

Procedure file

Basic information			
CNS - Consultation procedure Decision	2005/0048(CNS)	Procedure completed	
General programme "Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows": European Fund for the Integration of Third-country nationals, 2007-2013			
Repealed by 2011/0366(COD) Amended by 2012/0252(COD)			
Subject 7.10.06 Asylum, refugees, displaced persons; Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)			

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	Rapporteur PPE-DE KUDRYCKA Barbara	Appointed 06/06/2005
	Committee for opinion DEVE Development	Rapporteur for opinion The committee decided not to give an opinion.	Appointed
	BUDG Budgets	PSE GRECH Louis	09/06/2005
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	ALDE KUŁAKOWSKI Jan Jerzy	15/06/2005
	CULT Culture and Education	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration Competitiveness (Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space)	Meeting 2811	Date 25/06/2007
	Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)	2807	12/06/2007
European Commission	Commission DG Justice and Consumers	Commissioner FRATTINI Franco	

Key events			
06/04/2005	Legislative proposal published	COM(2005)0123	Summary
06/09/2005	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
06/11/2006	Vote in committee		

27/11/2006	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A6-0419/2006	
14/12/2006	Results of vote in Parliament		
14/12/2006	Decision by Parliament	T6-0583/2006	Summary
12/06/2007	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
25/06/2007	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		
25/06/2007	End of procedure in Parliament		
28/06/2007	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2005/0048(CNS)
Procedure type	CNS - Consultation procedure
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Decision
	Repealed by 2011/0366(COD) Amended by 2012/0252(COD)
Legal basis	EC Treaty (after Amsterdam) EC 063-p3
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	LIBE/6/27946

Documentation gateway					
Legislative proposal		COM(2005)0123	06/04/2005	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		SEC(2005)0435	06/04/2005	EC	
Committee of the Regions: opinion		CDR0144/2005	16/11/2005	CofR	
Committee draft report		PE368.066	14/02/2006	EP	
Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report		CES0234/2006	14/02/2006	ESC	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE370.170	09/03/2006	EP	
Committee opinion	EMPL	PE367.803	23/03/2006	EP	
Committee opinion	BUDG	PE367.620	28/03/2006	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A6-0419/2006	27/11/2006	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T6-0583/2006	14/12/2006	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2007)0303	24/01/2007	EC	
Follow-up document		COM(2011)0448	20/07/2011	EC	Summary
Follow-up document		SEC(2011)0940	20/07/2011	EC	

Follow-up document	COM(2011)0847	05/12/2011	EC	Summary
Follow-up document	C(2011)9771	22/12/2011	EC	
Follow-up document	COM(2018)0456	12/06/2018	EC	Summary
Follow-up document	SWD(2018)0333	12/06/2018	EC	

Additional information

European Commission

[EUR-Lex](#)

Final act

[Decision 2007/435](#)
[OJ L 168 28.06.2007, p. 0018](#) Summary

General programme "Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows": European Fund for the Integration of Third-country nationals, 2007-2013

PURPOSE: proposal to establish the European Fund for the Integration of Third-country nationals for the period 2007-2013 as part of the General programme ?Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows?.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

CONTEXT: The Communication establishing a Framework programme on ?Solidarity and the management of migration flows? is part of a coherent set of proposals aiming at providing an adequate support to an area of freedom, security and justice under the financial perspectives 2007-2013. Indeed, the three key objectives of freedom, security and justice are to be developed in parallel and to the same degree of intensity, thus allowing for a balanced approach, based on the principles of democracy, respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, and the rule of law. Each of these objectives is supported by a Framework programme, providing for the necessary coherence between relevant interventions in each policy area, and clearly linking political objectives and the resources available to support them. Furthermore, this structure represents a major simplification and rationalisation of existing financial support in the area of freedom, justice and security, thus allowing for greater flexibility in the allocation of priorities and increasing overall transparency.

The key objective for the ?Solidarity and management of migration flows? general programme is as follows: to support the principle of solidarity in managing people flows by ensuring a fair share of responsibilities between Member States as concerns the financial burden arising from the introduction of an integrated management of the Union?s external borders and from the implementation of common policies on asylum and immigration.

