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Making the most of EU funds to support a comprehensive approach to migrant integration



ReSOMA identifies the most pressing topics and needs relating to the migration, asylum and integration debate. Building on the identification of pivotal topics and controversies in the Discussion Policy Briefs, **ReSOMA Policy Option Briefs** put forward the policy alternatives that can fill the key gaps at EU/national level and map their support among stakeholders and researchers. In addition, they spell out which evidence is used by the advocates of these various solutions to argue for their effectiveness.

Under nine different topics, ReSOMA Policy Option Briefs capture available evidences and new analysis of the policy alternatives. They take stock of existing literature of policy solutions on asylum, migration and integration. They have been written under the supervision of Sergio Carrera (CEPS/EUI) and Thomas Huddleston (MPG). Based on the Policy Option Briefs, other ReSOMA briefs will outline scenarios for reform paths in the asylum, migration and integration areas in line with realities on the ground, the rule of law and human rights.

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Policy Option Brief

Making the most of EU funds to support a comprehensive approach to migrant integration

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is the stated intention of the European Commission to make more funding available to support the integration of migrants and refugees in the 2021 to 2027 EU programme period; and that better and more strategic use is made of the available EU means with a view to long-term integration. The ReSOMA Discussion Brief '[Operationalising a comprehensive approach to migrant integration](#)' has elaborated on a holistic model of integration policies, looking at all integration aspects broadly, and identified ten concrete and fundable focal points of implementing such an approach in practice. This ReSOMA Policy Options Brief matches the proposed elements of a comprehensive approach with the prospective EU programmes and draws conclusions with regard to funding opportunities and programming needs.

Section 2 is dedicated to the analysis of the future potentials of EU support for each of the elements from a local level perspective, referring to the EU instruments

- Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)*,
- European Social Fund Plus (ESF+),
- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF),
- European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD),
- European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF),
- EUInvest fund,
- Rights and Values programme,
- Erasmus programme,
- European Solidarity Corps (ESC).

Drawing on the cross-cutting analysis of opportunities, section 3 concludes on the policy options to be pursued to make the multi-funds approach advocated by the Commission work. To foster a comprehensive model of migrant integration through future EU funds, multi-level and multi-stakeholder collaboration is needed to close the existing three-fold gap in programming, implementation and participation.

* While the Commission had proposed to change the name of the fund into "Asylum and Migration Fund (AMF)" in its 2018 proposals for the 2021 to 2027 MFF, the co-legislators in the ongoing negotiations reached agreement to maintain the "Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)" denomination.

2. ELEMENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH AND THEIR EU FUNDING POSSIBILITIES FROM A CITY PERSPECTIVE

A systematic investigation into the future opportunities to support a comprehensive approach, looking at the funds' legal basis currently under negotiation by the EU co-legislators, reveals significant possibilities. Table 1 provides an overview of the in-depth analysis further below. It also indicates whether funding opportunities will arise in programmes implemented by the European Commission itself ('direct management'), by Member State authorities or entrusted bodies under Commission guidance ('indirect management'), or by Member State authorities based on national programmes and in collaboration with the Commission ('shared management'). As section 3 highlights, this has major repercussions for the scope and accessibility of those EU means that eventually will be available.

Table 1: Focal areas of a comprehensive approach and EU funding opportunities in the 2021 to 2027 MFF (source: own compilation)

	AMIF	ESF+	ERDF	EAFRD	EFMM	EUInvest	Rights & Values	Erasmus	European Solidarity Corps	Horizon Europe
Enabling comprehensive integration from day one	Shared management	Shared management	Limited possibilities	Shared management	Shared management					
Mainstreaming integration across policy areas	Shared management	Shared management	Limited possibilities	Shared management	Shared management	Indirect management		Indirect management		
Establishing effective non-discrimination policies	Shared management	Shared management	Limited possibilities				Direct management			
Facilitating social investments		Shared management	Shared management	Shared management		Indirect management				
Creating a knowledge base	Shared management	Indirect management	Limited possibilities				Direct management	Indirect management		Indirect management
Fostering trust and positive identification	Shared management	Shared management	Limited possibilities	Shared management	Shared management		Direct management	Indirect management		
Enabling participation	Shared management		Limited possibilities				Direct management	Indirect management	Indirect management	
Encouraging volunteerism	Shared management	Shared management	Limited possibilities	Limited possibilities	Limited possibilities		Direct management	Indirect management	Indirect management	
Seizing opportunities of transnational links	Limited possibilities	Limited possibilities							Indirect management	
Supporting place-based community empowerment	Shared management	Shared management	Limited possibilities	Shared management	Shared management			Indirect management	Indirect management	

