



INTEGRATION

POLICY OPTION
BRIEF

March **2019**

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Comprehensive and mainstreamed, longer-term
support for the integration of migrants:
Options for the 2021 to 2027 MFF



ReSOMA identifies the most pressing topics and needs relating to the migration, asylum and integration debate. Building on the identification of pivotal issues and controversies in the ReSOMA Discussion Briefs, **ReSOMA Policy Option Briefs** provide an overview of available evidence and new analysis of policy alternatives. They take stock of existing literature of policy solutions on asylum, migration and integration, highlight the alternatives that can fill key policy gaps and map their support among various stakeholders. They have been written under the supervision of Sergio Carrera (CEPS/EUI) and Thomas Huddleston (MPG).

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LINGUISTIC VERSION

Original: EN

Manuscript completed in March 2019

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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under the grant agreement 770730

Comprehensive and mainstreamed, longer-term support for the integration of migrants: Options for the 2021 to 2027 MFF*

1. INTRODUCTION

This ReSOMA Policy Options Brief takes a closer look at proposals which aim to make EU funding support for migrant integration more relevant for comprehensive policies with a longer-term orientation. Such proposals aim to ensure that EU support focuses not only on short-term measures in the arrival context but effectively contributes to mainstreamed integration policies across Europe. Thus, this ReSOMA brief addresses a key topic driving current efforts at improving the EU's response to migration and integration challenges in the next 2021 to 2027 multi-annual financial framework (MFF). Both civil society organisations and local/regional authorities have put forward ideas and concrete proposals for changes in the legal base of the AMF and ESF+ funds as presented by the European Commission in 2018.

This brief introduces the policy option, presents the corresponding proposals advanced by EU-level stakeholder organisations and traces the patterns of debate and support that the proposals garner, with a special focus on the European Parliament and the state of negotiations as of February 2019. Furthermore, the evidence base of the stakeholder proposals is discussed, pointing to key findings that support the arguments and alternative

solutions advocated by stakeholder organisations.

1.1 Policy option mainstreamed, longer-term policies – to promote comprehensive integration policies with a long-term orientation and mainstreaming them on Member State and EU level

Advancing this policy option is informed by the overtly short-term character of integration policies and the weak consideration of integration objectives across relevant policy areas in many Member States. EU funding programmes have the potential to improve the quality of integration policies in terms of their long-term orientation and of mainstreaming them into all areas which impact on the integration outlook and well-being of migrants and refugees – such as housing, employment, education and health. On Member State level, the policy option stresses EU support for ongoing, seamless and well-integrated measures aimed at enabling the inclusion of migrants and refugees in all walks of life, with no funding gaps emerging along the integration

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pathway. On EU level, the policy option relates to a stronger emphasis on social inclusion goals in overall EU economic and social governance, and how these goals translate into specific objectives of EU programmes conceived to facilitate integration.

Proposals put forward by stakeholder organisations start from the fact that EU integration funding up to now focuses on short term needs related to the arrival and reception context in many Member States, with comparatively little funding used for e.g. long-term labour market integration. Moreover, governments have wide discretion on whether EU funds implemented on national level become available for longer-term integration

measures or would in any way contribute to mainstreaming of migrant integration across policies. As a result, measures that receive EU support often are piecemeal, poorly integrated into coherent, longer-term strategies and not linked to an all-of-government and all-of-society response to immigration. What is more, policies aimed at longer-term and more comprehensive integration are under threat where governments perceive them as creating pull factors or being unpopular with the own citizens (cf. ReSoma Discussion Brief on 'maintaining mainstreaming', chapter 4 on key issues and controversies).

