them in employing (for instance) more immigrant women. This would include a review of their recruitment policies and other human resource practices.



The Flemish SME employers' organisation UNIZO has established a 'Service Point Diversity' delivering tailored services with regard to awareness raising and support for diversity management in SMEs. It is also working on an appropriate methodology for on-the-job (Dutch) language learning in small organisations. The project is part of a bigger programme of the Flemish government on equal labour market participation and diversity that has set ambitious goals which are to be achieved in 2010.

In the Netherlands, the Diversity Management National Network (Div) has established a Diversity Ambassadors' network with funding from the Ministry of Justice. The Diversity Ambassadors themselves are SME employers and pledge to set up programmes on diversity within their own companies. They also approach, stimulate and support other SMEs in embedding diversity in their business, and circulate good diversity practices within their own sector.



Website: [www.div-management.nl](http://www.div-management.nl) (in Dutch)

### 3.4 Immigrant entrepreneurship

Immigrant entrepreneurship is another integration 'track' with its own challenges and opportunities for inclusion, particularly for longer-resident migrants.



Immigrant and ethnic minority businesses are increasingly acknowledged to be a vital part of Europe's entrepreneurial culture. In particular, they make an important contribution to job creation.

#### Supporting immigrant entrepreneurs

Government authorities, immigrant and other NGOs, Chambers of Commerce, professional associations and other organisations can help (potential) immigrant entrepreneurs to analyse and develop a business idea, to write a business plan and to seek financing from banks and credit institutions. They can offer workshops and courses



for instance in bookkeeping, marketing or business law. Support can also be given for acquiring a patent, license or working tools.

The Swedish Association of Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurs (IFS) exists since 1996 and has 32 ethnic business advisors dealing with a minimum of 4000 cases per year. Clients come from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. Most often they are unemployed immigrants who have been in Sweden for a relatively short time.

The support services offered by IFS include consultations in 23 languages, information about the Swedish tax system, help with formulating a business plan and budget, market research, contacts with financial institutions and with public authorities (for permits or registrations), access to relevant networks and databases, courses in business management, and translation of documents. The organisation has also initiated an annual prize for the 'ethnic entrepreneur of the year'.

Website: [www.ifs.a.se/eng\\_start.php](http://www.ifs.a.se/eng_start.php)



Access to banking and credit services is often a key obstacle for immigrant entrepreneurs, since they may have difficulties in securing start-up revenue and demonstrating 'bankability'. Moreover, their business initiatives tend to be small, which makes them less attractive to mainstream banks. In several Member States, financial inclusion initiatives seek to promote access to financial services for self-employed immigrants. Certain banks have also developed customised products for immigrant clients.

In Italy, the BCC (Banche di Credito Cooperativo), a network of cooperative and agricultural credit banks, services 145,000 immigrant-owned businesses. The BCC is a credit institution with a strong field presence, counting 3500 branches across Italy. Immigrant entrepreneurs value the personal service and advice given by branch staff, for instance on credit allocation.

The BCC Trevigiano, together with the municipality of Castelfranco Veneto, runs a micro-credit initiative that can be useful for individual migrants seeking to start business activities. 1 million Euros are available for loans which have a ceiling of 6000 Euros and are allocated without a guarantee and a low interest rate of 2%.



Targeted advice services should be developed for immigrant entrepreneurs. Banks are encouraged to give equal access to start-up capital and other business facilities and to build relationships with immigrant entrepreneurs.



### Supplier diversity

Ethnic minority and immigrant owned businesses often operate in an ethnic niche market. Over time, as these businesses become stronger, they can become suppliers of larger





mainstream companies as well as of governments. As suppliers, immigrant entrepreneurs often contribute new product ideas, flexibility and real knowledge of customer groups in an increasingly diverse market.

Large companies can engage with ethnic minority businesses as part of corporate responsibility programmes. Governments (as buyers of goods and services) can also promote access to supplier networks for immigrant entrepreneurs by:

- including immigrant-owned businesses in their suppliers' lists
- setting voluntary targets for contracts with immigrant entrepreneurs, and/or
- sub-contracting with those private companies which themselves contract with immigrant businesses.

Immigrant entrepreneurs should have a consultative role in the development of such support policies. For instance in the UK, the Minority Business Advisory Forum acts as an independent advisory body to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).



**Immigrant owned businesses should be included in supplier lists. In this way supplier lists become as diverse as the population.**

At the European level, ethnic entrepreneurship is addressed in several contexts. For instance, the Commission Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry has commissioned a study to identify and examine specific measures and support schemes promoting ethnic minority entrepreneurs in the EU 25, EFTA Member States and applicant countries. The study, part of an action plan to stimulate entrepreneurship, will give an overview of policies and also present a certain number of measures as 'good practices'. See [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/action\\_plan/ap\\_05.htm#project\\_leader](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/action_plan/ap_05.htm#project_leader).



### Chapter 3: Conclusions

1. Rules concerning admission can be seen as integration starting points which set crucially important conditions for the integration process.
2. The legal framework for admission should be examined in view of its impact on the (socio-) economic integration of immigrants, and obstacles to integration contained in immigration rules should be addressed.
3. New arrivals, long-term resident immigrants and 'next generation' migrants are all faced with the challenge of establishing and maintaining their employability, and should have full access to general and specific support measures.
4. To overcome difficulties associated with formal recognition of qualifications, employers, professional associations and governments can seek to develop more flexible ways of assessing and validating skills.
5. Good assessment methods succeed in making visible all of immigrants' competences: occupational, communicative, social, etc. They look at assets rather than deficits and focus concretely on a person's (potential) performance in the workplace.
6. Involving employers in skills assessment processes from the start can increase the likelihood of further employment following on from the assessment and accreditation stage.
7. Job descriptions in certain professions could be modified to include 'intercultural competence' as one of the qualifications sought in candidates. This involves a reshaping of skills profiles and could also have an impact on formal qualifications in the longer term.
8. Anti-discrimination provisions concern all stages of immigrants' labour market integration. In terms of access, the focus is on directly or indirectly discriminatory recruitment practices. Once an immigrant is employed, harassment or discriminatory barriers to promotion can be tackled.
9. Governments should scrutinise their own practices as employers and, where possible, remove obstacles such as nationality requirements.
10. Positive action measures of different kinds can be used to actively promote diversity in the workforce. They could be voluntary or statutory.
11. Comprehensive diversity management policies include positive action initiatives on recruitment and promotion as well as cultural adaptations at the workplace and a strong anti-discrimination element.
12. Immigrant and ethnic minority businesses are increasingly acknowledged to be a vital part of Europe's entrepreneurial culture. In particular, they make an important contribution to job creation.
13. Targeted advice services should be developed for immigrant entrepreneurs. Banks are encouraged to give equal access to start-up capital and other business facilities and to build relationships with immigrant entrepreneurs.
14. Immigrant owned businesses should be included in supplier lists. In this way supplier lists become as diverse as the population.