● Shared management
 ● Indirect management
 ● Direct management
● ● ● Limited possibilities

The following analysis matches the ten proposed, fundable focal areas of a comprehensive approach and their specific implementation challenges (as operationalised in the related ReSOMA [Discussion Brief](#)) with the intervention areas of the EU instruments as set out in their respective legal basis. It draws on the initial proposals of the regulations put forward by the Commission in 2018, currently undergoing the final stages of negotiations among the co-legislators Parliament, Council and Commission. With some changes to be expected resulting from the legislative process, the stipulations included here are taken from the clauses

referring to the objectives, scope, eligible actions and purpose of the funds in the proposed draft regulations; with the exception of the European Solidarity Corps regulation, already adopted in 2018 (AMF: EC 2018e, ESF+: EC 2018d, ERDF: EC 2018f, EAFRD: EC 2018l, EMFF: EC 2018m; EUInvest: EC 2018h, Rights and Values: EC 2018i, Erasmus: EC 2018k, ESC: EP/CEU 2018).

The purpose of this analysis is to illustrate the full breadth of the emerging funding landscape for a broader practitioner audience. Therefore, the listing includes the generic objectives of instruments (e.g. ESF+) as much as eligible actions (e.g. AMIF). Readers should take note that some of the provisions proposed by the Commission are very likely to see several amendments, following the adoption of the legislative resolutions of the European Parliament (cf. the ReSOMA report '[Future EU funding to support the integration of refugees and migrants](#)') and the ongoing 'trilogue' negotiations among the co-legislators (e.g. concerning actions supported by AMIF). The concluding section of this brief will elaborate on the significant limitations that exist for increased use of the future funds for migrant integration purposes, mainly stemming from Member State national programming and implementation decisions.

1) Enabling comprehensive integration from day one & improving coordination among authorities for newly arrived

How to ensure that newly arrived migrants and refugees can integrate and access key services and rights immediately, preventing long waiting periods, social isolation and demotivation? – Implementation challenges to tackle include

- providing seamless, well-coordinated and mutually reinforcing integration support services based on individual needs and recognition of existing skills;
- supporting tailored early advice and the elaboration of individual long-term integration plans;
- ensuring early access to key regular institutions (such as education, housing, employment, health) without delays caused by lack of coordination;
- eliminating administrative barriers to accessing services which result from rules and conditions that newcomers cannot meet (such as previous residence), or from migrants' residence status;
- devising pre-departure integration measures which include key introductory knowledge and prepare migrants for quick orientation after arrival;
- in the asylum context, reconciling the early integration objective with the spatial implications of the reception system, safeguarding that asylum seekers as well have easy access to early integration support (also outside reception centres).

2021 to 2027 MFF funding opportunities

EU Instrument	Scope & measures
AMIF	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) & Commission work programmes (Thematic Facility): transnational Union Actions etc.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • setting up of administrative structures, systems and tools and training of staff, including local authorities and other relevant stakeholders; • assistance and support services consistent with the status and the needs of the person concerned, in particular vulnerable groups; • in asylum systems, identifying applicants with special procedural or reception needs; • in asylum systems, establishing or improving reception accommodation infrastructure; • assessment of skills and qualifications acquired in a third country, as well as their transparency and compatibility with those of a Member State; • early integration measures such as tailored support in accordance with the needs of third-country nationals and integration programmes focusing on education, language and other training such as civic orientation courses and professional guidance; • actions promoting equality in the access and provision of public and private services to third-country nationals, including adapting them to the needs of the target group; • cooperation between governmental and non-governmental bodies in an integrated manner, including through coordinated integration-support centres, such as one-stop shops.
ESF+	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) and provision of early labour market access by Member States in many cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving access to employment of all jobseekers, in particular youth and longterm unemployed, and of inactive people, promoting self-employment and the social economy; • promoting women's labour market participation, a better work/life balance including access to childcare, a healthy and well-adapted working environment addressing health risks, adaptation of workers, enterprises and entrepreneurs to change, and active and healthy ageing; • promoting equal access to and completion of, quality and inclusive education and training, in particular for disadvantaged groups, from early childhood education and care through general and vocational education and training, and to tertiary level, as well as adult education and learning, including facilitating learning mobility for all; • promoting lifelong learning, notably flexible upskilling and reskilling opportunities for all taking into account digital skills, better anticipating change and new skills requirements based on labour market needs, facilitating career transitions and promoting professional mobility; • fostering active inclusion with a view to promoting equal opportunities and active participation, and improving employability; • promoting socio-economic integration of third country nationals and of marginalised communities such as the Roma;

- enhancing the equal and timely access to quality, sustainable and affordable services; modernising social protection systems, including promoting access to social protection; improving accessibility of healthcare systems and long-term care services;
- promoting social integration of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion, including the most deprived and children;
- addressing material deprivation through food and/or basic material assistance to the most deprived, including accompanying measures.