This solidarity will support the implementation of Community legislation relating to four complementary dimensions of management of migration flows:

- integrated management of external borders, in order to ensure an equivalent and uniform level of protection at the external borders;
- asylum policy, as is already the case under the European Refugee Fund in order to support the development and implementation of a common European asylum policy based on solidarity between Member States and promote a balance in the efforts made by Member States in bearing the consequences of receiving refugees and displaced persons;
- fight against illegal immigration, and in particular the return of illegally resident third country nationals in the EU or persons irregularly migrating towards the EU;
- admission and integration of third country nationals, in particular as regards their social, civic and cultural integration, in order to enable them to settle and take actively part in all aspects of European societies.

Consequently, four Funds are set up as part of the framework programme.

(Please also see proposals under procedure references COD/2005/0046, CNS/2005/0047, and COD/2005/0049.)

CONTENT: Migration from third countries into the EU is a daily reality in each Member State . While the relative share of third country nationals varies considerably in Member States, all are confronted with the phenomenon of increasing ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity in their societies and the need to manage ?intercultural relationships?. The successful integration of immigrants is both a matter of social cohesion and a prerequisite for economic efficiency. In the context of a relaunched Lisbon agenda, it is crucial to ensure integration of both established and future immigrants.

The six main policy objectives of the Fund are:

- Facilitation of the organization and implementation of admission procedures for migrants, by strengthening their integration component and anticipating the needs of third-country nationals;
- Contribution to the organisation and implementation of introduction programmes and activities for third country nationals, by way of capacity building, policy development and implementation;
- Increase of civic, cultural and political participation of third country nationals in the host society, in order to promote their active citizenship and recognition of fundamental values;

- Strengthening of the capacity of Member States? public and private service providers to interact with third country nationals and their organizations and to answer in a better way the needs of different groups of third country nationals;
- Strengthening of the ability of the host society to adjust to increasing diversity by targeting integration actions at the host population;
- Increase of the capacity of Member States to develop, monitor and evaluate integration policies.

Besides a solidarity mechanism, the Fund also provides for a policy framework to support the exchange of experiences, cooperation and best practices between Member States, on the initiative of the Commission (?Community actions?), in particular in order to continue the encouragement of a more structured policy development.

The proposal goes on to discuss the allocation of resources:

- many Member States (and in particular the new Member States) would need to make some structural investments to successfully integrate third country nationals. Member States will be allocated a fixed amount each year. This amount will be higher for the period 2007 - 2013 for the states which acceded to the European Union on 1 May 2004. Moreover, this amount will also be higher for Member States which accede to the European Union in the period 2007 ? 2013 for the duration of the period 2007 - 2013 from the year after their accession.

- the bulk of the allocations to the Member States will be determined on the basis of a distribution key defining the relative share of Member States in relation to third country nationals legally staying within the EU. The distribution key consists of two components: one relating to stock data and the other to flow data of third country nationals. For the first component the average will be taken of the total number of third country nationals legally present in the Member State over a period of three years in order to smooth out any accidental, non representative increases or decreases. For the second component of the total number of third country nationals who have obtained an authorisation

to stay legally on the territory of the Member States (either under national or Community law) in the last three years will be added up. This total would then roughly correspond to the number of persons likely to benefit from integration measures for newcomers, assuming that introduction programmes and other ?welcome? activities may occur after the year in which the persons were admitted and may involve a series of courses taking place over a period of one or two years.

Since the Commission proposes that the Fund focuses mainly on third country nationals having recently arrived and been admitted by a Member State to reside in its territory (?newcomers?), the second component would be the most important one and would therefore be weighed more than the first (60%). The purpose is to direct the Fund to support for those Member States which have only recently started to welcome migrants or to those which are likely to become immigration countries in the period covered by these financial perspectives.

The emphasis on newcomers should be reviewed.

Programming is organised on a multiannual level, with two programming periods: 2007-2010 and 2011-2013.

The financial allocation for the Fund for the 2007-2013 period is EUR 1.771million.

This proposal is one of four draft decisions which comprise the framework programme ?Solidarity and management of migration flows?. (Please refer to COM/2005/0123). Four Funds are set up as part of the framework programme.

The proposal on the Integration Fund, along with the draft decisions establishing the External Border Fund (COD/2005/0047), the European Refugee Fund (COD/2005/0046) and the Return Fund (COD/2005/0049) provides for the creation of mechanisms ensuring a coherent approach of the programming, implementation and evaluation of the four instruments.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS :

Budget lines : Financial Perspectives 2007 - 2013: Heading 3.

Duration of the action and of the financial impact: 2007-2013.

