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EU initiatives supporting the integration of third-country nationals

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European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Integration is a **multidimensional process** of interactions between immigrants and the receiving society. It is not a single policy but a dimension which requires efforts in many **areas** and needs to be taken into account in a wide range of policy developments at various **levels** and involving numerous **actors**. Member States are primarily responsible for developing and implementing integration policies but measures taken at EU level provide support to actions in Member States to promote the integration of third-country nationals. The EU has a variety of instruments, which can be deployed to support migrants' integration, including **financial support, policy coordination** and, in certain cases, **legislation**.

EU cooperation in the area of integration of third-country nationals has developed since the adoption of the Tampere Programme in 1999. The **Common Basic Principles** for Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union (CBP), agreed in 2004, provide a framework for policy development in this area. The Commission's **Common Agenda** on Integration of 2005 was completed by 2010. Since December 2009, the **Lisbon Treaty** provides an explicit legal basis for EU incentives and support to Member States' actions to promote the integration of third-country nationals residing legally in the Member States. All harmonisation of legislation is excluded (Article 79.4 TFEU).

The EU policy context in this area has been further framed by the **Stockholm Programme**, which was adopted by the European Council in 2009, and the **Europe 2020 Strategy**, which identifies as its first headline target the aim to raise to 75% the employment level in the EU of women and men aged 20-64, including through better integration of legal migrants. Council conclusions were adopted on 'Integration as a Driver for Development and Social Cohesion' in June 2010 calling on the Commission to develop a **new European agenda on integration**, to reinforce tools for knowledge exchange and to facilitate the mainstreaming of integration priorities in all relevant policy areas.

Integration and **migration** are two sides of the same policy coin. Effective integration of migrants into the receiving societies is essential for the success of any migration policy. Without it, the migrant, whether a worker, family member or asylum seeker, risks encountering difficulties in getting a job, and faces the prospect of social exclusion and poverty – a high price for the individual and a waste for society. In the fields of **legal migration** and **asylum**, **EU legislation** provides for a common legal framework regarding the conditions of entry and stay and a common set of rights for certain categories of migrants. **Fundamental rights** lie at the heart of European legislation. The EU must ensure fair treatment of third-country nationals who reside legally on the territory of its Member States.

Moreover, the integration process is supported by actions taken in numerous policy areas to ensure **employment** opportunities, inclusive **education** systems, access to **health** and other public services, access to private services (banks, insurance, etc.), conditions allowing for active **participation** in public and political life and building up **social** and **cultural** ties to achieve a feeling of belonging to the receiving society. Special efforts are needed to target groups of migrants with particular needs, such as **young** migrants, migrant **women**, the elderly and **refugees**. Successful integration requires not only measures to facilitate the access of migrants to key areas of society, but also measures aimed at preparing the society to cope with increasing **diversity** and new cultural identities, to open up its institutions, involve migrants and grant them **equal opportunities**. The design and implementation of such measures should be supported through **research** results and the ongoing collection of **statistics** monitoring the situation of migrants.

1. INTRODUCTION

Managing integration is crucial for European economic development and social cohesion, and to realise the potential of migration. Achieving the Europe 2020 objectives of employment, education and social inclusion will depend on the capacity of the EU and its Member States to manage migrants' integration, ensuring fair treatment of third-country nationals and granting rights, opportunities and obligations comparable to those of EU citizens. Managing integration is also crucial to respect cultural differences and share a common vision of future European societies characterised by diversity and multiple identities.

Migrants' integration may be hindered by the lack of knowledge of language, institutions, culture and traditions of the receiving country. In addition, formal or de facto discrimination may create obstacles to an inclusive society. To overcome such barriers, efforts are needed to support migrants' language learning, to assist them in their introduction, to facilitate their access to employment and education, to ensure decent living conditions, to improve recognition of skills and qualifications, to promote diversity at work places, and to raise awareness among the general public of the contribution of migration and migrants to European societies. The EU must engage in a two-way process of mutual accommodation, requiring both the strong commitment on the side of the receiving society and the active participation of migrants. In this process, everyone has to respect fundamental rights, as laid down in the European treaties and national constitutions. And a fair balance between rights and obligations must be ensured.

Effective integration policies need vigorous actions embracing different policy areas and a variety of actors at local, regional and national levels. This document gives a factual and concrete overview of the most important integration challenges and recent EU initiatives in a number of relevant policy areas to tackle these challenges. These initiatives have been taken into account in the development of the European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals. They are described in the context of each thematic policy area, such as: migration, anti-discrimination, employment, social inclusion, cohesion policy, education, youth, sport, health, research and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), in addition to the development of EU cooperation in the area of integration.

2. EU COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF INTEGRATION

EU cooperation in the area of integration of third-country nationals has developed since the adoption of the Tampere Programme in 1999. Political debates on integration have been held regularly as part of Ministerial conferences on integration (in Groningen 2004, Potsdam 2007, Vichy 2008 and Zaragoza 2010). Based on the Hague Programme, the Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union (CBP) were adopted by the Council in 2004, providing a framework for policy development in this area.¹ These principles underline that integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by migrants and by the societies that receive them. In this regard, the principles stress the importance of access to employment, acquisition of basic knowledge of the host society's language, history, and institutions, efforts in education, equal access to institutions, goods and services and non discrimination. They recall the importance of interaction between migrants and Member States' citizens, as well as migrants' participation in the democratic process. Finally, they emphasise that mainstreaming of integration policies and practices in all relevant policy areas and at all levels of government is important, as well as the development of

¹ Council document 14615/04.

indicators and mechanisms to evaluate progress on integration. Following their adoption, the Commission proposed a Common Agenda on Integration in 2005 to put the CBP in practice.²

All proposed EU level actions had been completed by 2010, including:

- The network of National Contact Points on Integration (NCPI), created in 2003, is a network of governmental experts in charge of integration policy. The network is coordinated by the Commission, and it aims at fostering exchange of knowledge and good practices between Member States and strengthening co-ordination of national and EU integration policies.
- The publication of the 'Handbook on Integration for policy-makers and practitioners' (three editions published in 2004, 2007 and 2010, respectively).
- The Commission has developed a European Web Site on Integration (EWSI), which is available on <http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi> since April 2009. It provides policy-makers and practitioners from all Member States with a tool for exchanging information on migrant integration. Stakeholders' engagement is crucial for its success. In April 2011, the EWSI had uploaded 500 good practices, 1500 pieces of news, 2500 links and 3000 documents. Moreover, 700 events had been announced on its calendar and 1200 users had registered as members.
- The EWSI covers all dimensions of the integration process and gathers information from various categories of stakeholders, such as national ministries, regions, local authorities, civil society, academia, private enterprises or international organisations.
- The European Integration Forum is a consolidated assembly gathering around 100 civil society representatives from all Member States. The Forum is convened since 2009 twice a year by the Commission in cooperation with the European Economic and Social Committee. As a consultative entity, it provides valuable input on concrete topics to all public administrations with competences on integration. The Forum has addressed issues of relevance for the European Agenda for Integration of Third-Country Nationals, such as 'The relations between migrants and the media' in June 2010³, 'Active participation of migrants and strong commitment by the host society' in December 2010⁴ and 'Integration through local action' in May 2011⁵, and the involvement of countries of origin is planned to be addressed in the sixth meeting in November 2011.
- The European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals (EIF) – see below.

2.1. Financial instruments in support of integration of third-country nationals

The integration of third-country nationals is backed by the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals (EIF), with an available budget of 825 Million Euro for the period 2007-2013. The general objective 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

² COM(2005) 389 final.

³ Summary report of the third meeting of the European Integration Forum, Brussels 24-25 June 2010, http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/UDRW/images/items/static_38_303506505.pdf.

⁴ Summary report of the fourth meeting of the European Integration Forum, Brussels 6-7 December 2010, http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/UDRW/images/items/static_38_812142537.pdf.

⁵ Summary report of the fifth meeting of the European Integration Forum, Brussels 23-24 May 2011, http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/UDRW/images/items/static_38_992519171.pdf.

into the European societies.⁶ The EIF is targeted to addressing "specific needs" in the area of integration arising from the development of the common immigration policy. It is meant to affect the opportunities of legally staying third-country nationals to meet integration requirements by their receiving society and ensure that they have opportunities to integrate into all aspects of life other than the labour market. The European Refugee Fund (ERF)⁷, with an available budget of 628 Million Euro for the period 2008-2013, can also finance, among other measures, actions related to the integration of asylum-seekers and beneficiaries of international protection whose stay in a particular Member State is of a lasting and stable nature.⁸ Measures funded by the EIF belong to three broad categories:

- measures benefitting third-country nationals directly: pre-departure measures in the countries of origin; reception by the receiving society; improvement of language proficiency; provision of general and practical information and civic orientation; social and legal guidance; preliminary actions to facilitate access to the labour market subsequently; health; equal access to services; participation of third-country nationals in civic and social life etc.;
- measures targeted at the receiving society: awareness-raising, improving tolerance, promoting intercultural dialogue, involvement of the media; and
- measures targeted at staff of public and private bodies dealing with third-country nationals and at policy-makers: adaptation of public and private services to dealing with third-country nationals and to multiculturalism; coordination of and exchange between services within the Member States; research on the situation of third-country nationals; evaluation of integration measures and policies; cooperation between Member States.

The EIF has enabled Member States to establish national integration strategies where they did not exist, and to strengthen national strategies in place. It has increased awareness of the general public and the capabilities of national institutions and NGOs as regards integration. It has also contributed to structures for providing courses for language learning, for addressing difficulties of migrant children in their education systems and for involving parents in participatory process in connection with their children's schools. It has also supported the establishment of monitoring systems, which are crucial to follow up developments of the situation of migrants and results of integration policies. A large number of actors at local, regional and national levels have benefitted from the support of the EIF.⁹

Examples of successful co-financed projects are:

- The **CASA project** by the NGO 'Consorzio Sociale Coin' from Italy designed an Agency model able to provide services to people in need of long term assistance - for a better quality of life and to migrants, mainly women - searching for stable jobs for social and

⁶ Council Decision of 25 June 2007 establishing 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 (2007/435/EC).