Depending on **Commission work programmes (Employment and Social Innovation & Health strands)**:

- developing the market eco-system related to the provision of microfinance for micro-enterprises in start-up and development phases, in particular those that employ vulnerable people;
- effective and inclusive information-sharing, mutual learning, peer reviews and dialogue on policies in the fields supported by ESF+;
- social experimentations in the fields supported by ESF+ and build up of stakeholders' capacity to implement, transfer or upscale the tested social policy innovations;
- transnational cooperation to accelerate the transfer of, and to facilitate the scaling of, innovative solutions, in particular for the areas of employment, skills and social inclusion.

ERDF

Depending on **Member States national/regional programming** (shared management) of **policy objective 'a more social Europe'** (but limited scope for highly developed regions):

- enhancing the effectiveness of labour markets and access to quality employment through developing social innovation and infrastructure;
- improving access to inclusive and quality services in education, training and life-long learning through developing infrastructure;
- increasing the socioeconomic integration of marginalised communities, migrants and disadvantaged groups, through integrated measures including housing and social services;
- ensuring equal access to health care through developing infrastructure, including primary care.

Depending on **delegated implementation** (indirect management): **European Urban Initiative** with regard to sustainable urban development):

- support of capacity-building;
- support of innovative actions.

EAFRD

Depending on **Member States national programming** (shared management) under the rural development pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy:

- investments, incl. on basic services, with regard to the promotion of employment, growth, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, such as health care, (early childhood) education, employment/vocational training systems;
- investments with regard to the facilitation of business development, such as development of business incubators and investment support for self-employment;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support for business knowledge exchange and information to promote innovation and access to training and advice; • support for community-led local development cooperation (CLLD) with regard to social inclusion, employment and growth, based on bottom-up, multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral Local Action Groups (LEADER programme strand).
EMFF	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) with regard to fostering prosperous coastal communities and the growth of a sustainable 'blue' economy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support for the sustainable development of local economies and communities through community-led local development (CLLD), capitalising on and strengthening environmental, cultural, social and human resources.

2) Mainstreaming integration across policy areas & supporting integration in the long-term

How to ensure that mainstream public services provide services in equal quality for all members of society, by making differentiated efforts according to specific, individual needs that result from the migration context? – Implementation challenges to tackle include

- safeguarding that migrants' needs are understood and met by service providers and their staff (such as schools, employment services, social care, hospitals and other authorities) and that migrants and their descendants attain the same access and uptake of public goods and services as non-migrants in similar situations;
- embedding integration mainstreaming in a wider diversity approach that simultaneously takes account of gender, age and vulnerabilities;
- complementing standard services (for the public at large) with targeted measures responding to migrant-specific needs where necessary;
- introducing integration measures geared towards supporting long-term settlement and social mobility (e.g. access to language courses on higher levels, catch-up schooling for adults, tertiary education support, etc.);
- ensuring continuous, coordinated reform and adaptation across all relevant policy areas in order to retain the capacity to govern in contemporary immigration societies.

2021 to 2027 MFF funding opportunities

EU Instrument	Scope & measures
AMIF	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) & Commission work programmes (Thematic Facility): transnational Union Actions etc.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishment and development of national strategies in asylum, legal migration, integration, return and irregular migration; • setting up of administrative structures, systems and tools and training of staff, including local authorities and other relevant stakeholders;

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- assistance and support services consistent with the status and the needs of the person concerned, in particular vulnerable groups;
 - assessment of skills and qualifications acquired in a third country, as well as their transparency and compatibility with those of a Member State;
 - actions promoting equality in the access and provision of public and private services to third-country nationals, including adapting them to the needs of the target group;
 - cooperation between governmental and non-governmental bodies in an integrated manner, including through coordinated integration-support centres, such as one-stop shops.