2. PROPOSALS, THEIR DEBATE AND EVIDENCE BASE

The policy option aiming for mainstreamed, longer-term integration policies responds to the Commission proposals for the 2021 to 2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (EC 2018a, b, c) with regard to:

- the European Social Fund (as ESF+) to become a foremost EU funding source for migrant integration with a longer-term impact, in particular for measures related to labour market integration and social inclusion;
- ESF+ specific objectives relating to the funds' various intervention areas (including labour market participation, education and training, equal access to services and fighting poverty and deprivation);
- provisions to concentrate ESF+ resources on challenges identified in national reform programmes, in the European Semester and Country-Specific Recommendations (CSR);
- the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) in future also applying to the Asylum and Migration Fund (AMF), next to the Structural Funds which include ESF+;
- provisions in the CPR to link programming of funds implemented in Member States more strongly to the European Semester and Country-Specific Recommendations (CSR) made in this context;
- horizontal and thematic 'enabling conditions' in the CPR, setting out prerequisite conditions for implementation of the funds, incl. on ef-

fective application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights;

- provisions in the AMF regulation stipulating a focus of integration spending under this fund on the early stages of integration of third-country nationals.

More information on the Commission proposals for the upcoming EU programme period can be found in the ReSoma Discussion Briefs on 'sustaining mainstreaming' and 'cities as providers of services', chapters 3.2 on the EU post-2021 policy agenda.

2.1 Specific proposals put forward

Specific **stakeholder proposals** put forward as reaction to the Commission proposals and relevant for this policy option (details cf. Annex) include:

- A proper balance among social and macroeconomic objectives in the European Semester process, to ensure adequate investment for social inclusion and poverty reduction;
- more regular monitoring through the European Semester of how Member States implement enabling conditions, including the application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights;
- mainstreaming of integration support across the ESF+, with third country nationals as recipients of measures under all the specific objectives and an enhanced equality clause;
- strong coordination on EU level and between Managing Authorities in Member States of the actions and pri-

orities implemented under AMF, ESF+ and ERDF shared management, to the point of establishing cross-Fund national integration Monitoring Committees;

- priorities of the European Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals to be addressed in national operational programmes for ESF+ implementation;
- ongoing, effective support for early and long-term integration and foregoing of possible funding gaps due to the way Member States implement AMF and ESF+.

2.2 Patterns of debate & support

The thrust of these proposals is widely supported by the European stakeholder organisations that have voiced an opinion on the Commission's legislative proposals. Organisations active in the social inclusion field are particularly outspoken on the social dimension of the European Semester and its implications for how EU monies are spent in Member States. It is also the aspect where stakeholder positions appear most critical of the Commission plans. Nevertheless, both civil society- and local authority-based stakeholder organisations are broadly supportive of the Commission proposals to increase integration spending under ESF+ and suggest modifications that would better ensure the actual use of ESF+ as a lever for integration mainstreaming, as well as for longer-term orientation of integration policies in Member States.

Among the membership of European stakeholder organisations, the interest in additional impetus for integration mainstreaming arriving through EU pro-

grammes is highest in countries where there is a lack of comprehensive policies with a long-term outlook. That said, better coordination among EU funds as they are being implemented through different authorities is a shared concern of integration stakeholders throughout the EU (typically, AMIF has been channeled through home affairs portfolios and ESF through ministries of employment and social affairs). If not done in a proper way, the fear goes, uncoordinated priority-setting in Member States AMF and ESF+ programmes may lead to painful funding gaps, missing out on support for integration in both funds.

While stakeholder concerns related to AMF pertain to the risk of non-use for integration in the absence of minimum allocations to the integration/legal migration programme objective, fears related to the ESF+ stem from the reluctance of many Member States to effectively regard migrant integration as within the scope of this fund. For many actors on national level, the ESF is traditionally tied to a European cohesion philosophy and a notion of using EU means to facilitate socio-economic catch-up processes of Member States and a reduction of development gaps among European countries. The idea to spend EU means on migrants and not for the 'own people' often sits uneasy, in particular in countries hard hit by the economic crisis in recent years, or where a self-perception as country of transit still prevails. A similar reluctance can be observed in the context of the ERDF, which may be used to finance reception infrastructures.