# Chapter 4

## Integration governance



This chapter looks at governance issues and in particular at structures, mechanisms, processes and forms of collaboration that make up the framework for integration policies and practices. The putting into place of such a framework enhances the capacity of stakeholders to act. The chapter shows how the different actors involved in immigrant integration can jointly define relationships that capitalise on each stakeholder's strengths and assets. The chapter first describes ways of coordinating integration activities at the local level. It then looks at evaluation as a key aspect of good policy and programme design. Lastly, it addresses the management of resources and considers the roles of various public and private actors in funding integration policies and practices.

The examples and lessons learned presented in this chapter relate closely to the exploration of mainstreaming (see Chapter 1). They offer additional perspectives on some of the questions raised in the mainstreaming context: what is the right balance between leadership and ownership, coordination and flexibility? What funding models are successful in responding to real needs and opportunities? How can one learn from positive and negative experiences and adjust policies accordingly?



Investing in building and maintaining an integration governance structure is well worth the effort as it helps to develop an integration vision and strategy, generate resources, mobilise people and organisations, forge partnerships and build trust, all being crucially important for the achievement of short and longer term integration goals.

## 4.1 Local integration structures

Diversity as a result of immigration has become a feature of many local communities across Europe. While the majority of immigrants and refugees continue to settle in cities, smaller municipalities and rural communities are also experiencing new inflows. In some cases, the make-up of local populations can change fairly rapidly, with the proportion of migrant residents growing much faster than is the case for the national average. Local authorities and other stakeholders react to such changes by developing integration structures. Ideally they fit well with overall policy and administrative processes, and are based on common goals. Strong networks can help to build consensus around integration and make the delivery of programmes more effective.

### The legislative and policy framework

Local integration policies are developed within the legislative framework for admission and residence, which is generally set at national and European level. Legal requirements on admission conditions, residence and work permits, equal treatment and access to nationality are relevant parts of this framework, as well as refugee-related instruments



and rules on expulsion. Local governments are responsible for implementing some aspects of immigration laws and other tasks set by higher levels of government. At the same time, they may have considerable competences in areas relevant to integration and act as service providers in vital sectors such as health and housing. They are therefore dealing with the consequences of migration, be it regular or irregular, economic or family-based, temporary or permanent.

Structured communication and dialogue between European, national and local governance levels makes it possible to anticipate and assess the impact of measures taken at one level on another level. Equally, outcomes of integration programmes at one level could inform policies at other levels.



Many local governments have begun the process of anchoring integration as a mainstream issue. In some instances mayors or deputy-mayors play a leading and visible role. More often, a specific unit or office is designated to promote integration as a priority for the whole administration. In both cases the implementation of concrete policies is left to the individual departments.

Strong and visible leadership of mayors and/or elected local officials on integration issues is instrumental to a coherent approach to integration across multiple policy areas and helps bridge gaps between government and residents with or without an immigrant background.



### Integration strategies and goals

When they decide to become more active on integration, local communities can develop an 'integration concept' or strategy. Often it is developed in a participatory process, in which key actors in the local community find answers to questions such as: what are our overall goals with regard to integration, and how do they relate to the main needs and problems identified in our community? Can we agree on a statement of aspirations? Which priorities should be set, what concrete objectives should be formulated, and how can they be reached? Local communities can develop integration strategies individually, or draw on the ideas and experiences of others to identify common principles and goals.

In the German town of Solingen, the intercultural concept 'Vision Coexistence 2010' was developed in a participative process. Representatives of public and private institutions and organisations met for two years in working groups. Employment, health, housing and youth/school issues were given special attention. The groups identified problems, compiled an inventory of existing projects and services, and defined targets. Currently, the administration is working towards the development of a system of indicators to help with planning.





A 'Contribution to Good Governance concerning the integration of immigrants and reception of asylum seekers' has been adopted by the members of Eurocities, a network of 128 large European cities. Developed by and for cities, this charter contains general principles for how to approach integration, as well as more specific codes of conduct relating to the delivery of key services.

Examples of specific commitments are:

- Develop and/or invest in direct and open communication with all communities of immigrant background, to involve them in the design and implementation of all policies directly affecting their life-chances and living environments;
- Invest in full and transparent information to all residents on the realities of immigration and the necessary conditions for effective integration;
- Invest in sensitising educational institutions, their management and teachers towards the increasing diversity of their students, in providing the necessary expertise in this respect;
- Develop as much as possible mediation programmes within the health services and social services, so as to facilitate communication and understanding between professionals and different ethnic groups; and
- Promote access to the cultural facilities of the city and participation in cultural life for all immigrants.

The Contribution to Good Governance provides the basis for a systematic learning process between cities. The ultimate purpose of the document is to encourage innovation through structured monitoring and evaluation of actions.



Website: [www.eurocities.org](http://www.eurocities.org)



Local integration policies are more effective when they build on the support of the whole community. Rather than being directed at migrants only, they relate to all residents as well as the administration itself. Often, they require real changes across a number of departments and fields of municipal action. Political backing is therefore essential.

Local leaders can raise support for the common integration strategy through public declarations, by highlighting the contributions of immigrants to the city community and by honouring volunteer commitment and the role of immigrant associations. Ideally, commitment from the top is underpinned by a broad political and societal consensus concerning the importance of integration. Although full agreement on the goals of integration cannot always be achieved, residents, local organisations, administration and political parties should find a workable minimum consensus combined with respect for the opinions of others. Bipartisan cooperation is especially valuable, as integration strategies typically involve budgetary commitments. When municipal councils count immigrants among their members the profile of integration is usually raised.