⁷ European Parliament and Council Decision of 23 May 2007 establishing the European Refugee Fund for the period 2008 to 2013 as part of the General programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows' (2007/573), OJ L 144/1.

⁸ European Parliament and Council Decision of 23 May 2007 establishing the European Refugee Fund for the period 2008 to 2013 as part of the General programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows' (2007/573), OJ L 144/1.

⁹ Information on the EIF Community Actions and awarded projects can be found on http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/funding/integration/funding_integration_en.htm, and more information on national EIF funding on http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/funding/integration/funding_integration_en.htm.

economic integration. The aim was to match the increasing demand for long term cares and the offer of migrant workers and thus to facilitate the integration of migrants into European society.

- The **DIVE project** evaluated how municipalities use diversity and equality principles when acting as employers, buyers of goods and services, policy-makers and service providers. The DIVE benchmark was applied in Amsterdam, Leeds, Berlin and Rome. Cities participating in DIVE committed to a Charter on Integrating Cities, and the DIVE benchmark can be used to monitor the implementation of the Charter.¹⁰
- The '**Migrants in the Media**' project by Mira Media from the Netherlands improved the interaction between migrants and EU citizens by promoting intercultural competences among programming and journalistic staff of national media and media skills among immigrant organisations.
- The **MIPEX project** (Migrant Integration Policy Index) led by the British Council and the Migration Policy Group was developed to assess, compare, and improve integration policy. The third edition of MIPEX was published in 2011 and presents a multidimensional picture of migrants' opportunities to participate in society by assessing governments' commitment to integration.¹¹

2.2. Lisbon Treaty and Stockholm Programme

Since December 2009, the Lisbon Treaty provides an explicit legal basis for EU incentives and support to Member States' actions to promote the integration of third-country nationals residing legally in the Member States. All harmonisation of legislation is excluded (Article 79.4 TFEU). The EU policy context in this area has been further framed by the Stockholm Programme, which was adopted by the European Council in 2009.¹² Following the new Treaty and the Stockholm Programme, the fourth European Ministerial conference took place in Zaragoza in April 2010. Ahead of the conference, the Commission presented the report on 'The consolidation of the EU framework on integration', highlighting progress to date and steps to be taken in the context of the Stockholm Programme in order to promote and improve integration strategies.¹³ Council conclusions were adopted following the Ministerial conference on 'Integration as a Driver for Development and Social Cohesion' in June 2010.¹⁴ The Stockholm Programme and Council conclusions called on the Commission to develop a new European agenda on integration, to reinforce tools for knowledge exchange and to facilitate the mainstreaming of integration priorities in all relevant policy areas.

3. IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM

3.1. Legal migration

There is a strong link between integration and migration policies, as they address different phases of migrants' trajectories. In its Communication on migration adopted in May 2011, the Commission underlines that successful integration is necessary for maximising the economic and social benefits of immigration, for individuals as well as societies.¹⁵ In the field of legal

¹⁰ See the Integrating Cities website, <http://www.integratingcities.eu>.

¹¹ See www.mipex.eu.

¹² OJ 2010/C 115/01.

¹³ SEC(2010) 357.

¹⁴ Council document 9248/10.

¹⁵ COM(2011) 248 final.

migration, EU legislation provides for a common legal framework regarding the conditions of entry and stay and a common set of rights of certain categories of migrants.

So far, five directives have been adopted:

- Council Directive 2003/86/EC on the right to family reunification;
- Council Directive 2003/109/EC concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents;
- Council Directive 2004/114/EC on the conditions of admission of third-country nationals for the purposes of studies, pupil exchange, unremunerated training or voluntary service;
- Council Directive 2005/71/EC on a specific procedure for admitting third-country nationals for the purposes of scientific research; and
- Council Directive 2009/50/EC on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment. This Directive (Blue Card) had to be transposed by June 2011.

The Commission has also presented three proposals for new directives:

- Proposal of 23 October 2007 for a Directive on a single application procedure for a single permit for third-country nationals to reside and work in the territory of a Member State and on a common set of rights for third-country national workers legally residing in a Member State;
- Proposal of 13 July 2010 for a Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of seasonal employment; and
- Proposal of 13 July 2010 for a Directive defining conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer.

Throughout the development of the instruments concerning legal migration, ensuring an adequate standard of living as well as a successful integration into the labour market and in the society has always been an essential aspect. The recent proposals for directives will further strengthen this framework, improving the position of both low-skilled workers, who may be most susceptible to unfair treatment, and those highly-skilled who were also faced with complex procedures and could be uncertain about their rights.

Obviously, the new legal framework could not assure effectiveness if it is not accompanied by clear political guidelines. In strategic terms, the Stockholm Programme stresses that proactive policies for migrants and their rights should remain an objective of a common immigration policy and should be implemented as soon as possible. It clearly underlines that the EU must ensure fair treatment of third-country nationals who reside legally on the territory of its Member States. A more vigorous integration policy should aim at granting to third-country nationals rights and obligations comparable to those of EU citizens. This approach is reflected in both specific legal instruments forming the common EU immigration and asylum policy and EU integration measures.

In its 'Annual Report on Immigration and Asylum (2010)', the Commission has reported on actions at EU and the national level in response to both the 2008 Pact on Immigration and Asylum and the relevant priorities of the Stockholm Programme adopted in 2009.¹⁶

¹⁶ COM(2011) 291 final.

3.1.1. Family reunification

Article 7(2) of the Directive on the right to family reunification introduces an optional clause enabling Member States to require that third-country nationals comply with "integration measures". A few Member States have introduced such requirements in their national legislation, for example regarding language and introduction courses and tests. The objective of such measures should be to facilitate the integration of family members. The compliance of such requirements with the Directive depends on whether they serve this purpose and whether they respect the principle of proportionality. Their compliance has to be assessed on the basis of the accessibility of courses or tests, how they are designed and/or organised (test materials, fees, venue, etc.), and whether such measures or their impact serve purposes other than integration (e.g. high fees excluding low-income families). The procedural safeguard to ensure the right to mount a legal challenge should also be respected. The Commission's report of 17 June 2008 summarises Member States' transposition of the Directive, identifies possible problems and gives recommendations on proper application.¹⁷

3.1.2. Long-term residents

The integration of third-country nationals who are long-term residents in the Member States is a key element in promoting economic and social cohesion, a fundamental objective of the EU stated in the Treaty and recalled by Council Directive 2003/109/EC. In order to constitute a genuine instrument for the integration into society in which they live, long-term residents should enjoy equality of treatment with citizens of the Member State in a wide range of economic and social matters, as defined by this Directive. However, according to Article 5(2) of the Directive, Member States may ask the third-country nationals to comply with integration conditions, in accordance with national law. The Commission is currently finalising a report on the transposition of the Directive into Member States' national law: the expected results might raise some critical points similar to the case of family reunification.

3.1.3. Unaccompanied minors

The EU Action Plan on unaccompanied minors (UAM) 2010-2014 targets persons below the age of 18 who arrive on the EU territory from third countries either unaccompanied by an adult, or left unaccompanied after their arrival.¹⁸ The proposed EU common approach is based on the respect for the rights of the child as set out in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), taking into account the principle of the best interests of the child.

According to the EU Action Plan, where return is not possible or in cases where integration in the country of residence is considered being in the best interests of the child, a legal status should be granted to unaccompanied minors entitling them to at least the same rights and protection as beforehand and suitable accommodation should be found. The minors should be supported in their path toward successful integration in the host society.

Finally, the EU Council conclusions on unaccompanied minors have called on the Commission and the Member States to strengthen actions related to unaccompanied minors in order to establish and improve measures for the development of appropriate integration actions.¹⁹ Likewise, the Commission has been asked to reflect on how best to include the UAM dimension in the next generation of financial instruments, as of 2014, in the field of integration and to address the specific challenges of vulnerable groups, such as UAM, in the new EU agenda for migrants' integration.

¹⁷ COM(2008) 610 final.

¹⁸ COM(2010) 213 final.

¹⁹ Council document 10630/1/10 REV 1.

3.2. Asylum

The reception of asylum-seekers and the integration beneficiaries of international protection present challenges, which require particular attention in the context of EU measures to support integration policies in Member States. The objective concerning their integration should be to make them benefit from the general framework for integration of third-country nationals while taking, at the same time, due account of the specificity of refugee integration. Thus refugee integration needs to be mainstreamed into the general framework for integration without losing sight of a number of elements that make it different.

In this context, some of these challenges are already addressed in EU legislation or existing initiatives:

- The Council Directive 2003/9/EC on reception conditions lays down minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers to ensure dignified standards for them while waiting for the examination of their asylum application. According to the Directive, asylum seekers are inter alia entitled to accommodation, health care, education for minor children and to employment under certain conditions. The provisions of the directive have an impact on the integration of beneficiaries of international protection as they cover the first period of their residence in the Member State. Negotiations to amend the Directive are currently ongoing.
- Council directive 2003/109/EC on long-term residents is expected to be amended in 2011 to include beneficiaries of international protection in its scope. As the long-term resident status enables third-country nationals to enjoy a legal status comparable to that of citizens of the Member States, including allowing the person concerned to move from one Member State to another under certain conditions, its extension to beneficiaries of international protection will support their integration prospects.
- Council Directive 2004/83/EC defines the criteria that a person must fulfil to obtain international protection in the EU, in the form of refugee or subsidiary protection status. In addition, it lists the rights and obligations attached to these statuses: residence permit, access to the labour market, education, health services, etc. Negotiations to amend the Directive are currently ongoing. One of the objectives of the proposed amendment is to eliminate the differences between the rights of refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection which are not objectively justified, for instance regarding the duration of residence permits or access to social welfare, health care and to the labour market. The amended directive would also take into account the specific integration challenges faced by this category of people and the practical obstacles they face, such as lack of documentary evidence to support their academic and professional capacities, limited financial capacities, general lack of support from the country of origin and would aim to facilitate the recognition of qualifications, access to vocational training and employment as well as to integration facilities.
- The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) has started operating in 2011. The Regulation establishing the EASO²⁰ states in its Article 3 that "The Support Office shall organise, promote and coordinate activities enabling the exchange of information and the identification and pooling of best practices in asylum matters between the Member States." This could in the future include best practices in the area of integration of beneficiaries of international protection.