Support in the European Parliament

In the European Parliament, as co-legislator of the future EU funds in the 2021 to 2027 MFF, a number of the con-

cerns brought forward by stakeholder organisations have been taken up in the ongoing negotiations.

With regard to the **ESF+ regulation**, amendments adopted by Parliament in the plenary vote on 16 January 2019 (based on the Report of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee) reflect Parliament's eventual positions on the legislative proposals tabled by the Commission (EP 2018 c,d, 2019b). With a view to the stakeholder proposals, these amendments refer to

- the inclusion of challenges identified in the Social Scoreboard under the European Semester in the provisions on thematic concentration of national ESF+ spending (details cf. 3.1);
- additional general objectives of the ESF+ (and supporting related Member State policies) stressing inclusive societies, the quality of employment, education and training, integration and social cohesion, eradication of poverty, non-discrimination and access to basic services, among others (details cf. 3.3);
- additional specific objectives of the ESF+, among others related to the inclusiveness of education and training systems, services for access to housing, and access to equal social protection, including for disadvantaged groups and the most deprived people (details cf. 3.3);
- highlighting of integration challenges as the context in which the ESF+ will be implemented, and acquisition of language skills, reduction of segregation and non-discriminatory education systems, among others, as goals of the fund (details cf. 3.3);

- compulsory inclusion of Managing Authorities in coordination mechanisms with other EU funds, in order to deliver integrated approaches; with specific reference to coordination of ESF+ with the AMF but also ERDF and the Rights and Values programme (details cf. 3.4);
- inclusion of the EU Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals in the Union initiatives whose implementation is to be supported from ESF+ (details cf. 3.5);
- a separate specific objective of ESF+ solely dedicated to the promotion of long-term socio-economic integration of third country nationals, including migrants (details cf. 3.6);
- clarification of the scope of integration measures supported from ESF+ as focusing on legally residing third-country nationals or on those in the process of acquiring legal residence, including beneficiaries of international protection (details cf. 3.6).

Amendments to the **Common Provisions Regulation**, adopted by the European Parliament on 13 February 2019 based on the report of the Committee on Regional Development (EP 2019c), refer to:

- the Commission, when assessing the, to take into account not only relevant, but also Inclusion of the overall policy objectives of the structural funds (including a more social and inclusive Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights) in the needs assessment leading to Partnership Agreements between Commission and Member States, thus going beyond CSRs (details cf. 3.1);

- progress in support of the European Pillar of Social Rights, territorial needs and demographic challenges to be taken into account in reporting of Structural Funds' implementation, mid-term reviews and adjustments following mid-term reviews (details cf. 3.1);
- arrangements for implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights as horizontal enabling condition, applicable to all specific ESF+ objectives (details cf. 3.2);
- provision that enabling conditions are also seen as prerequisite for inclusive and non-discriminatory (and not only effective and efficient) use of EU support (details cf. 3.2);
- access to non-segregated education and training as part of the national strategic policy framework for the education and training system which is required as thematic enabling condition (details cf. 3.3);
- a concrete action plan as well as measures to combat segregation through access to quality services for migrants and refugees as part of the national strategic policy framework for social inclusion and poverty reduction which is required as thematic enabling condition (details cf. 3.3).

Amendments to the **AMF regulation** in the EP legislative resolution of 13 March 2019, based on the report of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) Committee, further address some of the above-mentioned stakeholder concerns (EP 2018e,f, 2019a):

- stress on the complementarity, coordination and coherence among AMF and the Structural Funds when implementing the specific objective related to integration and social inclusion of

third-country nationals, as well as in the annual performance reports of Member States (details cf. 3.4);

- scope of AMF as supporting integration measures for third-country nationals and actions supporting Member States' capacities in the field of integration that are generally implemented in the early stages of integration, complemented by interventions to promote the social and economic inclusion of third-country nationals financed under the structural funds (details cf. 3.6).