The Municipal Immigration Plan of the city of Barcelona was approved with the consensus of all political parties and emphasises that integration is a joint responsibility. It is based on the view of diversity as a resource. Immigrants are seen to have a positive impact on the age structure and the human capital of the city. Only 2.6% of immigrants are older than 65 years, compared to 21.9% of Barcelona's residents. 27.3% have a university education, with immigrant women showing particularly high percentages. The Municipal Immigration Plan places its policies and programmes in this context of 'diversity as an asset'. It foresees significant adaptations to public services, housing etc. in response to new needs.



Integration strategies often combine a general vision with more specific goals and objectives. These can become part of the administration's overall evaluation and monitoring practices. Many local administrations engage in formalised reporting to the city council, and integration can be given a recognised place in such reports. Departments can additionally engage in self-evaluation and set deadlines for concrete tasks. Data to support evaluations can be obtained through attitude surveys, records of the use of municipal services, school statistics, occupancy statistics of city-owned housing, local crime prevention reports, records of social and political participation such as volunteering and membership rates, and other sources.

### **Networks and consultation**

Local integration networks can facilitate coordination between migrant organisations, service providers, municipal administrations, educational institutions, employers, religious and philanthropic organisations, and other actors. They can be used for information exchange purposes, for professional cooperation, or to achieve a better use of scarce resources. They mobilise organisations and people, build bridges and establish trust.

Often, municipal administrations initiate and lead local integration networks. However, networks can also be created 'bottom-up' by other stakeholders, building on roundtables and informal groupings as precursors to more formal structures. Networks may likewise emerge during the implementation of projects. The development of contacts and partnerships has become one of the products of many integration projects and can leave a lasting legacy of networking structures. The challenge is to carry these networks beyond the project focus into the long term.

In Italy, the EQUAL project 'Integra' has led to the formation of local integration roundtables in seven municipalities, which continue beyond the project and have also been emulated by other municipalities. 'Integra' provides refugees and asylum seekers with language training, skills audits, job orientation, apprenticeships and other services to facilitate their access to the labour market.





The project involves a National Thematic Table and Local Integration Tables set up in the seven participating municipalities. The Local Integration Tables are moderated by the local authority and include representatives of employment offices, vocational training agencies, trade unions, asylum seekers and refugees, and other local partners. Beyond the project activities themselves, the identification of representatives within each institution and the establishment of the networks are seen as a positive result.



Website: [www.integra-anci.it/ita/transnational\\_partnership\\_ita.html](http://www.integra-anci.it/ita/transnational_partnership_ita.html)

Projects with a strong networking element are frequently embedded in national initiatives backed by powerful actors such as trade union confederations or employers associations. They may also involve national associations of municipalities or regional structures.

Experience suggests that successful networks often have a formalised structure that is accepted by the members as legitimate. Ideally, the structure provides for a clear division of labour with a chair (which could rotate) and a secretariat. Core groups and working groups can be used to give coherence to larger networks, while rules of procedure and conflict regulation mechanisms contribute to the sustainability of the structure.



Local integration networks ideally have a clear status within the community's political and administrative set-up. Their mandate could be to raise issues of particular concern and to make recommendations, without prejudice to the decision-making competences of elected representatives.



The Ballerup integration council is one of 73 local integration councils in Denmark. Their national umbrella is the Ethnic Minority Council, which advises the Minister of Refugee, Immigration and Integration affairs. The Ballerup integration council includes 10 members representing ethnic minorities, two members representing the local council, two members representing day-care and school boards, and one member each representing sports clubs, the elderly council and the youth council. Three consultants with no right to vote and a secretary complete the council's membership.

The integration council meets once a month and also has ad hoc working groups and an annual weekend seminar. It invites expert speakers as well as sending its own representatives to the city's Social Liaison Committee and the Coordination Committee responsible for employment and the labour market.

The integration council produces proposals on integration policy, discusses questions such as mother-tongue teaching or the possibility of establishing a Muslim graveyard, and is involved with volunteer counselling and a centre for ethnic minorities. It has also organised a conference on forced or arranged marriage.



Experience shows that the existence of a consultative committee need not limit the participation of immigrants to this forum only. Many municipalities also strive to involve qualified persons with an immigrant background in existing, theme-centred advisory boards and participatory planning processes. Consultation is particularly worthwhile where it goes beyond a two-way conversation between immigrants and the city administration. Local trade unionists, sports coaches, coordinators of cultural centres and community leaders are involved in the integration process along with each (immigrant and non-immigrant) resident of the community. Personal interaction in networks and consultative structures is a valuable element of social integration at the local level.

The Participatory Methods Toolkit developed in Belgium by the King Baudouin Foundation and the Flemish Institute for Science and Technology Assessment (viWTA) is a working tool that guides practitioners through the process of implementing participatory methods. By using such methods, practitioners can promote the involvement of 'the public' in decision-making processes, bearing in mind that the relevant 'public' depends on the topic being addressed.

The Toolkit offers overviews of 40 different participatory methods, with in-depth descriptions of 13 techniques. They range from small-scale dialogue settings to consultative exercises engaging thousands of people at a time. Some techniques are aimed primarily at citizens or stakeholders; others solicit input from experts in a particular field. Examples of methods are the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Meeting, the Citizens Jury, the Consensus Conference and the World Café.

Participatory Methods Toolkit: A practitioner's manual, September 2005, available on [www.kbs-frb.be](http://www.kbs-frb.be) or [www.viWTA.be](http://www.viWTA.be)



Common Basic Principle Nr. 9 recognises that the participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies and measures, especially at the local level, supports their integration. Various forms of democratic participation of immigrants are discussed in Chapter 2 of the first edition of the Handbook on Integration.

### Sharing local experiences

The exchange of experiences among local communities can serve as an inspiration regarding innovative projects or approaches. In a more structured way, such horizontal exchanges can also give rise to common indicators or evaluation methods. Local communities could develop common quality standards on integration. One way of identifying criteria for good integration policies, or 'success factors', is by carrying out competitions. National or European competitions can be used as a framework to gather and make known initiatives that promote integration.





The competition 'Successful integration is no coincidence: strategies of local integration policy', initiated by the German Ministry of Interior and the Bertelsmann Foundation, was driven by the following questions: 'Where do our local communities stand today with regard to integration? What strategies have they pursued? And what successes have they had?'

Although the competition's two-stage application process required a considerable amount of time and effort, several smaller communities were represented in the group of 23 finalists (of 107 contributions). The jury, which was composed of 11 experts, personally visited 15 communities and finally awarded prizes to four local authorities of different sizes.