²⁰ Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 establishing a European Asylum Support Office, OJ L 132/11.

- The EU pilot project to relocate beneficiaries of international protection from Malta to other Member States, currently being implemented, contains a strong integration component both before and after the departure from Malta. Lessons learnt from the Pilot Project will inform any future measures related to relocation.
- The further development of EU efforts in the area of resettlement, mainly through the implementation of a Joint EU Resettlement Scheme, will allow refugees with poor local integration prospects in third countries to settle in the Member States and start a new life in a more adequate environment. Due to its planned character and supervision by national authorities and UNHCR, resettlement can be developed with an important integration component from the start.

4. INTEGRATION – A CROSS-CUTTING DIMENSION

4.1. Fundamental rights and equal treatment

The principle of comparable rights, opportunities and obligations is at the core of integration. The EU must ensure fair treatment of third-country nationals who reside legally on the territory of its Member States. Integration also implies respect for the basic values of the EU, based on the provisions enshrined in the European Treaties and which are common to all Member States.²¹ Fundamental rights lie at the heart of European legislation. According to Article 2 TEU, the 'Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.'

4.1.1. Non-discrimination and equal opportunities: a renewed commitment

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.²² Directive 2000/43/EC provides a legislative framework to prevent people in the EU from being discriminated against on grounds of race or ethnic origin. In addition, Directive 2000/78/EC establishes a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, preventing discrimination on grounds of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. It should be noted that the prohibition of discrimination under these directives also applies to nationals of third countries, but it does not cover differences of treatment based on nationality and is without prejudice to provisions and conditions relating to the entry and residence of third-country nationals and stateless persons in the territory of Member States, and to any treatment which arises from the legal status of the third-country nationals and stateless persons concerned.

In addition, Directive 2004/38/EC specifically extends the right to equal treatment with nationals of a Member State, within the scope of the Treaty, to third-country family members of EU citizens exercising their right to free movement, provided these family members have the right of residence or permanent residence in the host Member State. In this manner, these third-country family members also benefit from the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of nationality enshrined in Article 18 TFEU.

²¹ Common Basic Principle 2, Council document 14615/04.

²² Common Basic Principle 6, Council document 14615/04.

This framework is completed by the gender equality directives. EU has a body of directives ensuring equal treatment of men and women in employment and in other areas of everyday life. Milestones include Directive 2004/113/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services, recast Directive 2006/54/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the field of employment and occupation and Directive 2010/41/EU ensuring equality for self-employed workers.

The Communication 'Non-discrimination and equal opportunities: A renewed commitment' presents a comprehensive approach to step up action against discrimination and promote equal opportunities, recognising that the fight against discrimination cannot be won by legislation alone.²³ An effective and properly-enforced legal framework is essential for meeting the objective of equal treatment but it also requires changing attitudes and behaviour. The Commission is committed to ensuring that the existing legal framework is respected.²⁴ In order to complete the existing legal framework, the Commission also proposed in 2008 a Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.²⁵ This proposal is being negotiated in the Council. Once adopted, the Directive will complete the legal framework as regards age, religion, sexual orientation and disability by extending the protection from discrimination on these grounds beyond the area of employment.

4.1.2. Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015

Promoting gender equality in all initiatives on immigration and integration of migrants is one of the important messages of the 'Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015'.²⁶ The employment rates of migrant women and women from ethnic minorities are still low in comparison with natives, especially during the first three years in the receiving country. Remaining gender gaps need to be reduced in both quantitative and qualitative terms. For this reason, there is a strong need to provide early support to migrant women and monitor the effect of such assistance. Making them more aware of their rights and facilitating their integration and access to education and health care is crucial. Barriers to employment are also reflected in higher inactivity rates and higher long-term unemployment rates. In addition, among migrants gender gaps tend to be much wider and cause many problems for women. Finally, active ageing policies and specific measures in the pension sector are needed to ensure that women have adequate means when they retire.

4.1.3. Roma integration

Besides a strong legal framework, the EU has in the past few years committed itself to improve the social inclusion of Roma by using all instruments and policies at its disposal. Although a majority of the estimated 10-12 million Roma living in the EU are EU citizens, a significant part are non-nationals or hold nationality of non-EU countries. They share the same extreme marginalised living conditions in both rural and urban areas and the very poor socio-economic standards. The legal regime applicable to third-country nationals residing legally in Member States covers also Roma who are third-country nationals residing legally in the EU. Access to the same level of rights as for other third-country nationals needs to be

²³ COM(2008) 420 final.

²⁴ The Commission is supported by a network of legal experts in anti-discrimination providing independent information and advice on relevant developments in the Member States, <http://www.non-discrimination.net/>.

²⁵ COM(2008) 426 final.

²⁶ COM(2010) 491 final.

ensured. Roma also share a number of challenges with migrants, including low educational attainment, labour market barriers, segregation in housing, and difficult health conditions.

These challenges need to be addressed simultaneously. The integration of Roma will not only have an important impact on the individuals but also social and economic benefits for our societies. Building on the actions implemented so far, and following the 2010 Communication on the social and economic integration of Roma²⁷, the Commission has recently published a Communication calling for the implementation of an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies by 2020.²⁸ Structures and tools developed to support Member States' integration policies can also serve to remedy the particularly vulnerable situation of Roma third-country nationals. Roma integration can be supported by a number of financial instruments, including the EU Structural Funds, the European Integration Fund and the European Refugee Fund.

4.1.4. EU Fundamental Rights Agency

The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) helps to ensure that fundamental rights of people living in the EU are protected and to make fundamental rights a reality for everyone in the EU. Among its tasks, the Agency deals with fundamental rights issues related to asylum, immigration and integration of migrants. A specific objective of current and future activities, by means of data collection, research, surveys, communication and networking, is to identify and analyse good practices in Member States aiming to promote a culture of fundamental rights in migration management and integration policies and to identify and analyse the impact of family reunification in relation to social integration and the right to family life.

In this context, it is worth mentioning the EU-MIDIS²⁹ study providing the most extensive data set to date on discrimination and victimisation faced by ethnic minorities and immigrants in the EU. The survey is the first of its kind to systematically survey minority groups across the EU through face-to-face interviews using the same standard questionnaire. In 2010, the FRA published reports on the basis of the data collected through EU-MIDIS, such as Data in Focus 5: Multiple discrimination; and Data in Focus 3: Rights awareness. Other relevant reports included Racism, ethnic discrimination and exclusion of migrants and minorities in sport; experience of discrimination, social marginalisation and violence among Muslim and non-Muslim youth; Understanding and preventing discriminatory ethnic profiling; the asylum seekers perspective; and the fundamental rights position of Roma and Travellers in the EU.

4.2. Employment

Employment is a key part of the integration process and it is central to the participation of immigrants, to the contribution immigrants make to the receiving society, and to making such contributions visible.³⁰ The contribution of migrants to the EU economies has been substantial. In the period 2000-2005, third-country nationals at EU level accounted for more than a quarter of the overall rise in employment and for 21% of the average GDP growth in the EU-15. This growing share of migrant labour consisted of both highly qualified jobs in expanding sectors of the economy and jobs requiring a mix of lower skills.³¹

²⁷ COM(2010) 133 final.

²⁸ COM(2011) 173 final.

²⁹ EU-MIDIS: http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/research/projects/proj_eumidis_en.htm.

³⁰ Common Basic Principle 3, Council document 14615/04.

³¹ Employment in Europe 2008,

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=113&furtherNews=yes&langId=nl&newsId=415>.

People born outside the EU tend to have fewer employment opportunities than those born in the EU and they often face cultural and linguistic barriers to working. They also face more obstacles on the labour market than people moving between Member States. The average employment rate of those born outside the EU aged 20-64 was 6.7 percentage points lower than that of those born inside the EU in 2009. The gap has widened fast during the crisis (4.7 in 2008). For third-country nationals aged 20-64 the employment level was 11.4 percentage points lower than that of EU nationals in 2009. This gap was even more pronounced among women aged 20-64 (employment rate of 49.7% among female third-country nationals compared to 63% for EU female nationals).³²

The integration dimension has been promoted as part of EU employment policies since several years, including through the European Employment Strategy and the Employment Guidelines, which call on Member States to pay due attention to the integration of migrants in EU labour markets. In line with the Europe 2020 strategy, the European Employment Strategy seeks to create more and better jobs throughout the EU. The Strategy provides a framework for Member States to share information, discuss and coordinate their employment policies through the open method of coordination (OMC).

4.2.1. An Agenda for new skills and jobs: A European contribution towards full employment

The EU has agreed on an employment rate target of 75% for women and men aged 20-64 years by 2020: an ambitious commitment to the sustainability of Europe's social model, welfare systems, economic growth and public finances. The potential of intra-EU mobility and migration from third countries is not fully utilised and is not sufficiently targeted to meet labour market needs. The Flagship initiative on 'An Agenda for new skills and jobs' highlights the need for more targeted job-search assistance for immigrants: they have been among those hardest hit by the recession and their unemployment has also risen sharply. Moreover, skilled migrant workers too often occupy jobs for which they are overqualified.³³

In this framework, the Commission is currently putting in place a number of instruments to review the matching of skills and supply – such as the comprehensive EU Skills Panorama foreseen in 2012, the European Vacancy Monitor, the European Job Mobility Bulletin, and CEDEFOP's forecasts on longer term demand and supply of skills – in view of identifying economic sectors and occupations currently facing recruitment difficulties or skills shortages and therefore limiting economic activity and recovery. Moreover, careful attention will be paid to the effective participation of the significant number of low skilled/low educated immigrants already living legally in the EU to promote their inclusion in employment and in our societies.

To maximise the potential contribution of migration to full employment, migrants already legally residing in the EU should be better integrated, particularly through removing barriers to employment, such as discrimination or the non-recognition of skills and qualifications, which increase the risk of unemployment and social exclusion. The lower performance of third-country nationals in Member States' education systems should also be addressed. A better monitoring and anticipation of skills needs, as well as improvements in the recognition of skills and qualifications, also obtained outside the EU, can substantially reduce the 'brain-waste' of highly educated migrants employed in jobs under their skills level.

³² Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_unemployment_ifs/data/database.

³³ COM(2010) 682 final.

4.2.2. *Financial instruments in support of employment and social inclusion*

The European Social Fund (ESF) prioritises action to increase the participation of immigrants (both third-country nationals and intra-EU mobility) in employment, thereby strengthening their economic and social integration. Moreover, the ESF can provide funding for testing innovative actions, together with the PROGRESS programme. The ESF can also provide a framework for mainstreaming social innovation and for peer-reviewing, mutual learning, communication and transfer of best practices, helping to improve the design and focus of integration and social inclusion policies targeting migrants.

The ESF is one of the EU's Structural Funds, set up to reduce differences in prosperity and living standards across Member States and regions, and therefore promoting economic and social cohesion. The ESF targets disadvantaged persons, including migrants (which are explicitly mentioned in recital 6 and articles 3 and 10), in particular by enhancing access to employment. Over the period 2007-2013 some 75 billion Euro are distributed to the Member States and regions to help achieve the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy. Member States are increasingly using the ESF to increase migrants' labour market participation (approximately 1.5% of the total ESF budget until the end of 2008).

The ESF allocation (2007-2013) for actions specifically aimed at migrants amounts to 1.2 billion Euro (close to 2% of the total ESF budget). Migrants and persons with a migration background will also benefit from a range of other actions notably from pathways to integration and re-entry into employment for disadvantaged people (9.9 billion Euro). The funds available are much more significant but can not be linked specifically to any single target group. In 2009, migrants made up at least 6% of the total number of participants (700 thousand out of 11 million). This share is much higher in a number of Member States, notably 24% in Austria, 21% in Belgium and in Sweden. Half of the total number of migrants benefitting from ESF support is reported from Spain.

Although less important in amounts, the EU's employment and social solidarity programme – PROGRESS – also contributes to the achievement of the Europe 2020 Strategy. It was established to support financially the implementation of the objectives of the EU in employment, social affairs and equal opportunities, as set out in the Social Agenda. PROGRESS has a budget of 743.25 million Euro for the period 2007-2013, and it covers actions in the areas of employment, social inclusion and protection, working conditions, non-discrimination and gender equality.

4.3. Enterprise

4.3.1. *A Small Business Act for Europe*

The entrepreneurship potential among immigrants needs to be better exploited. In order to make the most of this potential and to foster growth and jobs in Europe, the Commission and Member States support and promote migrant entrepreneurs and ethnic minority entrepreneurs and help these groups to overcome difficulties which might prevent them from starting and growing businesses in Europe.³⁴ Statistics from several Member States indicate that proportionately, more migrants and members of ethnic minorities than nationals start small businesses. It is important that policies to encourage entrepreneurship in Europe take full account of the potential represented by this group. Support measures and policy initiatives should help to overcome the specific barriers which might discourage migrants and members

³⁴ COM(2008) 394 final.

of ethnic minorities to become entrepreneurs. Many of the business problems faced by migrant/ethnic entrepreneurs are shared with small businesses in general.

The problems that appear to affect migrant/ethnic entrepreneurs include: access to finance and to support services; language barriers; limited business, management and marketing skills; over-concentration in low entry threshold activities where the scope for breakouts or diversification into mainstream markets may be limited. These problems are mostly due to circumstances rather than discrimination. Addressing these requires a range of measures, at many different levels of government. There is still a need to raise awareness amongst the different stakeholders that these problems exist and need to be tackled.

4.3.2. European Competitiveness Report

The European Competitiveness Report 2009 stresses the attention on the potential that attracting foreign born, work forces would have for the economic records of the EU.³⁵ While international competition for migrants is focusing primarily on the highly skilled labour force, comprehensive migration policies need to address future labour market needs across the full skills spectrum. High-skilled migrants, including those born in one of the EU Member States, have in general lower labour market participation rates, higher unemployment rates and lower employment rates than natives with comparable qualifications, and they face a substantially higher risk of being employed in jobs that do not fit their skill profiles. Therefore, there is a need to give third-country nationals access to professional training, recognise their qualifications, and benefit from their skills and expertises, in order to improve their productivity rates. Such actions must be backed by measures to improve the social, cultural and political integration of migrants. Evidence shows that in many cases national approaches rely on complementary and more regionally based integration initiatives.

4.4. Social protection and social inclusion

The integration dimension is also promoted as part of EU social policies through the European Strategy for Social Protection and Social Inclusion. The Strategy has set out a framework for defining common policy objectives in this particular field and the EU Social Protection Committee is mainstreaming social aspects of migration. The EU provides a framework for national strategy development, common policy objectives and coordinating policies between EU countries on issues relating to poverty and social exclusion, health care and long-term care as well as pensions through the OMC. Integration is also promoted as part of EU social policies through the social OMC.

4.4.1. Social protection

Guaranteeing migrants the same social protection rights as EU citizens is also a key aspect of ensuring their successful integration. Member States are in principle still responsible for their own social protection policies, including the power to set qualifying conditions for non-EU migrants to social security and social assistance at national level. EU law³⁶ provides the conditions for third-country nationals who are long-term residents within the meaning of Council Directive 2003/109/EC: the Directive requires that long term residents shall enjoy equal treatment with nationals as regards social security, social assistance and social protection as defined by national law. In addition, when non-EU nationals who have been insured in one national system move between Member States, they are protected by the EU social security coordination rules, meaning for example that the social security contributions that they have

³⁵ SEC(2009)1657 final.

³⁶ Excluding: the United Kingdom and Ireland, Denmark.

paid in one Member State should be taken into account by another Member State.³⁷ The Social Protection Committee is responsible for mainstreaming social aspects of migration.

4.4.2. *Social inclusion*

Social inclusion policies, both at EU and national levels, tend to focus on specific groups of disadvantaged and vulnerable people, including migrants. More effective integration of migrants can make an important contribution to the target identified by the EU 2020 Strategy to reduce by 20 million the number of people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion. Social inclusion measures targeted at migrants and ethnic minorities generally aim to remove the barriers blocking effective access to social and health services, e.g. by developing the intercultural competences of service providers and through information campaigns; targeted support for children and their parents through the education system; or provision of social services accompanied by language and civic courses, often targeted at women.

The implementation of the common principles of the Active Inclusion Strategy provides an effective framework combining adequate income support, inclusive labour markets and access to quality services for those people at risk of poverty and social exclusion, including migrants. Main findings of the Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2010 show that important gaps persist between immigrants and the majority population and that migrants were hit particularly hard by the crisis, as regards income, employment, unemployment, poverty, health, education and early school-leaving.³⁸

4.4.3. *The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion: A European framework for social and territorial cohesion*

The most vulnerable people in our societies have borne much of the impact of the economic crisis and they face a greater risk of exclusion. The Flagship initiative on 'The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion' puts focus on young people, migrants and the low-skilled (sometimes these three aspects overlap), who have experienced the greatest increases in unemployment and are therefore exposed to aggravation of their living conditions.³⁹ The unemployment rate for non-EU nationals aged 20-64 was 10.9 percentage points higher than for nationals of the same age group in 2009, and the low-skilled are experiencing an increase in unemployment twice that of highly skilled. The economic crisis has also further underlined the higher exposure to social risks of migrants, often the first to be hit in a context of rising unemployment. In 2009, the unemployment rate for non-EU nationals aged 20-64 reached 20.7%. For this population, the loss of employment is often compounded with lack of access to social security safety nets.

Unemployment rates of persons aged 20-64 by country of citizenship, EU-27 (%)									
		3Q2007	4Q2007	3Q2008	4Q2008	3Q2009	4Q2009	3Q2010	4Q2010
EU citizens	Nationals	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.6	8.0	8.4	8.4	8.6
	Other EU citizens	7.5	7.9	8.2	8.6	11.6	11.1	11.2	11.6
Third-country nationals		13.0	13.5	13.0	15.1	18.4	19.7	18.3	19.2
Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey									

³⁷ Regulation (EC) No 1231/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council extending Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 and Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 to nationals of third countries who are not already covered by these Regulations solely on the ground of their nationality.

³⁸ Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2010, European Commission, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=750&langId=en>.

³⁹ COM(2010) 758 final.

Around 10.5 million third-country nationals are at risk of exclusion (at risk of poverty, severely deprived or living in households with very low work intensity), meaning that one out of ten at risk of exclusion in the EU has a migrant background. Furthermore, people with a migrant background are at risk of poverty to a greater extent than EU citizens. On average, 26% of third-country nationals are at risk of poverty, compared to 17% of EU citizens. Children with a migrant background are exposed to a particularly high risk of poverty, reaching over 30% in a majority of Member States.⁴⁰

Setting a comprehensive and effective policy framework for integration is a major challenge. The process of becoming part of a new society is very complex and requires efforts in different areas to avoid the risk of exposure to poverty and exclusion. There is ample evidence of intergenerational transmission of disadvantage in the migrant population. In addition, second and third generation of migrants also experience discrimination in access to employment as well as to goods and services. Achieving the Europe 2020 objective of social inclusion and cohesion will crucially depend on the capacity of the EU and its Member States to fit together social and migration policies.⁴¹

4.5. Territorial cohesion and urban development

As shown already, succeeding in the integration challenge is crucial for European economic, social cohesion and territorial cohesion. Integration is a process that takes place primarily at the local level. The interactions and exchanges between immigrants and other residents at neighbourhood level are key elements of integration. The level of economic conditions and social welfare in neighbourhoods, the feeling of safety, the condition of public spaces and areas for children and young people, and other living conditions are all aspects that affect the image of the people who live in these areas. Disadvantaged and in some cases segregated urban areas, predominantly in large cities, often have a high concentration of immigrant population, and spatial segregation does not contribute to a positive integration process. At the same time, these cities play an essential part in shaping the urban interaction between immigrants and society and in building neighbouring policies which support integration.