2.3 Evidence base of proposals

Lack of long-term integration policies, paired with sparse EU support

Evidence for the need of a longer-term orientation of integration policies in many Member States comes from comparative research on integration policies in Europe. For example, MIPEX – the Migrant Integration Policy Index* – has been assessing a number of indicators that typically point out whether countries are prepared to provide migrants and their children an enduring, long-term perspective for inclusion and socio-economic well-being. Examined whether EU Member States provide e.g. targeted support for labour market integration (including recognition of qualifications, active economic integration measures, policies for youth and women and support to access public employment services), only Austria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Portugal and Sweden had favourable or slightly favourable policies in place, based on 2014 data (i.e. the countries scored at

* www.mipex.eu

least 60 out of 100 in the policy index). With regard to targeting needs in the education system, similarly indicative for the long-term quality of integration policies (including advice and guidance, language learning support, migrant pupil monitoring, targeted measures to address educational needs as well as teacher training), only Denmark, Estonia, Finland and Sweden scored favourable (i.e. higher than 80), with Belgium, Czechia, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Romania and the UK implementing slightly favourable policies (scoring 60 to 79; Huddleston et al. 2015).

Against this background of widely lacking long-term orientation of integration policies across Europe, the impact of EU instruments supposed to enhance integration policies needs to be assessed. ECRE/UNHCR research on AMIF implementation has pointed out a focus on short-term measures in several Member States. Although a definitive assessment of long-term sustainability of AMIF-funded measures is not yet possible, based on a survey among civil society organisations it seems safe to say that in particular in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania the use of AMIF mainly for the provision of basic services is unlikely to lead to integration support that is functional in the longer term (ECRE/UNHCR 2018: 30). Assessing 26 national AMIF interim evaluation reports, the research also finds that countries tend to focus AMIF integration spending on measures in the early phase of settling in, such as language learning (16 Member States supporting activities), civic and social orientation (13 countries) as well as initial support to access services (11 countries). Fewer states, on the contrary, invest AMIF means in areas which are crucial to providing migrants with a longer-term in-

tegration perspective, such as education (8 countries), housing (6 countries) and health (5 countries), with only labour market integration (14 countries) being the exception to the rule (ECRE/UNHCR 2019: 38f).

With regard to the use of the ESF for support of integration measures with a long-term character, the picture is somewhat different. A 2018 survey among national (regional, in the case of Belgium) authorities represented in the European Integration Network (EIN) identified 15 countries/regions using ESF for migrant-related employment measures, 13 countries/regions funding vocational training from ESF, 14 countries/regions supporting migrant integration under the fund's social inclusion bracket, and eight countries helping migrants in the education field with ESF means. Two countries each, according to this survey done for a report of the European Court of Auditors, use ESF in the housing and health areas (ECA 2018: Annex III; concerning the use of ESF for migrant integration see also ReSOMA Policy Option Brief 'High levels of EU support for migrant integration, implemented by civil society and local authorities', chapter 2.1.3).

Little consideration for migrant integration in the European Semester

The proposition to strengthen the role of the European Semester in guiding Member States efforts for migrant integration hinges on a number of preconditions. First of all, consideration of the employment and social performance of Member States in the governance of the Economic and Monetary Union (as envisaged by the European Pillar of Social Rights) needs to be assured in a policy process originally designed to coordinate macro-

economic policies. Once this basic precondition is fulfilled, migrant integration challenges must feature in the assessment of policy needs in Member States conducted together with the Commission, and from there make it into the rather small number of country-specific recommendations (CSR) designed to drive reforms at national level. These recommendations have to be agreed by the Commission and the Member States and will remain to have a non-binding and unanimous character under the 2021 to 2027 MFF.