ESF+

Depending on **Member States national programming** (shared management)

- improving access to employment of all jobseekers, in particular youth and longterm unemployed, and of inactive people, promoting self-employment and the social economy;
- modernising labour market institutions and services to assess and anticipate skills needs and ensure timely and tailor-made assistance and support to labour market matching, transitions and mobility;
- promoting women's labour market participation, a better work/life balance including access to childcare, a healthy working environment addressing health risks, adaptation of workers, enterprises and entrepreneurs to change, and active and healthy ageing;
- improving the quality, effectiveness and labour market relevance of education and training systems, to support acquisition of key competences (including literacy, multilingualism, citizenship, cultural awareness and expression);
- promoting equal access to and completion of, quality and inclusive education and training, in particular for disadvantaged groups, from early childhood education and care through general and vocational education and training, and to tertiary level, as well as adult education and learning, including facilitating learning mobility for all;
- promoting lifelong learning, notably flexible upskilling and reskilling opportunities for all taking into account digital skills, better anticipating change and new skills requirements based on labour market needs, facilitating career transitions and promoting professional mobility;
- fostering active inclusion with a view to promoting equal opportunities and active participation, and improving employability;
- promoting socio-economic integration of third country nationals and of marginalised communities such as the Roma;
- enhancing the equal and timely access to quality, sustainable and affordable services; modernising social protection systems, including promoting access to social protection; improving accessibility of healthcare systems and long-term care services.

Depending on **Commission work programmes (Employment and Social Innovation & Health strands)**:

- developing the market eco-system related to the provision of microfinance for micro-enterprises in start-up and development phases, in particular those that employ vulnerable people;
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective and inclusive information-sharing, mutual learning, peer reviews and dialogue on policies in the fields supported by ESF+; • social experimentations in the fields supported by ESF+ and build up of stakeholders' capacity to implement, transfer or upscale the tested social policy innovations; • transnational cooperation to accelerate the transfer of, and to facilitate the scaling of, innovative solutions, in particular for the areas of employment, skills and social inclusion.
ERDF	<p>Depending on Member States national/regional programming (shared management) of policy objective 'a more social Europe' (but limited scope for highly developed regions):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing the socioeconomic integration of marginalised communities, migrants and disadvantaged groups, through integrated measures including housing and social services; <p>Depending on Member States national/regional programming (shared management) of policy objective 'a Europe closer to citizens':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fostering integrated social, economic and environmental development, cultural heritage and security in urban areas; also through community-led local development <p>Depending on delegated implementation (indirect management): European Urban Initiative with regard to sustainable urban development):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support of capacity-building; • support of innovative actions; • support of knowledge, policy development and communication.
EAFRD	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) under the rural development pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investments, incl. on basic services, with regard to the promotion of employment, growth, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, such as health care, (early childhood) education, employment/vocational training systems; • investments with regard to the facilitation of business development, such as development of business incubators and investment support for self-employment; • support for business knowledge exchange and information to promote innovation and access to training and advice; • support for community-led local development cooperation (CLLD) with regard to social inclusion, employment and growth, based on bottom-up, multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral Local Action Groups (LEADER programme strand).
EMFF	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) with regard to fostering prosperous coastal communities and the growth of a sustainable 'blue' economy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support for the sustainable development of local economies and communities through community-led local development (CLLD),

	capitalising on and strengthening environmental, cultural, social and human resources.
Erasmus	Depending on Member States decentralised implementation (indirect management through national agencies) in the education and training strand : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promotion of cooperation, inclusion, excellence, creativity and innovation at the level of organisations and policies in the field of education and training; through • partnerships for cooperation and exchanges of practices, including small-scale partnerships and • policy dialogue and cooperation with relevant key stakeholders.
EUInvest	Depending on Member State decisions to use the InvestEU fund to mobilise additional public and private investment for measures supported by an EU grant (AMIF, ESF+, etc.); so-called ' blending ': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for investments in the 'social investment and skills' policy window through an EU budget guarantee to back the investment of the EIB and other financial partners, and increase their risk-bearing capacity, among others for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ microfinance, social enterprise finance and social economy; ○ demand for and supply of skills; ○ education, training and related services; ○ social innovation, including innovative social solutions and schemes; ○ cultural activities with a social goal; ○ integration of vulnerable people, including third country nationals.

3) Establishing effective non-discrimination policies & enforcing anti-discrimination laws

How to ensure that strong anti-discrimination laws are effectively enforced and that discriminatory behaviour becomes socially unacceptable? – Implementation challenges to tackle include

- establishing effective anti-discrimination laws (covering discrimination on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin as well as religion or belief, extending to all areas of equal treatment in employment, education, social protection and publicly available services);
- facilitating the reporting of discrimination cases and supporting victims to come forward with complaints;
- informing migrants about laws and their rights through campaigns and specialised NGOs;
- raising awareness among key actors on e.g. the housing and labour markets; establishing strong, independent and well-resourced equality bodies with powers to advise and launch own investigations;

- sustaining public communication and campaigns that consistently stress that discrimination is forbidden and socially unacceptable.