Financial Resources :

Summary of commitment appropriations and payment appropriations (totals in EUR million to 3 decimal places):

Operational expenditure:

European Refugee Fund : 1.102,800;

Emergency measures: 68,600;

Integration of Third country Nationals: 1.756,000;

European Return Fund: 749,000;

External Borders Fund: 2.135,000.

Administrative expenditure within reference amount:

Technical and administrative assistance (NDA):

European Refugee Fund: 11,200;

Emergency measures: 1,400;

Integration of Third country Nationals: 15,000;

European Return Fund: 10,000;

External Borders Fund: 17,000.

Total reference amount:

Commitment and payment appropriations : 5.866,000.

Administrative expenditure not included within reference amount:

Human resources and associated expenditure (NDA): 77,139.

Administrative costs, other than human resources and associated costs, not included in reference amount (NDA): 5,292.

Total indicative financial cost of intervention including cost of human resources: 5,948,431.

Co-financing details : Revenue in absolute terms: EUR 3.7 million in 2007 rising to EUR 12.5 million by 2013.

Staff to be assigned to management of the action using existing and/or additional resources (number of posts/FTEs): total staff in 2007 will be 70,25 rising to 126 by 2013.

Total Administrative expenditure, other than human resources and associated costs (NOT included in reference amount): 68,015.

General programme "Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows": European Fund for the Integration of Third-country nationals, 2007-2013

The European Parliament approved four programmes as part of the Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows framework programme. The framework aims to facilitate a fair share of responsibilities between Member States managing the external border and the implementation of common asylum and immigration policies. Four funds are created: the External Borders Fund (COD/2005/0047), the European Refugee Fund (COD/2005/0046), the Return Fund (COD/2005/0049) and the Integration Fund (COD/2005/0048).

The Integration Fund (starting 1 January 2007) is particularly targeted at new immigrants and provides EUR 825 million to Member States to favour their integration process. It will support the forthcoming Framework Directive on the rights of legally residing migrants and projects fashioned to promote the Community integration strategy. This new instrument will also help Member States to share their experiences and best practices, thereby strengthening teamwork at European level. Programmes covering civic orientation, language, history and cultural are all supported.

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Barbara Kudrycka (EPP, Poland) and made several amendments to the Commission's proposal, which were compromise amendments that had previously been agreed with Council.

The main amendments were as follows:

- the financial reference amount or the implementation of actions financed by the Fund for the period from 1 January 2007 until 31 December 2013 shall be EUR 825 million. Each Member State shall receive a fixed amount of EUR 500,000 from the Fund's annual allocation;
- third-country nationals who are on the territory of a third country and who are complying with specific pre-departure measures and/or conditions set out in national law, including those relating to the ability to integrate in the society of this Member State fall under the scope of the Decision. However, third-country nationals who have made an application for asylum in respect of which a final decision has not yet been taken, or enjoy refugee or subsidiary protection status, or qualify as refugees or are eligible for subsidiary protection in accordance with Council Directive 2004/83/EC, are excluded from the scope of the Decision;
- the general objective of the Fund is to support the efforts of Member States in enabling third-country nationals of different economic, social, cultural, religious, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds to fulfil the conditions of residence and to facilitate their integration into the European societies;
- the Fund shall primarily focus on actions relating to the integration of newly arrived third-country nationals;
- the national integration strategies for third-country nationals must take into account the principle that integration is a two-way dynamic process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States;
- the Fund's specific objectives now include exchange of information, best practices and co-operation in and between Member States in developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating policies and measures for the integration of third country nationals;
- actions supported under the Fund now include setting up programmes and activities aiming at introducing newly arrived third country nationals to the host society and enabling them to acquire basic knowledge about the host society's language, history, institutions, socio economic features, cultural life and the fundamental norms and values, as well as complement such existing programmes and activities. They also include improving the access of third-country nationals to public and private goods and services, and building sustainable organisational structures for integration and diversity management;
- in the framework of the implementation of national programming, Member States must select projects for financing on the basis of the following minimum criteria : the situation and requirements in the Member State; the cost-effectiveness of the expenditure, inter alia in view of the number of persons concerned by the project; the experience, expertise, reliability and financial contribution of the organisation applying for funding and any partner organisation; the extent to which the projects complement other action funded by the general budget of the European Union or as part of national programmes;
- the annual amount set aside for technical assistance may not exceed: 7% of the total annual amount of co-financing allocated to the Member State, plus EUR 30,000 for 2007-2010 and 4 % of the total annual amount of co-financing allocated to the Member State, plus EUR 30,000 for 2011-2013;
- the Commission shall adopt the strategic guidelines relating to the multiannual programming period on 31 May 2007 at the latest;
- the Commission shall review the strategic guidelines and where necessary, adopt, on 31 March 2010 at the latest, new strategic guidelines for the period 2011- 2013. If such strategic guidelines are adopted, each Member States shall re-examine its multi-annual programme and where appropriate, revise it;
- the Commission shall lay down guidelines to ensure the visibility of the funding granted under the Decision.