Cohesion Policy has played an important role, both in the programming period 2000-2006 and in the period 2007-2013, in supporting local and regional actors in their efforts to improve the living environment in terms of decent housing, neighbourhood safety, and the availability of opportunities for education and work. The contributions of the ESF (*see above 4.2.2.*) are important examples as well as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The ERDF supports a range of integration measures in the context of regional development based on the objectives of convergence, regional competitiveness and employment, and European territorial cooperation. The ERDF regulation has been amended⁴², answering to the needs of the marginalised communities. The main elements of the amendment include:

- Housing actions target urban and rural areas and should not reinforce spatial segregation;
- Renovation and replacement are eligible; and
- The integrated approach will be implemented within the housing actions (including education, employment, housing and health).

⁴⁰ Social Situation Observatory, Research Note 1/2010 "Detailed analysis of the relative position of migrants".

⁴¹ COM(2010) 758 final.

⁴² OJ 2010, L 132/1.

The capitalisation of cities' experiences through the URBACT Programme is an important contribution in this respect. For example, the **MILE project** – 'Managing Migration and Integration at Local Level' – was a fast track initiative bridging the framework of URBACT I into the successor URBACT II establishing a thematic partnership network of nine cities. The project assisted the cities in their development and identification of good practices addressing the following themes in relation to migrants' integration: enterprise development, active inclusion in the labour market, and access to services and intercultural dialogue.⁴³

4.5.1. *Fifth Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion – Investing in Europe's future*

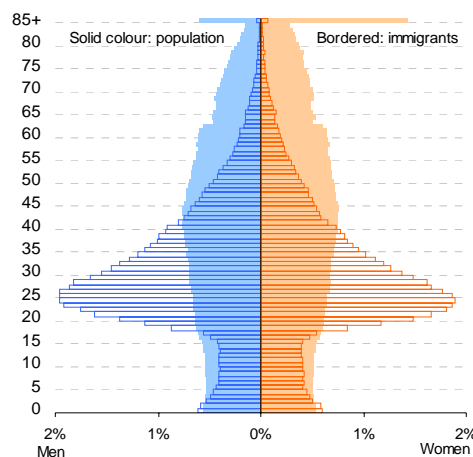
The Fifth Cohesion Report underlines the role migration plays to meet the demographic challenges of some European regions in particular.⁴⁴ It shows the important role that cohesion policy has played in supporting the integration of migrants and minorities, either indirectly, through measures combating social exclusion, or directly by identifying them as target groups. Moreover, it has developed a strong gender dimension, helped migrant women into employment, promoted their lifelong learning, combated their discrimination in career selection and professions, supported participation and assisted them to start up businesses.

4.6. Demographics

The Commission's Demography Report 2010 provides the latest facts and figures showing how the EU population has continued to develop in line with the projections highlighted already in the Communication of 2006 on 'The demographic future of Europe – from challenge to opportunity'.⁴⁵ The Communication underlined the need for the EU and Member States to seize opportunities to adapt to demographic change in five key areas, one of which tackled the issues related to 'Receiving and integrating migrants into our labour market and society'. Our demographic picture has become clearer: growth is fuelled mainly by immigration while the population is becoming older and more diverse.⁴⁶

Europe is strongly influenced by demographic changes, including the ageing population, longer life expectancies, a declining working-age population and migration. The large increase of foreign population implies that additional efforts are needed to ensure that immigrants have the opportunity to integrate into their host society and to allow them to fully contribute to the EU labour market and economy, making use of their education level and expertise. At the same time, the Union has witnessed a downward trend in immigration over the last few years. In 2008, immigration to the EU decreased by 6% compared with 2007, and emigration from the EU increased by 13%.⁴⁷ This trend was continuing in 2009. By way of international comparison, it can be noted that immigration to Canada increased by 4% from

Age structure of the population on 1 January 2009 and of immigrants in 2008, EU-27



EU-27 immigration data excluding BE, EL, CY, RO and UK. Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [migr_pop2ctz](#), [migr_imm2ctz](#)); Statistics in Focus (issue number - 1/2011).

⁴³ The report of the project is available on <http://urbact.eu/en/projects/active-inclusion/mile/our-outputs/>.

⁴⁴ Investing in Europe's future: Fifth report on social, economic and territorial cohesion, http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/cohesion5/pdf/5cr_en.pdf. COM(2006) 571 final.

⁴⁶ Demography Report 2010, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6688&langId=en>.

⁴⁷ Demography Report 2010, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6688&langId=en>.

2007 to 2008, to the United States by 5% and to Australia by 7%. These countries all have considerably larger 'stocks' of foreign-born population (as a proportion of total population) than the EU as a whole; 25% in Australia, 20% in Canada and nearly 14% in the US, although a few EU Member States have a 'stock' of foreign-born reaching above 13%, including Luxembourg, Estonia, Latvia, Austria, Ireland, Sweden and Spain.⁴⁸

Migration patterns are greatly affected by the global economic and labour market situation, both in terms of legal migration and irregular migration. In addition, the eruption of conflicts and natural disasters can quickly influence migration patterns, as seen with the events in the Southern Mediterranean leading to both refugees and irregular migrants trying to reach the EU. This calls for effective migration and asylum policies, as well as for integration measures for migrants residing legally in the EU.

Immigrants enrich themselves and the communities they join with experiences and knowledge thanks to an active exchange. Moreover, integrating newly-arrived migrants tend to be easier when populations are already more diverse from the start. Successful integration is a priority for the EU and its Member States in order not to waste the potential of a large part of EU future population and a consistent part of the youth currently living in our countries.

A dynamic immigration flow (together with low birth rates and rising life expectancy) can be expected to result in an almost unchanged, but much older, total EU population by 2060.⁴⁹ Immigration from third countries has boosted growth in several Member States. Even though the crisis has shrunk labour opportunities and attenuated labour and skills shortages in the short-term, a well organised legal immigration policy will have a role to play in filling labour shortages in a longer-term perspective.

In order to encourage and support the efforts of Member States, their regional and local authorities, social partners and civil society to promote active ageing and do more to mobilise the potential of the baby boom cohorts, the year 2012 has been designated as the European Year for Active Ageing.⁵⁰

4.7. Youth

4.7.1. Youth on the Move - an initiative to unleash the potential of young people to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the European Union

Young people face a number of challenges – aggravated by the economic crisis – in education and training systems and in accessing the labour market. The EU Youth Strategy made social inclusion one of its eight main fields of action.⁵¹ It proposes concrete initiatives for the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities and strives for equal opportunities for all. Employment is another main action field of the EU Youth Strategy.

The current situation is marked by low employment rates and high unemployment. Only one third of young people (aged 15-24) are in employment (34% in 2010 Q2). The youth unemployment rate (20.4%) is more than twice as high as the overall unemployment rate (9.6%). Nearly one in three young jobseekers is unemployed for more than a year.

⁴⁸ OECD International Migration Outlook 2010, http://www.oecd.org/document/41/0,3746,en_2649_33931_45591593_1_1_1_1,00.html in comparison with Eurostat online data code migr_pop3ctb (Statistics in Focus – issue number 45/2010), showing population by group of country of birth of Member States for which data are available. These data are based on national definitions that may be not fully comparable.

⁴⁹ COM(2009) 180 final

⁵⁰ COM(2010) 462 final

⁵¹ OJ 2010, C311/1.

Targets have been set for education, employment and poverty reduction, which all three concern young people directly. In the flagship initiative 'Youth on the Move', the Commission has set out how the EU can reach the targets through actions at national and European level. Action will be taken in three areas: 1) Improving education and training systems at all levels; 2) Stronger policy efforts for improving youth employment; and 3) More EU youth mobility for learning purposes and on the labour market.

'Youth on the Move' highlights the need for special efforts to attract highly skilled migrants in the global competition for talent.⁵² As certain professions see too many Europeans emigrating and too few third-country immigrants coming in, policies should address this. For young people with a migrant background or belonging to specific ethnic groups, more tailored measures may be needed to improve the progress made by this fast growing youth population, who often experience particular difficulties in starting their career. This flagship initiative is also relevant for migration because the bulk of incoming migrants are very young, but also because there are serious policy challenges related to the integration of the children and descendants of immigrants.

4.7.2. Financial instruments in support of youth

The Youth in Action programme aims to inspire a sense of active European citizenship, solidarity and tolerance among young people aged 15-28.⁵³ The programme promotes mobility within and beyond the EU's borders, and encourages the inclusion of all young people, regardless of their educational, social and cultural background. It helps young people acquire new competences, and provides them with opportunities for non-formal and informal learning with a European dimension. Youth in Action has a total budget of 885 Million Euro for the period 2007-2013) in the EU, its neighbourhood and its partner countries in the world.

4.8. Education

Efforts in education are critical to preparing immigrants, and particularly their descendants, to be more successful and more active participants in society.⁵⁴ Policy priorities have been identified, based on repeated Council conclusions emphasising the importance of education for integration, including the development of policies for language learning, partnerships with parents and communities, developing teacher training, improving multicultural mediation, strengthening intercultural learning activities, increasing access to quality early childhood education and care, combating school segregation and increasing quality in underperforming schools, as well as providing additional support through tutoring, mentoring or guidance.

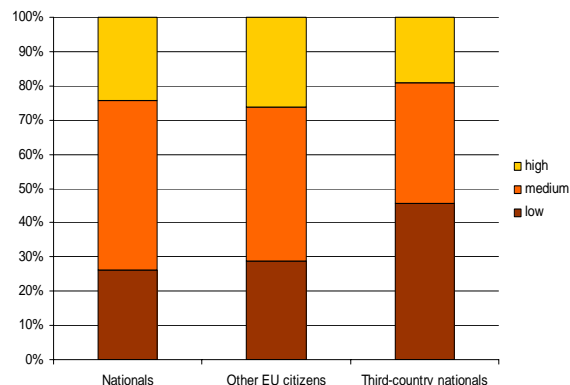
⁵² COM(2010) 477 final.

⁵³ Decision No 1719/2006/EC establishing the Youth in Action programme for the period 2007-2013.

⁵⁴ Common Basic Principle 5, Council document 14615/04.