2021 to 2027 MFF funding opportunities

EU Instrument	Scope & measures
AMIF	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) & Commission work programmes (Thematic Facility: transnational Union Actions etc.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • actions promoting equality in the access and provision of public and private services to third-country nationals, including adapting them to the needs of the target group; • information and awareness-raising campaigns to inform employers and irregular migrants about their rights and obligations pursuant to the EU Employer Sanctions Directive (2009/52/EC).
ESF+	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving access to employment of all jobseekers, in particular youth and longterm unemployed, and of inactive people, promoting self-employment and the social economy; • promoting equal access to and completion of, quality and inclusive education and training, in particular for disadvantaged groups, from early childhood education and care through general and vocational education and training, and to tertiary level, as well as adult education and learning, including facilitating learning mobility for all; • promoting socio-economic integration of third country nationals and of marginalised communities such as the Roma; • enhancing the equal and timely access to quality, sustainable and affordable services; modernising social protection systems, including promoting access to social protection; improving accessibility, effectiveness and resilience of healthcare systems and long-term care services. <p>Depending on Commission work programmes (Employment and Social Innovation strand):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective and inclusive information-sharing, mutual learning, peer reviews and dialogue on policies in the fields supported by ESF+; • social experimentations in the fields supported by ESF+ and build up of stakeholders' capacity to implement, transfer or upscale the tested social policy innovations; • transnational cooperation to accelerate the transfer of, and to facilitate the scaling of, innovative solutions, in particular for the areas of employment, skills and social inclusion.
ERDF	<p>Depending on Member States national/regional programming (shared management) of policy objective 'a more social Europe' (but limited scope for highly developed regions):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhancing the effectiveness of labour markets and access to quality employment through developing social innovation and infrastructure;

- improving access to inclusive and quality services in education, training and life-long learning through developing infrastructure;
- increasing the socioeconomic integration of marginalised communities, migrants and disadvantaged groups, through integrated measures including housing and social services;
- ensuring equal access to health care through developing infrastructure, including primary care.

Rights and Values	<p>Depending on Commission work programmes in the 'Equality and Rights' strand (focused on combating inequalities and discrimination, supporting comprehensive policies to promote antidiscrimination and their mainstreaming as well policies to combat racism and all forms of intolerance):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • awareness raising, dissemination of information to improve the knowledge of the policies and rights in the areas covered by the programme; • mutual learning through exchange of good practices among stakeholders to improve knowledge and mutual understanding and civic and democratic engagement; • training relevant stakeholders to improve their knowledge of the policies and rights in the fields covered; • encouraging and facilitating active participation in the construction of a more democratic Union as well as awareness of rights and values through support to civil society organisations.
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4) Facilitating social investments & ensuring adequate social infrastructures in regions experiencing higher levels of immigration

How to ensure that social infrastructures are provided in line with demand and population numbers, in particular in areas dealing with a growing citizenry resulting from immigration?

– Implementation challenges to tackle include

- the mobilisation of (public) funding for the expansion of social infrastructures, such as schools, early education, social care, public housing and health services;
- needs assessments and accurate foresight of emerging bottlenecks/future demand in areas undergoing demographic changes;
- the coordination of investments across different systems (e.g. childcare, education, housing) on a given territory;
- coordination between social and spatial (urban) planning both horizontally and vertically across levels of government.

2021 to 2027 MFF funding opportunities

EU Instrument	Scope & measures
ESF+	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving access to employment of all jobseekers, in particular youth and longterm unemployed, and of inactive people, promoting self-employment and the social economy;

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- promoting women's labour market participation, a better work/life balance including access to childcare;
 - improving the quality, effectiveness and labour market relevance of education and training systems, to support acquisition of key competences;
 - promoting equal access to and completion of, quality and inclusive education and training, in particular for disadvantaged groups, from early childhood education and care through general and vocational education and training, and to tertiary level, as well as adult education and learning, including facilitating learning mobility for all;
 - enhancing the equal and timely access to quality, sustainable and affordable services; improving accessibility, effectiveness and resilience of healthcare systems and long-term care services.

Depending on **Commission work programmes (Employment and Social Innovation & Health strands)**:

- support for the development of social enterprises and the emergence of a social investment market, facilitating public and private interactions and the participation of foundations and philanthropic actors;
- guidance for the development of social infrastructure (including housing, childcare and education and training, health care and long-term care) needed for the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

ERDF

Depending on **Member States national/regional programming** (shared management) of **policy objective 'a more social Europe'** (but limited scope for highly developed regions):

- enhancing the effectiveness of labour markets and access to quality employment through developing social innovation and infrastructure;
- improving access to inclusive and quality services in education, training and life-long learning through developing infrastructure;
- ensuring equal access to health care through developing infrastructure, including primary care.