General programme "Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows": European Fund for the Integration of Third-country nationals, 2007-2013

The Council adopted conclusions on strengthening of integration policies in the European Union.

The Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States stress the need to promote a global and coherent approach to integration policies, migrant flow management, development and cooperation with the countries of origin. They recognise the complementary linkage between immigration and integration.

The Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States recognise that integration is a dynamic two-way process involving both immigrants and the host society, with responsibilities for both sides, which should be underpinned by an agreed value system. Involving the host society in this process is one of the major challenges to the achievement of successful integration policies and long-term social cohesion. All individuals must assume responsibility in this integration process as well as state institutions, political parties, media, businesses and civil society. Migrants who aim to stay permanently or for the long term should make a deliberate effort to integrate, in particular learning the language of their host society, and understanding the basic values of the European Union.

They further recognise the role of local stakeholders, including in particular, the role of local government and cities in designing and implementing integration programmes, given that integration takes place primarily at a local level.

The Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States emphasise the need to continue to strengthen the integration policies of Member States with a view to managing diverse societies, counteracting all forms of discrimination and intolerance, maintaining social cohesion and ensuring that immigrants are able to reach their full potential and are able to participate to the fullest extent possible in the social, economic, cultural and civic life of the relevant Member State.

The Council invites the National Contact Points on Integration (NCPI), supported by the Commission, to consider approaches to integration that involve the society as a whole, including in particular to:

- explore and clarify the various conceptions of and approaches to ideas of participation and the various conceptions of citizenship under discussion, taking into account the relevant EC acquis that relate to the integration of immigrants and Member States? Constitutional and legal systems as well as exchange views and experiences on naturalisation systems applied by Member States;
- examine the added value of developing common European modules for migrant integration as a full project in the light of experience at national levels with introduction and language courses, the involvement of the host society, promoting the participation of immigrants in local life and various other aspects of the integration process;
- analyse measures that can be targeted at the host society in order to improve the public image of migration and to enhance the capacity of public institutions and the media to reflect in a balanced way and manage migration-related diversity in society;
- explore how integration programmes and policies can contribute to the prevention of social alienation and radicalisation;
- promote the development of common indicators and indexes that could be used by Member States on a voluntary basis in order to assess integration policy outcomes.

The Council invites incoming Presidencies and the Commission to proactively develop the Common Agenda for Integration. The Commission is further invited to report in particular to the above Ministerial Conference on Integration on the results of the tasks assigned to the NCPI network. This report should be the starting point for discussion on future priorities.

General programme "Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows": European Fund for the Integration of Third-country nationals, 2007-2013

PURPOSE: to establish the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision 2007/435/EC establishing the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals for the period 2007 to 013 as part of the General programme ?Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows?.

BACKGROUND: the EU is committed to the progressive establishment of an area of freedom, security and justice. These three key objectives are to be developed in parallel and to the same degree of intensity to allow for a balanced approach based on the principles of democracy, respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, and the rule of law.

In 2004 the European Council adopted the Hague Programme in which the need for the EU to contribute towards an equitable and effective international protection system and to provide access to protection and durable solutions was underlined. The Hague Programme also called for the establishment of appropriate structures involving the national asylum services of the Member States in order to facilitate practical and collaborative cooperation; the ultimate aim being an EU-wide single procedure and the joint compilation, assessment and application of country of origin information.

The ?Solidarity and Management of Migration flows? general programme is to support the principle of solidarity in managing people flows by ensuring a fair share of responsibilities between the Member States (as concerns the financial burden arising from the introduction of an integrated management of the Union?s external borders) and the implementation of common policies on asylum and immigration.

For these policies to succeed funding is needed. For this reason the EU has adopted four legislative acts setting up four separate, though related, Funds:

- [The European Refugee Fund](#)
- [The External Borders Fund](#)
- [The Fund for the Integration of third country nationals](#)
- [The European Return Fund](#)

CONTENT: This Decision establishes for the period from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2013 the European Fund for integration of

third-country nationals (the Fund), in order to contribute to the strengthening of the area of freedom, security and justice and the application of the principle of solidarity between the Member States.