Ten recommendations for a successful local integration policy were developed on the basis of the competition and published together with an extensive documentation of the local communities' experiences. The 100-page documentation has been distributed to local authorities in Germany, and an English summary has also been produced. Although local communities are the primary addressees of the documentation and recommendations, the competition was also motivated by the aim of providing Federal government with insights about the practical experiences of communities.



Website: [www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de](http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de)

European exchanges take place in the context of different federal structures, degrees of centralisation and distribution of competences across national, regional and local levels. At the same time, both horizontal exchanges and links with other levels of government have proven fruitful for the integration efforts of many local communities. Several European networks have taken on integration as a key concern (see Chapter 2).

## 4.2 Planning and evaluating integration policies

The translation of overall policy goals into concrete integration programmes and projects requires careful planning, of which the definition of clear objectives is an integral part.



Objectives should be **SMART**:

**Specific:** Objectives should be precise and concrete enough not to be open to varying interpretations.

**Measurable:** Objectives should define a desired future state in measurable terms, so that it is possible to verify whether the objective has been achieved or not. Such objectives are either quantified or based on a combination of description and scoring scales.

**Accepted:** If objectives and target levels are to influence behaviour, they must be accepted, understood and interpreted similarly by all of those who are expected to take responsibility for achieving them.



**Realistic:** Objectives and target levels should be ambitious – setting an objective that only reflects the current level of achievement is not useful – but they should also be realistic so that those responsible see them as meaningful.

**Time-dependent:** Objectives and target levels remain vague if they are not related to a fixed date or time period.

European Commission, Impact Assessment Guidelines, SEC (2005) 791, June 2005

During the implementation of integration programmes, policy-makers and practitioners may at some stage ask themselves the following questions: how well did we succeed in achieving the objectives defined in the beginning? Did we in fact do what we set out to do? Who participated in the programme and why; who did not participate and why? For whom did the programme work (or not work)? What were the critical factors determining the outcome? How were the risks managed and the opportunities used? Were there differences between men and women, young and old? Did these groups receive special attention? Evaluations can be used to address some of these questions. They can help in decision-making about objectives and priorities, and about the allocation of resources. They can also increase knowledge of needs and problems, identify unwanted outcomes, and explain why stated goals were not reached.

Evaluation techniques are commonly used to look at individual projects and at their success in accomplishing set objectives. However, only checking for effective implementation will not capture problems with the overall strategic direction, since 'bad policy can be implemented well' as much as 'good policy can be implemented badly'.

It may therefore be useful to make policies themselves the subject of evaluations. In this way, the assumptions underpinning funding programmes can be questioned before significant resources are invested. At the same time, experience shows that some of the parameters for integration policy are set by political realities. In such cases, it is important to make explicit the political goals linked with integration and to base programmes on a clear statement of purpose.

Some of the complexities surrounding the definition of targets for integration policies, and the choice of indicators for measuring progress, are discussed in Chapter 3 of the first edition of the Handbook on Integration.

Evaluations look chiefly at the appropriateness and quality of integration policies themselves, for which good governance indicators can be developed, rather than attempting to measure the 'degree of integration' of individuals or immigrant groups, which remains a challenge.





In France, the LOLF (Loi organique sur les lois de finances) is one of the elements supporting the performance orientation of public administration. It provides for an information system on the precise cost of specific public policies. Every programme has a PAP (Projet annuel de performances) specifying the activities planned, their cost, the objectives of the programme as well as past and projected results according to specific indicators.

The PAP of the 'reception of foreigners and integration' programme is being presented to Parliament in 2006. Identifying indicators has been difficult because PAPs look only at the specific programmes under review, whereas many factors play a role in shaping integration outcomes. Two indicators have been chosen: (1) the percentage of signatories to the reception and integration contract who follow the civic training, and (2) the percentage of non-Francophone beneficiaries of public reception services who, at the end of their training, obtain a certificate of elementary French language proficiency.



Evaluation ideally goes hand in hand with planning, or at least informs any major changes to programmes that are already in place. Evaluations of pilot projects can also be used to shape and modify ongoing programmes.

For instance, in Norway the evaluation of pilot integration courses in 26 municipalities was used to adjust the policy before its extension to the national level.



The Swiss programme for promoting the social integration of foreigners provides an annual credit of approximately 9 million Euros to about 600 co-financed projects. It targets five priority areas: (1) language skills, (2) opening up institutions, (3) small local projects, (4) regional centres of competence, and (5) innovation and quality assurance.

For the evaluation of the first programme phase (2001-2003), partial evaluations of the five priority areas were carried out as steps towards the final synthesis and summary report. The schedule of partial and final evaluation reports was designed so that interim results could already be used for developing the next programme phase (2004-2007). Similarly, current evaluation activities will play a role in the definition of the next phase (from 2008).



Website: [www.eka-cfe.ch](http://www.eka-cfe.ch)

### Evaluation methods

Both external evaluations and self-evaluations are used in the field of immigrant integration.



Self-evaluations can build the capacity of administrations and promote organisational learning and the identification of best practices. On the other hand, external evaluations provide an outside view and can make an independent and credible assessment of policies' actual impact.



Evaluations typically include a number of policy recommendations, which may be highly political given the public profile of immigrant integration. They may also have significant financial implications. Where external evaluations are used, the terms of reference should define the relationship between the commissioning body and the evaluator and clearly set out the scope of the task at hand. Competitive tender procedures often facilitate the establishment of such explicit 'ground rules'.

The means employed should be proportionate to the aims and to the prospective function of the evaluation in the overall process of policy-making and implementation. Methodology and data collection should be adapted to the circumstances.



For instance, control groups are desirable from a scientific point of view but are generally difficult to designate in the context of integration interventions. In situations where the target population fluctuates, evaluators should opt for continuous monitoring rather than for before-after tests, which are likely to suffer from a high degree of attrition.

The definition of target groups is a key step in any evaluation. In the Swiss programme for promoting the social integration of foreigners, a useful distinction was made between direct target groups and 'end users'. For instance, an intercultural training programme targeted 'key players' such as janitors or sports coaches. The evaluation showed that these key players benefited from the training programmes but did not use their knowledge effectively enough in their interactions with 'end users', i.e. society more broadly. An analysis of 'next steps' should therefore be included in a complete assessment of the programme's impact.