It is exactly this context of rather ambitious EU governance objectives in which stakeholder proposals focus on the role of the European Pillar of Social Rights in the European Semester and a strengthening of the EU's hand in the implementation of recommendations. Proposals along these lines can draw on the regular analysis of the adequacy and completeness of CSRs from a social inclusion point of view provided by the European Social Network (ESN), the platform of local public services in the EU. Its 'Reference Group on the European Semester' has been assessing Country Reports and recommendations in the light of the needs identified by the health, social welfare, employment, education and housing services represented in the network. While it notes that 'the importance of the country reports in the European Semester and the level of detail of the analysis contained have increased' over the years (ESN 2016: 22), the Reference Group continues to highlight important gaps and areas where more attention is needed in the Commission's analysis of social policy challenges. For the 2017 Country Reports, these included topics with implications for migrant integration as relevant as acces-

sibility of the health system (in Latvia), housing and homelessness (in Ireland), integration of ethnic minorities groups (in Portugal) and adequately trained staff in social services (in Czechia), to give a few examples (ESN 2017: 22). Looking at the 2016/17 Country-Specific Recommendations, group members representing five Member States expressed a rather negative assessment of the CSRs, while 12 of them agreed or at least partially agreed that the CSRs adequately addressed the main socio-economic challenges of their countries (ESN 2016: 22).

Particularly revealing is the comparison between the priorities for the European Semester identified by ESN's 'country profiles' and the CSRs actually adopted by the Council in the following year. While challenges related to the integration of migrants and refugees were explicitly highlighted by ESN stakeholders in 2017 for Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland and Sweden (ESN 2017), the CSRs adopted in 2018 only in the cases of Austria (concerning the wide performance gap between students with and without a migrant background) and France (related to labour market conditions for people with a migrant background) eventually contained relevant recommendations (CEU 2018 a,b).

Insufficiently coordinated implementation of EU funds

Little systematic analysis exists about the quality of coordination among the implementing authorities and intermediate bodies in Member States of AMIF, ESF and other EU instruments used to support migrant integration. However, the already mentioned report of the European Court of Auditors also highlights the problematic

situation with regard to complementarity, synergies, overlaps and risk of funding gaps. Building on own research, reports of Member State supreme audit institutions and the survey among Member State authorities, it concludes that without effective coordination there is a clear risk of inefficient policy implementation due to the complexity of funding arrangements (ECA 2018: 30).

Overall, next to AMIF eight EU instruments were identified by the ECA report as being used for migrant integration in the current programme period, with 23 countries/regions using ESF, six countries/regions using Erasmus+, five countries/regions using the ERDF, four countries/regions the FEAD, three countries/regions the EAFRD and one country/region each EaSI, Horizon 2020 and the Youth Employment Initiative. More than 400 organisations are calculated to be involved in managing integration measures financed by the EU in the current programme period. In spite of provisions in the EU regulatory framework asking Member States for mechanisms to coordinate the different European instruments, at least in eight Member States national audit institutions identify weaknesses in these coordination mechanisms (ECA 2018: 28-30, Annex III).

Asked about coordination issues among EU funds used for integration, civil society and city funding experts point to key challenges for the upcoming MFF on Member State level.[†] Concerns include

[†] ReSOMA Transnational Feedback Meeting 'Towards coordinated, complementary and comprehensive integration policies funded from EU programmes', March 2019. Participants represented experiences in Belgium, Czechia, Estonia, France, the Netherlands, Poland and Spain.

the duplication of calls resulting from lack of inter-ministerial coordination, overconcentration and disregard for absorption capacities, lack of multi-fund coordination in particular with regard to 'unusual' instruments like EAFRD (supporting integration in rural areas), as well as discrepancies in target group definitions (in particular concerning the residence status of beneficiaries). Provisions for flexibility and adaptability in national programmes is seen as a precondition for using the EU instruments to support innovative, multi-annual and sustainable measures which appropriately respond to migratory and social developments in the course of a programme period.