The Decision defines the objectives to which the Fund contributes, its implementation, the available financial resources and the distribution criteria for the allocation of the available financial resources. It establishes the Fund's management rules, including financial rules, as well as monitoring and control mechanisms based on the sharing of responsibilities between the Commission and the Member States.

Third-country nationals who are on the territory of a third country and who are complying with specific pre-departure measures and/or conditions set out in national law, including those relating to the ability to integrate in the society of this Member State fall under the scope of this Decision. However, third-country nationals who have applied for asylum in respect of which a final decision has not yet been taken, or enjoy refugee or subsidiary protection status, or qualify as refugees or are eligible for subsidiary protection in accordance with Council Directive 2004/83/EC shall be excluded from the scope of the Decision.

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

Specific objectives: the Fund will contribute to the following specific objectives:

- facilitation of the development and implementation of admission procedures relevant to and supportive of the integration process of third-country nationals. Eligible actions under this heading include: facilitating the development and implementation by Member States of admission procedures; rendering the implementation of admission procedures more effective and accessible to third-country nationals; and preparing third-country nationals for their integration into host society in a better way;
- development and implementation of the integration process of newly-arrived third-country nationals in Member States. Eligible actions in the Member States include: setting up programmes aiming at introducing newly arrived third-country nationals to the host society; developing the quality of such programmes and activities at local and regional level; and reinforcing the capacity of such programmes and activities to reach out to particular groups, such as dependants of persons subject to admission procedures, children, women, elderly, illiterate or persons with disabilities;
- increasing of the capacity of Member States to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate policies and measures for the integration of third-country nationals;
- exchange of information, best practices and cooperation in and between Member States in developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating policies and measures for the integration of third-country nationals. Eligible actions in the Member States under these latter two headings include: improving the access of third-country nationals to public and private goods and services, *inter alia* by intermediary services, interpretation and translation services; building sustainable organisational structures for integration and diversity management; developing intercultural training, capacity building and diversity management, training of staff within public and private service providers, including educational institutions.

Financial provisions: The financial envelope for the implementation of actions financed by the Fund shall be EUR 825 million (please refer to the financial statement).

Annual distribution of resources for eligible actions in the Member States: each Member State shall receive a fixed amount of EUR 500 000 from the Fund's annual allocation. This amount shall be fixed at EUR 500 000 per annum for Member States which will accede to the European Union during the period from 2007 to 2013, for the remaining part of the period from 2007 to 2013 as from the year following their accession. The remainder of the available annual resources shall be broken down between the Member States as follows:

- (a) 40 % in proportion to the average of the total number of legally residing third-country nationals in Member States over the previous three years; and
- (b) 60 % in proportion to the number of third-country nationals who have obtained an authorisation issued by a Member State to reside on its territory over the previous three years.

However, for the purpose of the calculation the following categories of persons shall not be included: (a) seasonal workers; (b) third country nationals admitted for the purposes of studies, pupil exchange, unremunerated training or voluntary service in accordance with Council Directive 2004/114/EC; (c) third country nationals admitted for purposes of scientific research ; (d) third country nationals who have received a renewal of an authorisation issued by a Member State or a change of status, including third-country nationals who acquire long-term resident status in accordance with Council Directive 2003/109/EC.

Reporting: On the basis of strategic guidelines adopted by the Commission, each Member State should prepare a multiannual programming document taking into account its specific situation and needs and setting out its development strategy that should constitute the framework for the implementation of the actions to be listed in the annual programmes. The final report on the implementation of the annual programme shall include the following information in order to obtain a clear view of the implementation of the programme: a) the financial and operational implementation of the annual programme; b) the progress made in implementing the multi-annual programme and its priorities in relation to its specific, verifiable targets, with a quantification, wherever and whenever they lend themselves to quantification, of the indicators; c) the steps taken by the responsible authority to ensure the quality and effectiveness of implementation, in particular: i) monitoring and evaluation measures, including data collection arrangements; ii) a summary of any significant problems encountered in implementing the operational programme and any measures taken; iii) the use made of technical assistance; d) the measures taken to provide information on and make public the annual and multi-annual programmes.

Territorial provisions: the United Kingdom and Ireland have notified their wish to take part in the adoption and application of this Decision. On the other hand, Denmark shall not participate in this Decision.