Timing is an important consideration when choosing evaluation methods. For instance, quantitative evaluations can be especially valuable in the early implementation phases, while qualitative methods can yield helpful information on the impact of longer-running programmes.

Ongoing data collection in the framework of performance management systems is increasingly becoming a part of public and private programmes in the integration field. Often, the monitoring of outputs is a 'built-in' project activity required by the supervising or funding body. Such regular auditing processes can stimulate the learning process within an organisation while laying the foundation for future (often external) evaluations. In fact, ex-post evaluations of programmes without regular data gathering mechanisms are unlikely to attain a scientific standard because they will be 'snapshots' rather than looking at outputs and impacts over time.

In summary, a well-balanced mix of quantitative and qualitative methods, and of internal and external evaluations, is most likely to contribute to a comprehensive understanding. At the same time, limitations will remain because of the multifaceted and complex nature of integration.





Common Basic Principle Nr. 11 affirms that 'developing clear goals, indicators and evaluation mechanisms is necessary to adjust policy, evaluate progress on integration and to make the exchange of information more effective'. More concretely, the Commission Communication on a Common Agenda for Integration suggests that admission procedures, introduction programmes (especially compulsory programmes) and other integration policies should be evaluated and monitored through national impact assessments, stakeholder-consultation mechanisms such as surveys, indicators and monitoring measures. The Commission also calls upon Member States to support the exchange of information on national evaluation tools, and to develop where appropriate European criteria for the process of comparative learning.

Can common standards be developed in the field of evaluation? International sets of standards do exist, for the most part on ethical issues. They are typically not specific to the topic of immigrant integration but can nevertheless be used to inform evaluations planned in this field. At the level of EU funding programmes, common standards for evaluating projects are being developed. The EU could also help to raise the profile of evaluation as a key component of good administration and planning.

### 4.3 Resource management

Resources may be broadly understood as 'assets', which can be mobilised by different types of actors. A successful integration governance structure maximises the positive impact of resources by setting out well-defined roles for each actor and providing a framework that offers adequate support. It is a matter of good governance to answer to the question: 'who does what best, and what do they need to do it?'



Good resource management matches resources of different types. In a well-managed project financial capital is matched with human resources and other assets that participants bring to the table. Voluntary work is also an important resource.

Well-designed integration programmes do not rely on one type of resource to the exclusion of others but use a balanced combination to make the most of all participants' contributions.

The following section looks at funding in the area of immigrant integration. It examines the role of the state as a funding body for regions, municipalities or the voluntary sector and considers the European context and EU funding. It then looks at private foundations and how they define their position in the integration field. Overall, financial support is the dominant aspect but is typically embedded in other forms of support and influence.



## Public funding

Funding is always an expression of priorities, and funding programmes at all levels are associated with a certain strategic direction. In the national context, governments aim to distribute resources according to the needs of different target groups and according to political and societal priorities. These priorities may be subject to change. For instance, in several Member States funding has been primarily directed at refugees, which are seen as a group with 'unambiguous' needs, but is now starting to cover migrants as well. Funding needs are also affected by legislative developments such as laws making compulsory the participation in integration programmes. In many Member States federal funding is directed towards sub-national levels of government, often involving significant amounts. Regional, national and European funding sources should complement each other. Taken together, considerable amounts of money are made available for the promotion of immigrant integration.

In Estonia, the following sources of financing have provided resources for integration measures over the past years:

- State budget (different ministries)
- EU pre-accession programmes (incl. Phare)
- EU post-accession programmes
- EU structural funds (incl. European Social Fund)
- Other EU financial instruments (incl. 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme)
- Bilateral (Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Norway, UK, US, Canada, Netherlands, etc.)

Although much of the bilateral funding and the EU pre-accession programmes are no longer relevant, Estonia still has more international than national funding on integration.

In addition to the immediate monetary impact, international support has also influenced Estonian funding practices more broadly. For instance, the procedures of the Non-Estonians' Integration Foundation, which in 2005 disbursed 5.7 million Euros, are based on Phare programme procedures. Estonian public procurement rules at the time of the Foundation's creation (1998) were vague and mainly limited to the construction sector, and the Phare procedures covering service tenders, supply tenders, grant schemes and individual scholarships were seen as helpful in this context.

In the Czech Republic, EU funding sources have included Phare, INTI, the European Social Fund and the European Refugee Fund. In 2005 17 projects were co-financed by the EU with a total amount of around 4.8 million Euro.

Since limited resources are available, it is often the EU that provides multi-year and high-volume funding, offering financial stability to the NGOs delivering integration programmes. The organisations can move beyond short-term targeted actions and



address structural issues such as labour market problems. EU programmes such as EQUAL also stimulate transnational learning and are at the origin of many innovative projects.

NGOs and ministries have had to adapt to the procedures associated with EU funding. They initially underestimated the amount of effort and staff time required for applications and reports, which is much higher than for state-funded projects. In addition, delays in payments forced several NGOs to take out bank loans to temporarily cover their costs.



The Spanish Integration Fund was created in 2005 as a national contribution to the integration policies implemented at regional and local level. Its volume was 120 million Euros in the first year, rising to 182.4 million Euros in 2006. This compares with an integration budget at national level of ca. 7.5 million Euros annually in 2000-2004.

The funding is transferred in full to the Autonomous Communities (regional governments), on the condition that they provide 30% co-financing. Distribution criteria include the number of non-EU nationals registered with the municipalities, as workers in the Social Security System, or as agricultural workers. There is also an allowance for special influx situations, for instance in the case of Andalusia. 40% of the money provided by the Integration Fund must be spent directly by municipalities and is passed on to them by the Autonomous Communities.

The main activities financed are the strengthening of general public services, intercultural training for the personnel of public services and professionals of integration services, and exchange of experiences and good practices. 50% of the Fund's total amount is assigned to education, covering reception programmes in schools.

The Fund seeks to foster the emergence of a coherent national integration strategy by stimulating regional and local integration policies and by promoting cooperation between the different levels of government. Joint decisions on priorities are taken by the national administration and by the Autonomous Communities, which submit regional action plans. Bilateral monitoring commissions are set up with each Autonomous Community and are tasked with tracking progress and preparing new proposals on an annual basis.



In Denmark, the Integration Act provides the statutory basis for the financing of municipal integration efforts. The local authorities are responsible for the housing of refugees, offering introduction programmes, paying benefits to eligible persons, and co-ordinating the general integration effort in the municipality. In 2004, 17,244 persons fell within the scope of the Integration Act, principally refugees and family migrants.