Depending on **Member States national/regional programming** (shared management) of **policy objective 'a Europe closer to citizens'**:

- fostering integrated social, economic and environmental development, cultural heritage and security in urban areas; as well as in rural and coastal areas also through community-led local development.

EAFRD

Depending on **Member States national programming** (shared management) under the rural development pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy:

- investments, incl. on basic services, with regard to the promotion of employment, growth, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, such as health care, (early childhood) education, employment/vocational training systems;
 - investments with regard to the facilitation of business development, such as development of business incubators and investment support for self-employment.
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EUInvest	<p>Depending on Member State decisions to use the InvestEU fund to mobilise additional public and private investment for measures supported by an EU grant (AMIF, ESF+, etc.); so-called 'blending':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for investments in social infrastructure under the 'social investment and skills' policy window through an EU budget guarantee to back the investment of the EIB and other financial partners, and increase their risk-bearing capacity, in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ education and training, including early childhood education and care, educational facilities; ◦ social housing; ◦ health and long-term care, including clinics, hospitals, primary care, home services and community-based care.
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5) Creating a knowledge base & strengthening evidence-based integration policy development and evaluation

How to nurture a reliable knowledge base, allowing for continuous monitoring of integration processes, identification of policy gaps and development of measures, evaluation and further development of policies? – Implementation challenges to tackle include

- using statistical concepts that fully capture population diversity resulting from migration;
- implementing indicator-based monitoring systems to systematically track developments and measure outcomes by means of reliable and comparable data;
- using monitoring systems to benchmark the implementation and mainstreaming of policies (from the arrival/reception phase to settlement/integration and social cohesion/managing diversity);
- conducting impact assessments and evaluations of individual measures and policies, of long-term integration outcomes and effects on social cohesion;
- linking data gathering efforts to the policy cycle with procedures to continuously feed information on socio-economic trends and emerging policy needs into formulation, review and adaptation of policies.

2021 to 2027 MFF funding opportunities

EU Instrument	Scope & measures
AMIF	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) & Commission work programmes (Thematic Facility): transnational Union Actions etc.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development, monitoring and evaluation of policies and procedures including on collection and exchange of information and data, development and application of common statistical tools, methods and indicators for measuring progress and assessing policy developments; • exchanges of information, best practices and strategies, mutual learning, studies and research, the development and implementation of joint actions and operations and the setting-up of transnational cooperation networks.

ESF+	Depending on Commission work programmes (Employment and Social Innovation & Health strands) : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> high-quality comparative analytical knowledge in order to ensure that policies to achieve the specific objectives of ESF+ are based on sound evidence and are relevant to needs, challenges and conditions.
ERDF	Depending on delegated implementation (indirect management): European Urban Initiative with regard to sustainable urban development): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> support of knowledge, policy development and communication.
Rights and Values	Depending on Commission work programmes in the 'Equality and Rights' strand (focused on combating inequalities and discrimination, supporting comprehensive policies to promote antidiscrimination and their mainstreaming as well policies to combat racism and all forms of intolerance): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analytical and monitoring activities to improve the understanding of the situation in the Member States and at EU level in the areas covered by the programme.
Erasmus	Depending on Member States decentralised implementation (indirect management through national agencies): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> strategic partnerships for cooperation and exchanges of practices, including small-scale partnerships to foster a wider and more inclusive access to the Programme; partnerships for innovation, such as adult education alliances, to strengthen Europe's innovation capacity.
Horizon Europe	Depending on Commission work programmes , research and innovation related to 'Social and Economic Transformations' on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human mobility in the global and local contexts for better migration governance, integration of migrants including refugees; respect of international commitments and human rights; greater, improved access to quality education, training, support services, active and inclusive citizenship especially for the vulnerable; Knowledge base for advice on investments and policies especially education and training, for high value-added skills, productivity, social mobility, growth, social innovation and job creation. The role of education and training to tackle inequalities; New types of work, the role of work, trends and changes in labour markets and income in contemporary societies, and their impacts on income distribution, non-discrimination including gender equality and social inclusion; Modernisation of public authorities to meet citizens' expectation regarding service provision, transparency, accessibility, openness, accountability and user centricity.