At the EU level, in the age group 20-64, the share of female and male third-country nationals with high educational attainment is lower than the share of highly educated nationals in the same age group. The differences between third-country nationals and nationals are more pronounced for those with a low level of education.⁵⁵ At the age of 15, migrant children are also one and a half years behind their EU national peers in their literacy skills.⁵⁶ There is a strong link in most countries between educational achievement and socio-economic background and other underlying conditions, but the experiences of several countries show that high levels of performance and equality of educational opportunities can be jointly achieved with effective policy support.⁵⁷

Educational attainment of persons aged 20-64 by group of country of citizenship, EU-27, 2009



Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey

4.8.1. Migration & mobility: challenges and opportunities for EU education systems

The Green Paper of 2008 on migration and mobility addressed an important challenge facing education systems, namely the presence in schools of large numbers of children from a migrant background who are in a weak socio-economic position.⁵⁸ In many Member States, over 10% of children attending education are from a migrant background. Schools must therefore adjust to their presence and build their particular needs into the traditional focus. Education is crucial to ensure that these pupils are equipped to become integrated in the receiving country. At the same time, migration can be enriching for the educational experience of all: linguistic and cultural diversity may bring an invaluable resource to schools. It can help to deepen and strengthen pedagogies, skills and knowledge itself.

Many factors are likely to lie behind the pattern of educational disadvantage among children from a migrant background: socio-economic conditions, language and educational background. First generation migrants experienced particular difficulties as in many countries they are more than one and a half year behind their native peers at the age of 15.⁵⁹ It is necessary to accommodate increased diversity of mother tongues, cultural perspectives and attainments. New, adapted teaching skills will be needed and new ways of building bridges with migrant families and communities from different backgrounds need to be developed. Finally, efforts should be made to achieve also higher levels of graduation from higher education for migrants.

⁵⁵ 45.5% for third-country nationals and 26.4% for EU-nationals in 2009.

⁵⁶ SEC (2011) 526: Progress towards the common European objectives in education and training (2010/2011) – Indicators and benchmarks.

⁵⁷ PISA 2009 Results: Overcoming Social Background, Equity in Learning Opportunities and Outcomes. Equity in learning opportunities and outcomes. Volume II, www.pisa.oecd.org.

⁵⁸ COM (2008) 423. For the sake of this Communication a broad concept of "migration" has been used. The terms "children from a migrant background", "children of migrants" and "migrant pupils" are used to refer to the children of all persons living in an EU country where they were not born, irrespective of whether they are third-country nationals, citizens of another EU Member State or subsequently became nationals of the host Member State.

⁵⁹ PISA 2009 Results: Overcoming Social Background, Equity in Learning Opportunities and Outcomes.

4.8.2. *Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020')*

The strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ("ET 2020") includes the education of immigrants as one of the priorities of the OMC.⁶⁰ Education and training policy should enable all citizens, irrespective of their personal background, or socio-economic circumstances, to acquire, update and develop both job-specific skills and the key competences needed for their employability and to foster further learning, active citizenship and intercultural dialogue. Educational disadvantage should be addressed by providing high quality early childhood education and targeted support, and by promoting inclusive education. Education and training systems should aim to ensure that all learners – including migrants – complete their education, where appropriate, through second-chance education and the provision of more personalised learning.

4.8.3. *Tackling early school leaving: a key contribution to the Europe 2020 Agenda*

The Communication on 'Tackling early school leaving' reaffirms the link between early school leaving and social disadvantage and low education backgrounds.⁶¹ As young people with a migrant origin are often concentrated in lower socio-economic groups, their average rate of early school leaving is double that of native youth (26.4% vs. 13.1% in 2009). Increasing access to quality early childhood education and care, combating school segregation and increasing quality in underperforming schools should focus on measures to address questions such as language support for children with a migrant background, active desegregation policy which improves the social, ethnic and cultural mix in schools, and helps integration.

The Commission proposal for a Council Recommendation on policies to reduce early school leaving emphasises support for migrants as a group at risk as a focus both for EU cooperation and for national policy development.⁶² The proposal for a Recommendation is part of the Youth on the Move flagship initiative.

4.8.4. *Early Childhood Education and Care: Providing all our children with the best start for the world of tomorrow*

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) is the essential foundation for successful lifelong learning, social integration, personal development and later employability.⁶³ Children's earliest experiences form the basis for all subsequent learning. High quality early childhood education and care can make a strong contribution – through enabling and empowering all children to realise their potential – to achieving two of the Europe 2020 headline targets in particular: reducing early school leaving to below 10%, and lifting at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and social exclusion.

ECEC is also particularly beneficial for the socially disadvantaged, including those from migrant backgrounds. It can help to lift children out of poverty and family dysfunction, and so contribute to achieving the goals of the Europe 2020 flagship initiative European Platform against Poverty. Evidence shows that while many children from a migrant background are high achievers, there is a persistent gap in educational attainment vis-à-vis their peers. However, a number of countries have narrowed the achievement gap during the last decade.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ OJ 2009/C 119/02.

⁶¹ COM(2011) 18 final.

⁶² COM(2011) 19 final.

⁶³ COM(2011) 66 final.

⁶⁴ Council Conclusions on the education of children with migrant background (OJ C 301 – 31.12.2009).

4.8.5. *A new impetus for European cooperation in Vocational Education and Training to support the Europe 2020 Strategy*

Social exclusion of low-skilled learners from a migrant background is often the result of cumulating elements such as low formal qualification and the lack of basic skills and transversal competences. Education and training can be important forces to counter social exclusion; VET systems have a particularly important role to play. Integration of some groups, including people from migrant backgrounds, might require additional support, for instance validation of non-formal and informal learning and specific language courses for migrants. Continuing VET is particularly well placed to increase the labour market participation of groups at risk through: guidance services and validation of prior learning, particularly for migrants in order to facilitate their integration into society.⁶⁵

4.8.6. *Financial instruments in support of education*

The EU's Lifelong Learning Programme enables people at all stages of their lives to take part in stimulating learning experiences, as well as helping to develop the education and training sector across Europe. With a budget of nearly €7 billion for the period 2007-2013, the programme funds a range of actions including exchanges, study visits and networking activities. Projects are intended not only for individual students and learners, but also for teachers, trainers and all others involved in education and training.

A Call for Proposals to be published in May 2011 aims to support the establishment of a European network to analyse, develop and exchange policy and practice on the education of children and young people from a migrant background. The network should actively stimulate trans-national cooperation primarily at governmental level, but also at the level of experts and practitioners. The network will be supported by annual grants from the Lifelong Learning Programme, based on annual work programmes submitted by the network under a multiannual framework agreement for the period 2012-2014. The network has been included in the implementation of the Flagship initiative on An Agenda for new skills and jobs.

4.9. Culture

Integration is not only about succeeding economically and socially, it is also about achieving a sense of belonging. Intercultural dialogue needs to accompany and support economic and social integration. Deepening the knowledge and understanding cultural traditions and values, and participating in different aspects of collective life are important aspects of the two-way process of mutual accommodation between migrants and the receiving society. Frequent interaction between immigrants and Member State citizens is a fundamental mechanism for integration. Shared forums, education about immigrants and immigrant cultures, and stimulating living conditions in urban environments enhance the interactions between immigrants and Member State citizens. The practice of diverse cultures and religions is guaranteed under the Charter of Fundamental Rights and must be safeguarded, unless practices conflict with other inviolable European rights or with national law.⁶⁶

4.9.1. *European Agenda for Culture*

Culture lies at the heart of the European project and is the anchor on which the EU's "unity in diversity" is founded. The combination of respect for cultural diversity and the ability to unite around shared values has guaranteed the peace, prosperity and solidarity the EU enjoys. In 2010 the Commission has published a communication on the 'Implementation of the European Agenda for Culture'⁶⁷, followed by the Council Conclusion endorsing the 'Work Plan for

⁶⁵ COM(2010) 296 final.

⁶⁶ Common Basic Principles 7 and 8, Council document 14615/04.

⁶⁷ COM(2010)390 final.

Culture 2011-2014⁶⁸. Under the Priority Area tackling Cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and accessible and inclusive culture, a group of experts appointed by Member States will work on the identification of policies and good practices in creating spaces in public arts and cultural institutions to facilitate exchanges among cultures and between social groups, in particular by highlighting the intercultural dimension of the heritage and by promoting artistic and cultural education and developing intercultural competences. Besides, in 2011 the Commission will work on the analysis of good practices and instruments to promote culturally inclusive cities, building on the results of projects co-funded by the EU on management of diversity in cities.

4.9.2. *Activities on Intercultural Dialogue*

Intercultural dialogue is an ongoing priority of the EU. It is also one of three specific objectives of the Culture Programme (*see below 4.9.3*). After the implementation of a successful 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, the Commission is actively continuing work in this field. This includes in particular initiatives supporting cooperation on intercultural dialogue, such as the joint action by the Council of Europe and the Commission on 'Intercultural cities: governance and policies for diverse communities' and the 'Platform for Intercultural Europe'.

Intercultural Cities is a joint project of the Council of Europe and the Commission. It supports cities in the definition of an intercultural strategy to adapt governance systems and policies in all relevant fields to the needs of a diverse population. All services are reviewed through an 'intercultural lens', aiming at increasing opportunities for interaction and concrete collaboration among communities. Management of intercultural conflict, which is often inevitable, is also at the centre of such strategies. Handled well, it can lead to mutual learning and growth for all participants, including city authorities.

4.9.3. *Financial instruments in support of culture*

The EU's Culture programme has a budget of 400 Million Euro for the period 2007-2013, for projects and initiatives to enrich Europe's cultural diversity and enhance its shared cultural heritage. The Culture programme aims to achieve three main objectives: to promote cross-border mobility of those working in the cultural sector; to encourage the transnational circulation of cultural and artistic output; and to foster intercultural dialogue. For the achievement of these objectives, the programme supports three strands of activities: cultural actions; European-level cultural bodies; and analysis and dissemination activities.

4.10. Sport

4.10.1. *Developing the European Dimension in Sport*

Sport enables immigrants and the host society to interact in a positive way, thus furthering integration and inter-cultural dialogue, as highlighted in the Communication on 'Developing the European Dimension in Sport'.⁶⁹ Sport has been increasingly included in specific programmes for immigrants, but national approaches differ considerably. Sport can be a vehicle to promote social inclusion of minorities and other vulnerable or disadvantaged groups and contribute towards better understanding among communities. Sport has been increasingly included in specific programmes for immigrants in a number of Member States, but national approaches differ considerably and often lack evidence based strategies.