As the European Social Fund, relabelled ESF+, is intended to gain a much bigger role in EU support for migrant integration, evidence like this weigh in even more heavily. It directly informs stakeholder proposals on better coordination among Managing Authorities and all other authorities and intermediate bodies that are involved in the implementation of the funds.

3. Annex: Stakeholder proposals and their support in detail

3.1

What is proposed	To ensure a proper balance among social and macroeconomic objectives in the European Semester process , so that adequate investment for social inclusion and poverty reduction in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights, including for the socio-economic integration of third-country nationals, is guaranteed. Investments from ESF+ must be able to take into account regional and local realities and support measures tailored to the needs and target groups identified at local level without having to focus on CSR priorities that do not correspond to the most urgent or prevalent needs in an area.
Who is proposing it	<i>among stakeholder organisations:</i> EU Alliance for Investing in Children (incl. PICUM), EUROCITIES, Social Platform
Where does the proposal find support?	<p><i>in the European Parliament:</i></p> <p><u>ESF+ regulation amendments adopted:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to add to the provisions on thematic concentration of national ESF+ spending that Member States shall address the challenges identified in the Social Scoreboard under the European Semester (Amendment 92 on Art 7.1) <p><u>Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) amendments adopted:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Commission, when assessing the Partnership Agreement, to take into account not only relevant country-specific recommendations, but also the overall policy objectives of the structural funds, including a more social and inclusive Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights (Amendment 98 on Art. 9.1 referring to Art. 4 CPR) Member States, when regularly presenting to the monitoring committee and the Commission the progress in implementing the programmes, to take into account not only progress in support of the country-specific recommendations, but also of the European Pillar of Social Rights (Amendment 12 on Rec. 13) mid-term reviews of structural funds (incl ESF+) to take into account not only challenges identified in relevant country-specific recommendations adopted in 2024 and the socio-economic situation, but also the state of implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and territorial needs with a view to reducing disparities and economic and social inequalities (Amendment 119 on Art. 14.1.b); adjustments of programmes following mid-term reviews of structural funds to take into account not only new challenges and relevant country-specific recommendations, but also progress with the European Pillar of Social Rights as well as demographic challenges (Amendment 18 on Rec. 19)

3.2

What is proposed	Enabling conditions with their fulfilment criteria should have a strong role for a thorough implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and in ensuring that investments are in full compliance with the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights. The European Semester and its Country Reports should have an important role in monitoring on a more regular basis how
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Member States implement enabling conditions, including on the effective application and implementation of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Who is proposing it	<i>among stakeholder organisations:</i> EU Alliance for Investing in Children (incl. PICUM), Social Platform
Where does the proposal find support?	<i>in the European Parliament:</i> <u>Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) amendments adopted:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to add as <i>horizontal</i> enabling condition (i.e. prerequisite conditions for implementation of funds applicable to all specific objectives) arrangements at national level to ensure the proper implementation of the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights that contribute to upward social convergence and cohesion in the EU (Amendment 379 on Annex III Table row 6a new) • to stress that enabling conditions linked to specific objectives are a prerequisite not only for effective and efficient use of EU support granted by the funds, but also for their inclusive and non-discriminatory use (Amendment 16 on Rec. 17)

3.3

What is proposed	To mainstream support to the integration of third country nationals into all objectives and sections of ESF+ as a cross-cutting priority, by including them as recipients of measures under all the specific objectives (and not only in targeted measures under the objective 'Promoting socio-economic integration of third country nationals'). The promotion of equal opportunities for all, without discrimination based on <i>nationality</i> and <i>residence status</i> should be added to the equality clause of the fund (Art. 6.1).
Who is proposing it	<i>among stakeholder organisations:</i> ECRE, PICUM, Social Platform
Where does the proposal find support?	<i>in the European Parliament:</i> <u>ESF+ regulation amendments adopted:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to add to the general objectives of the ESF+ inclusive societies, high levels of quality employment, job creation, quality and inclusive education and training, equal opportunities, eradicating poverty, including child poverty, social inclusion and integration and social cohesion; to add to the Member State policies supported by the fund equal access to the labour market, lifelong learning, high quality working conditions, social protection, integration and inclusion, eradicating poverty, including child poverty, investment in children and young people, non-discrimination, gender equality and access to basic services (Amendment 88 on Art. 3) • to add to the specific objectives of the ESF+ the inclusiveness of education and training systems, services for access to housing and person-centred healthcare, and access to equal social protection, with a particular focus on children and disadvantaged groups and the most deprived people (Amendment 89 on Art. 4) • to highlight integration challenges related to the