6) Fostering trust and positive identification & initiating community-building among newcomers and the receiving society

How to build and sustain trust among newcomers and residents, as a starting point for a positive social climate, sense of belonging and identification with a place as being home to people of various background? – Implementation challenges to tackle include

- supporting activities which encourage regular and trust-building interaction among (local) residents of all backgrounds and newly arrived;
- creating partnerships with civil society, businesses and the culture sector for this purpose;
- enabling local residents and migrants to work together on common projects to improve the community and address its needs (e.g. related to gender, youth, age issues);
- engaging in debate about the impact of diversity on social development and its potentials and challenges;
- building stable majorities across different segments of the public in favour of immigration and long-term inclusion of migrants and refugees;
- consistently advocating a pluralistic identity of communities/cities/countries and communicating diversity as a resource;
- pursuing public communication strategies that reflect the diversity in the composition of the population;
- ensuring pro-active and transparent communication in the context of large-scale arrival situations, involving political, social, security and civil society stakeholders.

2021 to 2027 MFF funding opportunities

EU Instrument	Scope & measures
AMIF	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) & Commission work programmes (Thematic Facility): transnational Union Actions etc.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • actions aimed at enhancing awareness of asylum, integration, legal migration and return policies among stakeholders and the general public; • actions enabling and supporting third-country nationals' introduction to and active participation in the receiving society and actions promoting acceptance by the receiving society; • promoting exchanges and dialogue between third-country nationals, the receiving society and public authorities, including through the consultation of third-country nationals, and intercultural and inter-religious dialogue.
ESF+	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fostering active inclusion with a view to promoting equal opportunities and active participation, and improving employability; • promoting socio-economic integration of third country nationals and of marginalised communities such as the Roma; • promoting social integration of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion, including the most deprived and children.

		<p>Depending on Commission work programmes (Employment and Social Innovation strand):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective and inclusive information-sharing, mutual learning, peer reviews and dialogue on policies in the fields supported by ESF+; • social experimentations in the fields supported by ESF+ and build up of stakeholders' capacity to implement, transfer or upscale the tested social policy innovations; • transnational cooperation to accelerate the transfer of, and to facilitate the scaling of, innovative solutions, in particular for the areas of employment, skills and social inclusion.
ERDF		<p>Depending on Member States national/regional programming (shared management) of policy objective 'a Europe closer to citizens':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fostering integrated social, economic and environmental development, cultural heritage and security in urban areas; as well as in rural and coastal areas also through community-led local development. <p>Depending on delegated implementation (indirect management): European Urban Initiative with regard to sustainable urban development):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support of capacity-building; • support of innovative actions; • support of knowledge, policy development and communication.
EAFRD		<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) under the rural development pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support for community-led local development cooperation (CLLD) with regard to social inclusion, employment and growth, based on bottom-up, multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral Local Action Groups (LEADER programme strand).
EMFF		<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) with regard to fostering prosperous coastal communities and the growth of a sustainable 'blue' economy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support for the sustainable development of local economies and communities through community-led local development (CLLD), capitalising on and strengthening environmental, cultural, social and human resources.
Rights and Values		<p>Depending on Commission work programmes in the 'Citizens Engagement and Participation' strand (focused on increasing citizens' understanding of the Union, its history, cultural heritage and diversity):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mutual learning through exchange of good practices among stakeholders to improve knowledge and mutual understanding and civic and democratic engagement; • training relevant stakeholders to improve their knowledge of the policies and rights in the fields covered; • strengthening citizen's awareness of European culture, history and remembrance as well as their sense of belonging to the Union;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> encouraging and facilitating active participation in the construction of a more democratic Union as well as awareness of rights and values through support to civil society organisations.
Erasmus	<p>Depending on Member States decentralised implementation (indirect management through national agencies) in the youth strand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> promotion of active participation among young people, as well as cooperation, inclusion, creativity and innovation at the level of organisations and policies in the field of youth; through partnerships for cooperation and exchanges of practices, including small-scale partnerships and policy dialogue and cooperation with relevant key stakeholders.

7) Enabling participation & involving migrants with different residence status, host language skills and social capital

How to facilitate, on all levels, the formal and informal participation of migrants in managing the affairs of their new country; in order to ensure participation of all members of society and maintain the legitimacy of the democratic system? – Implementation challenges to tackle include

- achieving a level of representation of persons with a migrant or refugee background in assemblies, parliaments, governments, political parties and other decision bodies that reflects their actual share among the population;
- conducting active citizenship campaigns to increase voter turnout among enfranchised migrants (naturalised citizens, TCNs with voting rights);
- pursuing inclusive citizenship policies which facilitate and encourage naturalisation and extend voting rights to settled TCNs;
- involving migrants in participatory decision-making on local level (citizen fora, consultative processes, neighbourhood development, participatory urban planning etc.);
- creating independent consultative bodies on local, regional and national levels to represent migrants' needs and interests;
- involving migrants in the formulation of integration policies so that their interests and perspectives, as primary stakeholders, are reflected;
- including information on civic and political participation in social orientation courses.