Under the current financing system, a combination of different financial instruments is used to transfer funds to municipalities. They receive a basic grant allocated per person for three years, intended to cover expenses on interpreters, information, guidance and counselling, accommodation, etc., as well as programme grants for Danish courses and employment/education programmes. Municipalities are also reimbursed for certain



expenses and can obtain performance grants if a person passes the Danish language test or finds employment for at least six months within the three-year introductory period.

The objective of the financing system is to provide municipalities with incentives for an active integration effort. In addition to the performance grants, the main instrument is the way in which the basic grant is paid out: the municipality receives this grant during the entire introductory period, regardless of whether the person is employed or receives public benefits. If the person finds employment before the three years are over, the municipality can use the remainder of the basic grant, which is not earmarked specifically for integration activities, any way it wishes.

Governments also fund other societal actors such as the voluntary sector. In this area, grants can differ widely in size. For instance, the UK Home Office administers the Refugee Community Development Fund, which gives small grants of up to 7200 Euros to organisations for capacity building, provision of new services, and building of community relations. Only one grant is made to an organisation in any financial year. At the same time, many of the national voluntary sector organisations working in the refugee integration field are core-funded by the Home Office with around 8.6 million Euros annually.

At European level different types of funds are made available which directly or indirectly promote integration. The biggest funds are known as the Structural Funds and they work towards the goal of achieving economic and social cohesion in the European Union. Resources are targeted at actions that help to bridge gaps between the more and the less developed regions and which promote equal employment opportunities between different social groups. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) are well known examples. Under these large funds particular initiatives are taken such as EQUAL, funded through the ESF, which aims to promote new ways of combating all forms of discrimination and inequalities in the labour market on the basis of transnational cooperation. The target groups include immigrants. The Urban Initiative, in the ERDF, aims to promote the design and implementation of innovative models of development for the economic and social regeneration of troubled urban areas. It strengthens the exchange of information on sustainable urban development in the European Union. This specific programme will be discontinued, but from 2007 there is likely to be a continued emphasis on projects concerning the development of cities in a new generation of programmes under this fund.

Research and Development funds promote research, including the production of policy relevant knowledge of migration and integration processes. DG Justice, Freedom and Security manages a number of funding programmes. For example, the European Refugee Fund (ERF) which assists Member States of the European Union and other stakeholders to receive asylum seekers, refugees and displaced persons. Under the new financial perspectives for the years 2007-2013 a new and substantial fund dedicated to the integration of third-country nationals will be introduced alongside ERF. It has been preceded by the INTI





programme which aims to support governments and non-governmental actors with their work on immigrant integration.



INTI is a European Union funding programme of preparatory actions promoting the integration in the EU Member States of people who are not citizens of the EU. Its aim is to promote dialogue with civil society, develop integration models, seek out and evaluate best practices in the integration field and set up networks at European level. INTI encourages co-operation between Member States, their regional and local authorities and other stakeholders and the creation of trans-national partnerships and networks. The underlying principle is to promote new and innovative ways of integrating immigrants, building wherever possible on past experience. Priority is given to actions enhancing the empowerment of migrants and contributing to a trans-national and constructive dialogue. The last call for proposals for INTI (in 2006) aims at providing financial support to actions which contribute to the realisation of the following three specific objectives:

- To support the setting up of trans-national co-operation networks or pilot projects designed to identify, exchange and evaluate good practices and new approaches in the field of integration.
- To increase the knowledge base for the development of integration policies EU-wide.
- To support trans-national dialogue and awareness on integration issues and its impact on society.



[http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/funding/intro/wai/funding\\_intro\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/funding/intro/wai/funding_intro_en.htm)

Funding issues are often central to the identity and capability of NGOs (see Chapter 1). Organisations may not receive core funding and may face strict project limitations on eligible budget items. At the same time, they must find the resources to design projects, build partnerships, write proposals and negotiate funding. Reporting requirements may vary according to the funding body, creating burdens for organisations that rely on multiple funding sources. It could be beneficial to introduce easier application processes, for instance in two stages where the first stage is a simple 'expression of interest' and full proposals are only submitted by shortlisted organisations. Allowing for overhead costs can also help organisations to look beyond short-term project targets at the changing needs of the population they serve. However, NGOs often lack financial expertise to evaluate their overhead costs effectively and allocate them to their various projects.

### Private funding

Private foundations across Europe are increasingly involved in the integration field. Some foundations are mainly grant-making, meaning that they see their primary function in supporting the activities of others. Others are more operative, developing initiatives themselves and engaging directly in a variety of projects. However, there is no strict division: many foundations are both grant-making and operative, and a wide spectrum of funding models exists. Foundations may vary in their emphasis on long-term or short-



term funding, their support of organisations or of projects, and the degree to which they involve outside partners of different kinds.

The German Körber Foundation, which has an endowment of 526 million Euros and disbursed approximately 11 million in 2005, aims to support civic involvement in integration. It is particularly interested in new ideas and bottom-up initiatives. The Foundation grants start-up funding to such initiatives and also gives awards to model projects (e.g. the 'Hamburg Tulip' award for German-Turkish integration projects), helping them to access other funding sources and become sustainable without relying on long-term funding from the Foundation.

Website: [www.stiftung.koerber.de](http://www.stiftung.koerber.de)



The British Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT), with an endowment of 180 million Euros and annual grants of about 7.5 million, similarly uses small grants with the aim of building confidence to apply for mainstream funding. In addition to funding projects, the JRCT gives core grants to organisations such as black and ethnic minority groups. The Trust often gives several 3-year core grants in a row, since it considers that new arrivals need time to become familiar with NGO governance structures, civil society in the UK, and types of funding mechanisms available. Grantees receive support in the form of partnerships and networking.

Website: [www.jrct.org.uk](http://www.jrct.org.uk)



The German Hertie Foundation, with 800 million Euros in assets and a 25 million annual outlay, develops model projects on integration and extends them with the help of partners. For instance, the START programme grants gifted 15-18 year old immigrants a stipend of 100 Euros/month and involves them in an intensive programme of coaching, excursions etc. From 50 beneficiaries initially, the programme has grown to include 160 youths in 2005 and up to 300 in 2006. More than 20 foundations, ministries of education, municipalities, private individuals, companies, clubs and associations are now involved in START. Each contributor can choose how many scholarships to fund (at 5000 Euros/year) or whether to volunteer time and expertise for the project. The Hertie Foundation funds START with 5.5 million Euros.