- management of migration flows as the context in which the ESF+ will be implemented (Amendment 8 on Rec. 5)
- to stress as goals of ESF+ support the integration into the labour market of disadvantaged groups and economically inactive; acquisition of language skills; the reduction of horizontal and vertical segregation; the non-discriminatory nature, accessibility and inclusiveness of education and training systems; the accessibility of the teaching profession for minorities and migrants; educational schemes for low-skilled adults to acquire a minimum level of literacy; the study of languages, also through a wider adoption of the toolkit for language support for refugees developed by the Council of Europe (Amendments 16 on Rec. 13, 18 on Rec. 14, 25 on Rec. 15d new, 30 on Rec. 18, 54 on Rec. 28b new)

Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) amendments adopted:

- to add as fulfilment criteria of the *thematic* enabling condition (i.e. a prerequisite condition for implementation of ESF+) related to a national strategic policy framework for the education and training system that it includes measures ensuring access to *non-segregated* education and training (Amendment 396 on Annex IV Policy Objective 4 row 2/column 4)
- to add as fulfilment criteria of the *thematic* enabling condition (i.e. a prerequisite condition for implementation of ESF+) related to a national strategic policy framework for social inclusion and poverty reduction that it also includes an action plan; an that it includes measures to combat segregation through access to quality services not only for migrants but also for refugees (Amendment 401 on Annex IV Policy Objective 4 row 4/column 4)

3.4

What is proposed

To **strongly and systematically coordinate** and align on EU level and between Managing Authorities the actions and priorities implemented by Member States funded under **AMF, ESF+ and ERDF shared management**, to avoid gaps between short, medium and long-term integration interventions at local level. The actions and priorities of the AMF decided each year should be coordinated with the ERDF and ESF+. Rules for ESF+ and AMF programmes should be as closely aligned as possible, to ensure coherent programming, management and monitoring requirements.

Cross-Fund national Integration Monitoring Committees (ECRE) should be tasked with reviewing planned calls, identifying unmet needs, providing advice as well as input to programme evaluation.

Who is proposing it

among stakeholder organisations:
EUROCITIES, ECRE, Social Platform

Where does the proposal find support?

in the European Parliament:
ESF+ regulation amendments adopted:

- to specify (in the provisions on coordination, complementarity and coherence with other EU funds) that mechanisms for coordination to avoid duplication of effort need to include *Managing Authorities* responsible for

-
- implementation to deliver *integrated approaches*, coherent and streamlined support actions (Amendment 92 on Art. 7.1)
- to stress synergies between ESF+ and the Rights and Values programme to ensure that ESF+ can mainstream and scale up actions to prevent and combat discrimination, racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism, islamophobia and other forms of intolerance, as well as devoting specific actions to prevent hatred, segregation and stigmatisation, including bullying, harassment and intolerant treatment (Amendment 28 on Rec. 17a new)
 - to stress (in the context of the role of ESF+ for promoting integration of third-country-nationals) that this may include initiatives on local level and that ESF+ funded actions are not only complementary to actions financed under the AMF, but also the the European Regional Development Fund and those funds which can have a positive effect on the inclusion of third-country nationals (Amendment 34 on Rec 20, similar Amendment 45 on Rec. 24)
 - the authorities responsible for planning and implementing the ESF+ to coordinate with the authorities designated to manage the interventions of the AMF, in order to promote the integration of third-country nationals at all levels in the best possible way through strategies implemented mainly by local and regional authorities and non-governmental organisations and by the most appropriate measures tailored to the particular situation of the third-country nationals (Amendment 35 Rec. 20a new)