Review: The Council shall review this Decision on the basis of a proposal from the Commission by 30 June 2013.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 29/06/2007. This Decision shall apply from 1 January 2007.

General programme "Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows": European Fund for the Integration of Third-country nationals, 2007-2013

In accordance with the requirements of Council Decision 2007/435/EC, the Commission presents a report on the results achieved and on qualitative and quantitative aspects of implementation of the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals for the period 2007-2009.

It recalls that for the period 2007-2013, the EU established the General Programme Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows with a total allocation of EUR 4 032 million, consisting of four Funds. One of these is the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals, established for the period 2007-2013 with an indicative total budget of EUR 825 million.

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

Budget implementation: the reporting period 2007-2009 covers 29 % of the overall reference amount of the Fund, with a total of EUR 239.9 m in EU appropriations available for both shared and direct management actions. For national programmes run under shared management, during the first three years of the Funds implementation, 78 annual programmes were approved, committing a total of some EUR 223.1 m. The five main beneficiaries were Spain (EUR 34.7 m), the United Kingdom (EUR 34.3 m) Germany (EUR 33.6 m) and Italy (EUR 30 m), followed by France (EUR 18.2 m). Together, they received about 68% of the total amounts allocated to national programmes in the reporting period. When the resources provided under the annual programmes by the national budgets and by the beneficiaries are added to the contribution from the Fund, the total costs of all operations to be funded amounted to about 371 m over the three-year period 2007-2009.

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

Assessment: the following assessment can be made in the light of the Funds implementation during the three first years of the 2007-2013 multiannual programmes:

1. Once the implementation problems for the 2007 and 2008 annual programmes were cleared up, the majority of Member States have been able to catch up and have implemented annual programmes from 2009 with no major delays. This does not exclude some residual difficulties, which the Commission is looking into with the Member States concerned. Projects completed so far generally meet their planned targets and, at least from the 2009 annual programme, most Member States expect to achieve the programmes objectives.
2. The Fund has gained acceptance in most Member States, and among project implementing organisations especially. This is evidenced, in particular, by the very high response rate to calls for proposals from the 2009 annual programme and the range of organisations involved in the Member States.
3. The Fund has filled a gap. It is perceived in most Member States as bringing genuine value added, whether Member States had previous experience with the integration of third-country nationals or not. On the other hand, the Funds programming and implementation framework seems to be too complex given the types of actions funded, the beneficiary organisations involved and the high number of projects.
4. In order to meet Member States concerns, the Commission undertook in 2011 a significant revision of the implementing rules for all four Funds in the General Programme. The largest part consists of a substantial simplification of the eligibility rules, with the new rules applicable from the implementation of the 2011 annual programmes (at the latest) and, subject to full compliance with the principles of equal treatment, transparency and non-discrimination, even to projects funded under the 2009 and 2010 annual programmes. 15 Member States have welcomed the revision. Further suggestions for improvement from the Member States will be considered in the context of the proposals which the Commission will make this year on the future financial instruments in the area of Home Affairs, as part of the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework applicable from 2014.

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

- boosting the active participation of third-country nationals and the receiving society in the integration process, in the context of the two-way process: promoting comprehensive integration programmes, and third-country nationals involvement in relevant consultative bodies and networks; enhancing third-country nationals participation in collective life; enhancing the public's perception of migration, including knowledge of the contribution made by migration to the receiving society itself etc;
- increasing the effectiveness of integration measures which address the specific needs of vulnerable groups (women, young people and children, unaccompanied minors with a legal status, the elderly, victims of trafficking etc.); enhancing educational opportunities for children; promoting womens role in integration, fostering their autonomy in society and improving their knowledge of rights and their participation in public life; promoting integration of unaccompanied minors who have been granted a legal status etc;
- fostering integration at local level and a bottom-up approach to integration, as well as multilevel cooperation between the different levels of governance involved in devising integration strategies and measures: supporting integration processes at local level, including partnerships involving all stakeholders concerned; improving local integration of third-country nationals in housing, schools, social assistance, health, education; supporting inclusive neighbourhoods and bottom-up initiatives for local integration etc;
- developing, in countries of origin, pre-departure measures supportive of integration, without making third-country nationals admission conditional on participation: information on, for example, visas and work permits, and on the language, institutions and values of the receiving country; vocational training to match skills with the actual needs of the receiving countrys labour market etc.

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