Website: [www.ghst.de](http://www.ghst.de)



The legal framework and basic governance structure are unequivocally a state responsibility.

Foundations generally do not want to substitute for the state but want to take on a complementary and innovative role. Beyond their role in supporting concrete initiatives, they may also bring together specialists, build coalitions of interest, commission and





publicise relevant research, fund immigrant advocacy, or contribute in other ways to policy development.

Increased networking takes place between foundations at national and international level. The European framework is seen as a valuable opportunity for the exchange of good practices and the development of common initiatives. For example, the 'European Programme for Integration and Migration' (EPIM) is a collaborative effort of ten European foundations. EPIM makes grants available to European-level NGOs and to European networks of nationally-based NGOs. It also organises a series of consultations in Member States (2006-2007).



## Chapter 4: Conclusions

1. Investing in building and maintaining an integration governance structure is well worth the effort as it helps to develop an integration vision and strategy, generate resources, mobilise people and organisations, forge partnerships and build trust, all being crucially important for the achievement of short and longer term integration goals.
2. Structured communication and dialogue between European, national and local governance levels makes it possible to anticipate and assess the impact of measures taken at one level on another level. Equally, outcomes of integration programmes at one level could inform policies at other levels.
3. Strong and visible leadership of mayors and/or elected local officials on integration issues is instrumental to a coherent approach to integration across multiple policy areas and helps bridge gaps between government and residents with or without an immigrant background.
4. Local integration policies are more effective when they build on the support of the whole community. Rather than being directed at migrants only, they relate to all residents as well as the administration itself. Often, they require real changes across a number of departments and fields of municipal action. Political backing is therefore essential.
5. Local integration networks ideally have a clear status within the community's political and administrative set-up. Their mandate could be to raise issues of particular concern and to make recommendations, without prejudice to the decision-making competences of elected representatives.
6. Evaluations look chiefly at the appropriateness and quality of integration policies themselves, for which good governance indicators can be developed, rather than attempting to measure the 'degree of integration' of individuals or immigrant groups, which remains a challenge.
7. Evaluation ideally goes hand in hand with planning, or at least informs any major changes to programmes that are already in place. Evaluations of pilot projects can also be used to shape and modify ongoing programmes.
8. Self-evaluations can build the capacity of administrations and promote organisational learning and the identification of best practices. On the other hand, external evaluations provide an outside view and can make an independent and credible assessment of policies' actual impact.
9. The means employed should be proportionate to the aims and to the prospective function of the evaluation in the overall process of policy-making and implementation. Methodology and data collection should be adapted to the circumstances.
10. Good resource management matches resources of different types. In a well-managed project financial capital is matched with human resources and other assets that participants bring to the table. Voluntary work is also an important resource.





11. Foundations generally do not want to substitute for the state but want to take on a complementary and innovative role. Beyond their role in supporting concrete initiatives, they may also bring together specialists, build coalitions of interest, commission and publicise relevant research, fund immigrant advocacy, or contribute in other ways to policy development.

## Annex I

# Praxis-based policies - the translation of practices into policies



The handbook describes programmes and projects with a view to presenting good practices and drawing lessons from them. Carefully prepared exchanges can help policy-makers and practitioners to replicate practices or adapt them to particular circumstances, and to develop new programmes.

Further reflection may lead to the translation of project outcomes into policy recommendations. This can help make policies more praxis-based, which in turn enhances the sustainability of integration practices and increases support for integration policies.

The translation process is rather complex and includes a number of steps of which the most important ones are summarised below. First, the quality of programmes and projects must be measured followed by an appraisal of their outcomes and output after which recommendations for new policies or to adapt current policies can be made.

### **1. The quality of the integration projects and programmes is measured by assessing their relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact.**

Programmes and projects are *relevant* when they

- meet clearly identified needs
- are consistent with policy goals
- engage stakeholders and target groups
- build project carriers' institutional capacity

They are *efficient* when they

- achieve results at reasonable costs
- are financially viable or have positive economic return
- produce high quality results
- are co-ordinated, managed and financed adequately

They are *effective* when they

- deliver the anticipated outputs and outcomes
- are managed well and in a transparent way
- address unexpected and negative side-effects
- are owned by stakeholders and target groups

They are *sustainable* when they

- continue after the initial phase
- attract support from new sponsors or generate their own resources
- set up monitoring and evaluation mechanisms
- develop management skills on an ongoing basis

They have an *impact* when they

- deliver products or services to stakeholders and target groups
- improve the socio-economic position of target groups
- change behaviour and organisational culture
- affect the wider environment
- contribute to overall policy objectives

## **2. Projects and programmes are appraised by comparing them to each other, identifying actors, formulating policy options and prospectively assessing their impact.**

### *Comparative analysis*

- the outputs and outcomes of various programmes and projects are collected, described and compared
- additional information is gathered and further research undertaken
- factors contributing to success or failure are identified and analysed

### *Identifying actors*

- responsibilities and accountability issues are specified for governmental and non-governmental actors
- governance levels are established: from local, regional, national to European
- stakeholders and target groups are consulted and negotiations among them take place

### *Formulating policy options*

- conclusions are drawn from the comparative analysis and identification of actors
- issues are described which will be addressed by proposed policy options
- concrete policy recommendations are formulated and presented

### *Prospective impact assessment*

- environmental, economic and social impacts (direct and indirect) of the policy options are analysed
- risks and uncertainties including implementation and compliance obstacles are considered
- options are compared and the preferred option is translated into concrete policy proposals

## **3. The (set of) concrete policy proposals are submitted to the competent decision-making body for consideration and processed in accordance with its rules of procedure.**



## Annex II

# National Contact Points on Integration



### **Austria**

Federal Ministry of the Interior (Bundesministerium für Inneres) – Department III/4  
Residence and Citizenship Matters  
Herrngasse 7, 1014 Vienna, Austria, fax: +43 1531263159

### **Belgium**

Cabinet of Minister Christian Dupont, Minister for Public Office, Social Integration, Big Cities' Policy and Equal Opportunities (Ministre de la Fonction publique, d'Intégration sociale, de la Politique des grandes villes et de l'Égalité des chances)  
Rue de la Loi 51, B-1040 Bruxelles, Belgique, fax: +32 27905798

Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism (Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme)  
Rue Royale 138, B-1000 Bruxelles, Belgique, fax: +32 22123030

### **Cyprus**

Ministry of Interior (Υπουργείο Εσωτερικών) – EU and International Relations Section  
Demosthenis Severis Avenue, 1453 Nicosia, Cyprus, fax: +357 22867755

### **Czech Republic**

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí) – Department for Migration and Integration of Foreigners  
Na Poříčním právu 1/376, 128 01 Praha 2, Czech Republic, fax: +420 221923090

### **Denmark**

Ministry of Integration (Ministeriet for Flygtninge, Indvandrere og Integration) – Unit for Integration Policy  
Holbergsgade 6, DK-1057 Copenhagen K, Denmark, fax: +45 33951479

### **Estonia**

State Chancellery (Riigikantselei) – Office of the Minister for Population and Ethnic Affairs  
The Stenbock House, Rahukohtu 3, 15161 Tallinn, Estonia, fax: +372 3326151

### **Finland**

Ministry of Labour (Työministeriö) – Policy Department  
Eteläesplanadi 4, P.O. Box 34, FIN-00023, fax: +358 916049184

### **France**

Ministry of Employment, Social Cohesion and Housing (Ministère de l'Emploi, de la Cohésion sociale et du Logement) – Directorate for Population and Migrations  
Bureau DMI 3, 14 Avenue Duquesne, 75350 Paris 07 SP, France, fax: +33 140565349

## **Germany**

Federal Ministry of Interior (Bundesministerium des Innern) – Unit MI2 Fundamental Issues of Integration

Dienstsitz Berlin, Alt-Moabit 101 D, 10559 Berlin, Germany, fax: +49 188868151918

## **Greece**

Ministry of Interior (Υπουργείο Εσωτερικών) – Directorate of Aliens and Migration – Social Integration Sector

2 Evangelistrias Str., 105 63 Athens, Greece, fax: +30 2103223335

## **Hungary**

Ministry of Justice and Law Enforcement (Igazságügyi és Rendészeti Minisztérium) – Migration Department

Kossuth Lajos tér 4., 1055 Budapest, Hungary, fax: +36 14412932

## **Ireland**

Reception & Integration Agency

Block C, Ardilaun Centre 112 - 114 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2, Ireland, fax: +353 14133271

## **Italy**

Ministry of Interior (Ministero dell'Interno) – Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration – Central Directorate for Immigration and Asylum Policies

Palazzo Viminale, Via A. Depretis, 00184 Roma, Italy, fax: +39 06 46549751

Ministry for Social Solidarity (Ministero della Solidarietà Sociale) – Directorate General for Immigration

Via Fornovo 8, 00192 Roma, Italy, fax: +39 06 36754769

## **Latvia**

Secretariat of the Special Assignment Minister for Social Integration (Īpašu uzdevumu ministra sabiedrības integrācijas lietās sekretariāts)

Elizabetes Str. 20, 2nd floor, LV-1050 Riga, fax: +371 7365335

## **Lithuania**

Ministry of Social Security and Labour (Socialinės apsaugos ir darbo ministerija) – International Affairs Department

A. Vivulskio Str. 11, LT-03610 Vilnius, Lithuania, fax: +370 52664209



### **Luxembourg**

Ministry of Family and Integration (Ministère de la Famille et de l'Intégration) –  
Government Department for Foreigners  
12-14, Avenue Emile Reuter, L-2919 Luxembourg, fax: +352 4783672

### **Malta**

Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity (Ministeru għall-Familja u Solidarjeta' Soċjali)  
Palazzo Ferreria, 310 Republic Street, Valletta CMR 02, Malta, fax: +356 25903121

### **Netherlands**

Ministry of Justice (Ministerie van Justitie) – Minorities Integration Policy Department  
Schedeldoekshaven 100, P.O. BOX 20301, 2500 EH Den Haag, the Netherlands, fax: +31  
703709089

### **Poland**

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (Ministerstwo Pracy i Polityki Społecznej) –  
Department of Social Assistance and Integration  
1/3/5 Nowogrodzka Str., 00-513 Warsaw, Poland, fax: +48 226611140

### **Portugal**

Presidency of the Council of Ministers (Presidência do Conselho de Ministros)  
Rua Prof. Gomes Teixeira, 1399-022 Lisboa, Portugal, fax: +351 213927860

### **Slovakia**

Ministry of Interior (Ministerstva vnútra) – Migration Office  
Pivonková 6, 812 72 Bratislava, Slovak Republic, fax: +421 243414759

Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny)  
Špitálska 4, 816 43 Bratislava, Slovak Republic, fax: +421 252921271

### **Slovenia**

Ministry of Interior (Ministrstvo za notranje zadeve) – Internal Administrative Affairs  
Directorate  
Stefanova 2, 1501 Ljubljana, Slovenia, fax: +386 12833647

### **Spain**

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales) –  
Directorate General for the Integration of Migrants  
C/ José Abascal, 39 -1ª Planta-, 28003 Madrid, Spain, fax: +34 913637057

**Sweden**

Ministry of Justice (Justitiedepartementet) – Division for Immigrant Integration and Diversity

S-103 33 Stockholm, Sweden, fax: +46 84053578

**United Kingdom**

Home Office – Immigration and Nationality Policy Directorate

Apollo House, 36 Wellesley Road, Croydon, Surrey CR9 3RR, United Kingdom, fax: +44 2087608008

**Observers****Bulgaria**

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (Министерство на труда и социалната политика)

– Unit for Eurointegration 2

2, Triaditza Str., 1051 Sofia, Bulgaria, fax: +359 29873980

**Romania**

Ministry of Administration and Interior (Ministerul Administrației și Internelor) – National Refugee Office – Social Integration Department

15 Vasile Stolnicu street, Bucharest 2, Romania, fax: +40 212408510







This Handbook offers best practices and lessons learned from 25 EU Member States on the following themes: mainstreaming immigrant integration, housing in an urban environment, economic integration and integration governance. It has been developed in close cooperation with the National Contact Points on Integration and aims to promote the creation of a coherent European framework on integration by facilitating the exchange of experience and information. The Handbook is addressed to policy-makers and practitioners at the local, regional, national and EU levels.



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