AMF regulation amendments adopted:

- the Commission to assess, through the coordination mechanisms set up in Member States among the Managing Authorities of AMF and the Structural Funds, the coherence and complementarity between the funds, and the extent to which measures implemented through each fund contribute to the integration of third country nationals (Amendment 22 on Rec. 14)
- to render the effective integration and social inclusion of third-country nationals a separate specific objective of AMF and to promote it in complementarity with other EU Funds (Amendment 70 on Art. 3.2c)
- the annual performance reports of Member States to also set out information on the complementarity, coordination and coherence between the actions supported under AMF and the support provided by other Union funds, such as the structural funds (Amendment 156 on Art. 30.2c)

3.5

What is proposed

To address the priorities of the **European Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals in national operational programmes for ESF+ implementation**. The Action Plan should be included in the list of key Union initiatives whose implementation is to be supported from ESF+. Specific reporting on how the Cohesion Funds contribute to the implementation of the European Action Plan on the integration of third-country nationals should be requested by the Commission.

Who is proposing it

among stakeholder organisations:
ECRE, PICUM

Where does the proposal find support? *in the European Parliament:*
ESF+ regulation amendments adopted:

- to add the Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals to the Union initiatives whose implementation is to be supported from ESF+ (Amendment 4 on Rec. 3)

3.6

What is proposed

To ensure **ongoing, effective support for early and long-term** integration in the broader framework of building inclusive societies, and to **avoid that the planned division of responsibilities** between the funds is used as a justification by Member States to **exclude specific target groups such as asylum seekers and people with precarious status** from broader integration programmes. Integration of asylum seekers and newly arriving migrants must not fall between the ESF+ and the AMF, so that integration and participation from the day third country nationals arrive in an EU Member State is ensured. In particular, early labour market integration should be fundable from the ESF+.

Who is proposing it *among stakeholder organisations:*
ECRE, PICUM, Social Platform

Where does the proposal find support? *in the European Parliament:*
AMF regulation amendments adopted:

- to specify that measures financed under AMF should support integration measures tailor-made to the needs of third-country nationals that are generally implemented in the early stages of integration, and horizontal actions supporting Member States' capacities in the field of integration, complemented by interventions to promote the social and economic inclusion of third-country nationals financed under the structural funds; thus replacing the Commission proposal that AMF is to support measures that are *generally implemented in the early stage* of integration, whereas interventions with a longer-term impact should be financed under the ERDF and ESF+ (Amendment 20 on Rec. 13; reflected in Amendments 179 on Annex II.2.a and 211/216 on Annex III.3.g/3.a new)

ESF+ regulation amendments adopted:

- to specify that a distinct specific objective is dedicated to the promotion of *long-term* socio-economic integration of third country nationals, including migrants (Amendment 89 on Art. 4.1.viii)
- to specify that the scope of integration measures supported from ESF+ should focus on third-country nationals legally residing in a Member State or where appropriate in the process of acquiring legal residence in a Member State, including beneficiaries of international protection (Amendment 35 Rec. 20a new)

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ReSOMA - Research Social Platform on Migration and Asylum

is a project funded under the Horizon 2020 Programme that aims at creating a platform for regular collaboration and exchange between Europe's well-developed networks of migration researchers, stakeholders and practitioners to foster evidence-based policymaking. Being a Coordination and Support Action (CSA), ReSOMA is meant to communicate directly with policy makers by providing ready-to-use evidence on policy, policy perceptions and policy options on migration, asylum and integration gathered among researchers, stakeholders and practitioners.

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