⁶⁸ 2010/C 325/01.

⁶⁹ COM(2011) 12 final.

Especially girls and women need more intention in these programmes because sports can bring them out of isolation.

4.11. Health

4.11.1. Solidarity in health: reducing health inequalities in the EU

Vulnerable and socially excluded groups, including also people from some migrant or ethnic minority backgrounds, experience particularly poor average levels of health. Particular attention needs to be given to the needs of people in poverty, disadvantaged migrant and ethnic minority groups, people with disabilities, elderly people or children living in poverty. For some groups, the issue of health inequality including reduced access to adequate health care can be qualified as one which involves their fundamental rights. Actions to be implemented should aim to: raise awareness and promote actions to improve access and appropriateness of health services, health promotion and preventive care, through the identification and exchange of good practice supported by the health and other programmes.⁷⁰

4.11.2. Public health

Ensuring public health protection is a key objective of the Treaty, particularly as regards serious cross border health threats. Legislation on communicable diseases⁷¹ provides for surveillance and alert systems at EU level for a specified number of communicable diseases, and allows for coordination of measures in case of need. In the case of migrants, issues relating to prevention and control of communicable diseases are well known, and specific strategies have been developed and implemented for example as regards Tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, measles and other vaccine preventable diseases. The EU Health Programme has supported a number of projects which are either specifically addressing the needs of migrants' health protection or could reinforce Member State public health capacity.⁷² Furthermore, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control has carried out several risk assessments, analyses, and country visits in respect of communicable disease issues affecting migrants.⁷³

4.12. Research

Within the Research Programme on Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) of the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development, an important amount of research projects have been funded in the areas of migration and integration. The projects address a wide range of issues and demonstrate that migration is inextricably linked to social, political and economic concerns such as economic growth, economic instability, climate change, welfare, health, youth, age, gender, education, political participation and social cohesion.

In order to support evidence based policy making, new and emerging migration trends have been investigated and up-to date empirical knowledge has been analysed on the realities of migration and the lives of migrants. As an example, the **INCLUD-ED project** ('Strategies for Inclusion and Social Cohesion in Europe from education') analysed educational strategies that contribute to overcoming inequalities and promoting social cohesion, as well as educational strategies that generate social inclusion, particularly focusing on vulnerable and marginalised groups including migrants. Successful Educational Actions have been identified by the

⁷⁰ COM(2009) 567 final.

⁷¹ Decision 2119/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 1998 setting up a network for the epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases in the Community OJ L 268/1; 03.10.1998.

⁷² See <http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html>.

⁷³ See http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Forms/ECDC_DisForm.aspx?ID=378.

project, analysing their organisation and contribution to the improvement of academic results and coexistence in schools.

The project shows that educational performance is not linked to the ethnic composition of the class but rather to implementing best practices and evidence-based methods. Also the family participation is very important to increase school success and social inclusion: the training of relatives at the school and family participation in children's learning at home and inside the schools are key actions.

New theoretical approaches, concepts and methodologies have also been developed through the different research projects funded by the SSH Programme. This includes undocumented migrant workers, women migrants, citizenship and integration issues. Also developments in migration research have been explored, such as trans-nationalism, which emphasise the emergence of transnational spaces, in which migrants establish social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders and go beyond the dimension of sending and receiving countries.

4.13. Information and Communication Technology

4.13.1. A digital agenda for Europe

The digital agenda for Europe is the EU strategy for a flourishing digital economy by 2020.⁷⁴ It outlines policies and actions to maximise the benefit of the digital revolution for all. To achieve these goals, the Commission will work closely with national governments, concerned organisations and companies, gathering an annual Digital Assembly that will bring stakeholders together to assess progress and emerging challenges. This initiative builds on the achievements of the i2010 and the targets set by the Conclusions of the 2006 Riga Ministerial Conference “ICT for an inclusive society”, where Member States had agreed to put in place, by 2008, digital literacy and competence actions, in particular through formal or informal education systems, building on existing initiatives, tackling the needs of groups at risk of exclusion (including vulnerable migrant communities), because of their social circumstances or their capacities and special needs, contributing to their employability and working conditions. In this context, tailored ICT training and support actions could help improving the possibilities for economic and social participation and integration, creativity and entrepreneurship of immigrants and minorities by stimulating their participation in the information society.

Research carried out in support of the implementation of the e-Inclusion policies launched at the 2006 Riga Ministerial Declaration on e-Inclusion shows that migrants have similar PC-Internet uptake compared to native population.⁷⁵ Their major motivations are: keeping in touch in mobility, supporting their children education, looking for jobs, learning and living in the digital society. Internet shops have a crucial role for access, especially for newly arrived and young. In this context, migrants’ high motivation and adoption of ICT should be seen as a policy opportunity for integration.

However, in spite of a significant number of initiatives identified across the 27 EU Member States that aim at supporting migrants' integration through access, skills and use of ICT, a number of challenges have been encountered to maximize the potential of ICT. Digital exclusion is still important. Factors like age, host language proficiency, education level,

⁷⁴ COM(2010) 245 final.

⁷⁵ See IPTS research projects and publications on ICT for Inclusion and cultural diversity: <http://is.jrc.ec.europa.eu/pages/EAP/eInclusion.html>.

socio-economic status and gender are shaping the digital divide. Also, the lack infrastructure (Broadband, Public Internet Access Points) in disadvantaged and segregated areas is creating barriers for accessing the opportunities. While digital access and skills are crucial, successful digital inclusion measures are the ones that focus digital literacy acquisition in a problem oriented and purposeful context that supports integration, i.e., focusing for example on skills development and language acquisition, job finding⁷⁶, access to health information and services, and information and access to legal rights and public services.⁷⁷ The barriers here encompass insufficient intermediaries' digital skills and support as well as lack of sustainability of ICT- based initiatives. Lack of awareness and information among the stakeholders (policy actors, integration actors, social actors, migrants, etc) is also common.⁷⁸

4.14. Statistics

Migration and integration policies rely heavily on high quality statistics for policy formulation and monitoring of results. Several actions have been envisaged to improve the capacity to collect and publish statistics on migrants and their socio-economic characteristics at EU level.⁷⁹ Statistics on the social situation and integration of migrants are developed in line with the 'Malta Declaration on the Mainstreaming of Migration in official statistics'.⁸⁰ In response to the Malta Declaration, Eurostat has been working at EU level, together with a Strategic Task Force composed of the Directors of Social Statistics from selected EU countries and other relevant Directorates General of the Commission, to develop a conceptual framework for mainstreaming migration statistics and a work programme for the development of statistics on migration in the period up to 2016, including the improved use of censuses, surveys and administrative data sources, data linkage and integration, and better communication and cooperation at national and international levels.

At the EU level, work has also been carried out to develop indicators to monitor results of integration policies, as proposed in the annex to the Council conclusions on integration of June 2010.⁸¹ The aim is to increase comparability and reinforce the European learning process. Eurostat has published a pilot study on the availability and quality of data required to calculate these indicators, which will provide a basis for analysis and systematic monitoring of the situation of migrants and the results of integration policies.⁸² The relevance of the proposed indicators will also be explored further based on the report. To ensure effectiveness, the data used should be complemented by contextual analysis at national and EU level.

A few preliminary observations can be made in relation to the data used to calculate the indicators proposed in the four areas: employment, education, social inclusion and active citizenship. The data sources are the EU Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS), the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), the OECD's Programme for International Student

⁷⁶ See for instance trainings offered by Telecentres type establishments, e.g. <http://www.interface3.be/>.

⁷⁷ IPTS publications on migrants and ICT <http://ipts.jrc.ec.europa.eu/publications/search.cfm>.

⁷⁸ Workshop conclusions around Intermediaries needs <http://www.epractice.eu/en/blog/5298101>.

⁷⁹ Statistical Work Programme of the Commission for 2011, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/pgp_insite/insite_docs/estat/AWP_detailedEN_revised_final.pdf.

⁸⁰ The Malta Declaration was adopted in October 2009 by the Directors General of National Statistical Institutes of the European Union (DGINS), http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/conferences/documents/95th_dgins_conference/malta_declaration.pdf.

⁸¹ Council document 9248/10.

⁸² Eurostat Methodologies and Working Papers, Indicators of Immigrant Integration - A Pilot Study, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/publication?p_product_code=KS-SF-11-030.

Assessment (PISA), as well as Eurostat's migration statistics, specifically data from administrative sources on acquisition of citizenship and residence permits).

4.14.1. Activity rate

At EU level, the average activity rate of third-country nationals aged 20-64 is 3 pp lower than that of the total population. The highest gaps concern female third-country nationals in the prime working ages 25-54, whose activity rate is 14 pp lower than the activity rate of all women in this age group. The lower activity rate of third-country nationals in the prime working ages 25-54 (in comparison to the total population) is noticeable in most Member States with the exception of Estonia, Greece, Spain, Italy and Portugal.

4.14.2. Employment rate

At the EU level, in the age group 20-64, the employment rate of third-country nationals is 10 pp lower than that of the total population. The lower employment rate of third-country nationals in the prime working ages 25-54 (in comparison to the total population) is noticeable in almost all Member States. At EU level, the highest gaps concern female third-country nationals in the age group 25-54, whose employment rate is 19 pp lower than the employment rate of all women in this age group, with far larger differences seen in some individual Member States, as for example Belgium with a gap of 43 pp, France a gap of 36 pp, the Netherlands a gap of 35, Slovenia a gap of 58 pp, Finland a gap of 34 pp and Sweden a gap of 38 pp.

4.14.3. Unemployment rate

At the EU level, in the age group 20-64, the unemployment rate of third-country nationals is much higher than the unemployment rate of the total population (19% compared to 9%). The highest gaps concern male third-country nationals in the age group 55-64, whose unemployment rate is 13 pp higher than the unemployment rate of all men in this age group. The higher unemployment rates of third-country nationals in the prime working ages 25-54 (in comparison to all persons of this age group) are noticeable in almost all Member States with the exception of Greece.

4.14.4. Overqualification rate

In the age group 20-64, the overqualification rate of third-country nationals is much higher than the overqualification rate of the total population (45% to 21%). This can be seen both for men (21 pp gap to total population) and women (28 pp gap to total population). The highest gaps concern female third-country nationals in the age group 55-64, whose overqualification rate is 33 pp higher than the overqualification rate of all women in this age group. The higher overqualification rates of third-country nationals in both the groups aged 20-64 and 25-54 (in comparison to all persons of this age group) are noticeable in all Member States for which reliable data are available.

4.14.5. Self-employment

The interpretation of self-employment as an indicator of integration is open to discussion and the results should be analysed very carefully taking into account the particular situation in the country concerned. For some migrants self-employment may be seen as an escape from long periods of unemployment and from discrimination in the labour market. Others could see comparative advantages in self-employment. In the age group 20-64, the self-employment rate of third-country nationals is lower than the self-employment rate of the total population (10% compared to 15%). This is seen for both men (6 pp gap compared to the total population) and women (3 pp compared to the total population). The highest negative gap concerns male third-country nationals in the age group 55-64, whose self employment rate is 11 percentage points lower than the self-employment rate of all men in this age group. Analysing the situation for individual countries, the lowest self-employment rates of third-country nationals

compared to the total population are seen in southern Member States and in Ireland. In contrast, the highest self-employment rate of third-country nationals (again compared to the total population) is in the Czech Republic with 39%.

4.14.6. Educational attainment

At the EU level, in the age group 20-64, the share of third-country nationals with high educational attainment is lower than the share of all highly educated persons in the same age group (19% compared to 24%). Similar results can be seen for the age group 25-54. The differences between third-country nationals and the total population are more pronounced for the proportion with lower levels of education. Migrants are significantly under-represented at the medium educational level (regardless their age and sex) and over-represented to a much greater extent at the lowest educational level. In the prime working ages of 25-54, there is a difference of 19 pp between the share of third-country nationals with low educational attainment and the share of all persons with low educational attainment. The proportions of third-country nationals with tertiary and low education differ significantly between individual Member States. Ireland, Luxembourg, Hungary, Sweden and the United Kingdom have a high degree of migrants with a high level of education. In contrast, there are Member States in which the proportion of lower educated third-country nationals exceeds considerably the share of the total population with a low level of education, e.g. Germany, France, the Netherlands, Austria and Slovenia. This is seen for both men and women.

4.14.7. 30-34-year-olds with tertiary educational attainment

At the EU level, the share of third-country nationals aged 30-34 with a high level of educational attainment (tertiary level education) is 23% compared to 32% for the total population aged 30-34. A smaller proportion of male third-country nationals are tertiary educated compared to female third-country nationals (21% compared to 26%). Analysing the data by individual countries, lower shares of highly educated 30-34-year-olds third-country nationals can be seen in 13 Member States, with gaps in excess of 15 pp noted in Belgium, Greece, Spain, Latvia and the Netherlands.

4.14.8. Early leavers from education and training

Young people with a migrant background are generally at greater risk of exiting the education and training system without having obtained an upper secondary qualification. At the EU level, the share of third-country national early school leavers aged 18-24 is higher than the share of early school leavers aged 18-24 of the total population (34% compared to 14%). The greatest differences in the shares are in Greece, Italy and Austria. In each of these countries, the gap between the proportions of third-country nationals and of the total population who are early leavers from education and training is greater than 20 pp. In contrast, in the UK the situation is reversed and the share of third-country national early school leavers aged 18-24 is lower than the share of early school leavers aged 18-24 in the overall population. For the UK, this lower rate concerns particularly men (8 pp gap).

4.14.9. Median disposable income

In the majority of Member States, the median annual equalised disposable income (presented in PPS) for third-country national is considerably lower than that of the total population. The median income of third-country nationals in the prime working ages of 25-54 is less than 70% of the median disposable income of the total population in Belgium, France, Italy, Austria, Slovenia, Finland and Sweden. Only in Malta are third-country nationals in a more favourable situation compared to the total population.

4.14.10. Persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion

21% of the total population aged 20-64 in the EU is at risk of poverty or social exclusion. At the EU level, the proportion of third-country nationals aged 20-64 at risk of poverty or exclusion was higher than the proportion of the total population in this age group with a gap of 18 pp. This larger proportion at risk of poverty or social exclusion was particularly noted for third-country nationals in Belgium, France, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Slovenia and Sweden, in which the proportion of third-country nationals aged 20-64 at risk of poverty or social exclusion was at least 25 percentage points higher than the proportion for the total population in this age group.

4.14.11. Persons at risk of poverty after social transfers

15% of the total population aged 20-64 in the EU is at risk of poverty after social transfers. The gap to the total population is particularly large for third-country nationals. At EU level, 31% of third-country nationals in the same age group are at risk of poverty after social transfers. At national level, the gaps are particularly high in Belgium, France, Luxembourg and Sweden, which all have a gap of at least 30 pp.

4.14.12. Self-perceived health status

The interpretation of self-perceived health status as an indicator is open to discussion. Currently, this is the only information available and comparable across the EU in relation to migrants' health status. At the EU level, in the age group 20-64, the share of third-country nationals who perceived their health as good is similar to that of the total population (78% to 75%). The largest gaps concern male third-country nationals in the age group 55-64 perceiving their health as good; the difference in proportion compared to all persons in this age group is -9 pp.

4.14.13. Property owners

At the EU level, in the age group 20-64, the ratio of property owners to non-property owners among the third-country nationals is 0.5. In contrast, the ratio of property owners to non-property owners for the total population in the age group 20-64 is more than four times higher at 2.2.

4.14.14. Acquisition of citizenship

For almost all Member States, the rate of acquisition of citizenship is higher for third-country nationals than for all foreigners together. The country with the highest level of the rate of acquisition by third-country nationals in 2009, as a share of the total number of resident foreigners at the beginning of the year, was the United Kingdom (8,2%), followed by Sweden (7,7%), Poland (7%) and Portugal (7%).

Evidence shows that naturalised migrants and their children fare better in the labour market than those who are not naturalised. It is difficult, though, to judge whether naturalisation boosts integration or whether migrants who are better integrated are more likely to seek or be granted host-country nationality.⁸³

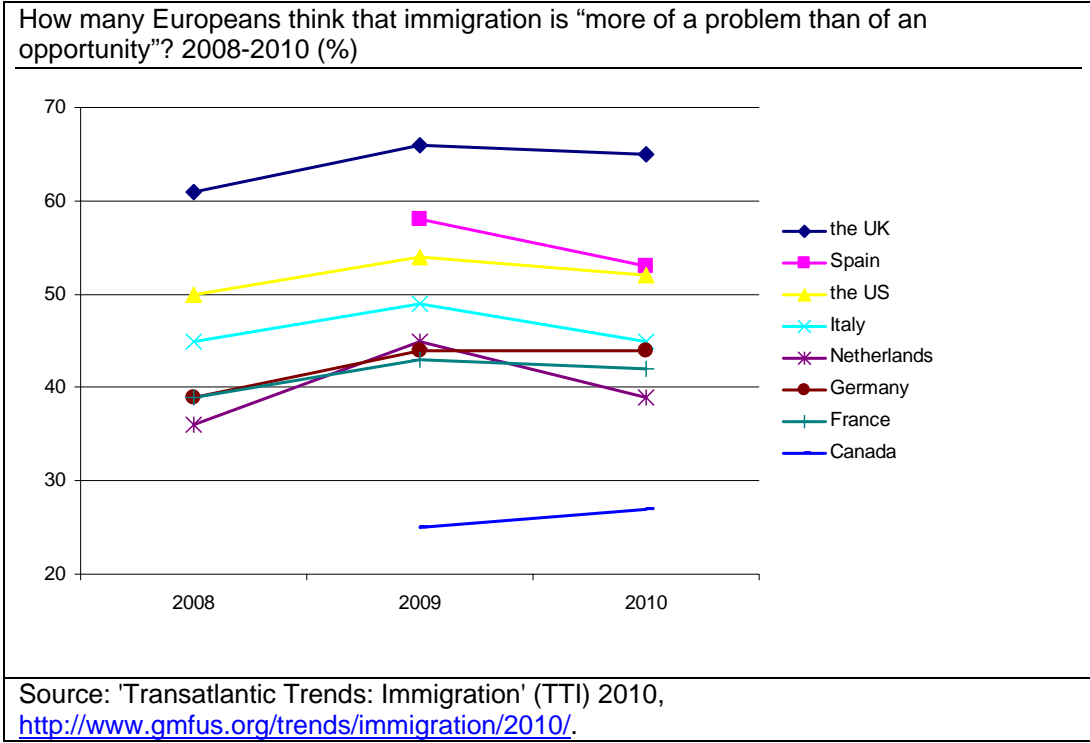
4.14.15. Public perceptions

Facts and figures are important in order to address public concerns about migration and to raise awareness of the situation of migrants in different areas of life. It is also important to study the development of perceptions over time on the basis of objective data from different sources. In 2011, the Commission carried out a Eurobarometer on Migrant Integration interviewing both

⁸³ OECD, 'Naturalisation: A Passport for the Better Integration of Immigrants?', http://www.oecd.org/document/0/0,3746,en_2649_37415_48125719_1_1_1_37415,00.html.

EU citizens and migrants. The results show that both migrants and EU citizens have concerns regarding the integration process and that more efforts are needed from the side of governments, migrants and the general public. Migrants and EU citizens agree that the top four most important factors that facilitate integration are: speaking the language; having a job; respecting local cultures; and enjoying legal status.

On other hand, another survey carried out in some EU Member States in 2010 indicated that public concerns about immigration did not increase following the economic crisis.⁸⁴



⁸⁴ 'Transatlantic Trends: Immigration' (TTI) 2010, <http://www.gmfus.org/trends/immigration/2010/>, among other studies, offer insights on European citizens' perceptions, opinions and preferences with regard to integration of foreign immigrants. The TTI 2010 survey has been carried out in six EU countries (France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom), Canada and the US. For Spain and Canada data are not available for 2008.