2021 to 2027 MFF funding opportunities

EU Instrument	Scope & measures
AMIF	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) & Commission work programmes (Thematic Facility): transnational Union Actions etc.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> actions enabling and supporting third-country nationals' introduction to and active participation in the receiving society and actions promoting acceptance by the receiving society;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting exchanges and dialogue between third-country nationals, the receiving society and public authorities, including through the consultation of third-country nationals, and intercultural and inter-religious dialogue.
ERDF		<p>Depending on delegated implementation (indirect management): European Urban Initiative with regard to sustainable urban development, with a view to inclusion objectives which allow for support actions e.g. benefitting people with precarious status or undocumented migrants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support of capacity-building; • support of innovative actions; • support of knowledge, policy development and communication.
Rights Values	and	<p>Depending on Commission work programmes in the 'Citizens Engagement and Participation' strand (focused on increasing citizens' understanding of the Union, its history, cultural heritage and diversity):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mutual learning through exchange of good practices among stakeholders to improve knowledge and mutual understanding and civic and democratic engagement; • training relevant stakeholders to improve their knowledge of the policies and rights in the fields covered; • strengthening citizen's awareness of European culture, history and remembrance as well as their sense of belonging to the Union; • encouraging and facilitating active participation in the construction of a more democratic Union as well as awareness of rights and values through support to civil society organisations.
Erasmus		<p>Depending on Member States decentralised implementation (indirect management through national agencies) in the youth strand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promotion of active participation among young people, as well as cooperation, inclusion, creativity and innovation at the level of organisations and policies in the field of youth; through • partnerships for cooperation and exchanges of practices, including small-scale partnerships and • policy dialogue and cooperation with relevant key stakeholders.
European Solidarity Corps		<p>Depending on Member States decentralised implementation (indirect management through national agencies):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • solidarity projects on the initiative of participants (aged 18 to 30) which should help address unmet societal needs and contribute to strengthening communities and enhancing the personal, educational, social, civic and professional development of young people.

8) Encouraging volunteerism & ensuring long-term collaboration between authorities and civil society

How to encourage and sustain high levels of citizen involvement and volunteerism in integration support, as well as volunteering of migrants as a catalyst for their civic, social and economic integration? – Implementation challenges to tackle include

- developing integration frameworks that allow for a strong role of volunteering in integration support (mentoring, learning, mixing,...) as a way to foster intercultural relationships and the notion of a welcoming society;
- supporting the effectiveness of often small volunteer-based initiatives through training, tools and support;
- providing resources and coordination for outreach to potential volunteers and beneficiaries to meet demand;
- encouraging migrant involvement in integration support activities to gain from their language and intercultural skills;
- linking the contributions of voluntary initiatives to overall integration programmes and measures and ensuring their complementarity;
- encouraging general civic and social engagement of migrants in the voluntary sector to facilitate interaction with the receiving society, community building, informal acquisition of (language) skills and learning about the new country;
- supporting carrier organisations, initiatives and local bodies in creating such volunteering opportunities for migrants;
- mobilising potential volunteers through community outreach and supporting volunteering initiatives carried by migrants.

2021 to 2027 MFF funding opportunities

EU Instrument	Scope & measures
AMIF	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) & Commission work programmes (Thematic Facility): transnational Union Actions etc.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • actions enabling and supporting third-country nationals' introduction to and active participation in the receiving society and actions promoting acceptance by the receiving society; • promoting exchanges and dialogue between third-country nationals, the receiving society and public authorities.
ESF+	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fostering active inclusion with a view to promoting equal opportunities and active participation, and improving employability; • promoting socio-economic integration of third country nationals and of marginalised communities such as the Roma; • promoting social integration of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion, including the most deprived and children. <p>Depending on Commission work programmes (Employment and Social Innovation strand):</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social experimentations in the fields supported by ESF+ and build up of stakeholders' capacity to implement, transfer or upscale the tested social policy innovations; • transnational cooperation to accelerate the transfer of, and to facilitate the scaling of, innovative solutions, in particular for the areas of employment, skills and social inclusion.
ERDF		<p>Depending on Member States national/regional programming (shared management) of policy objective 'a Europe closer to citizens':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fostering integrated social, economic and environmental development, cultural heritage and security in urban areas; also through community-led local development (CLLD).
EAFRD		<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) under the rural development pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support for community-led local development cooperation (CLLD) with regard to social inclusion, employment and growth, based on bottom-up, multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral Local Action Groups (LEADER programme strand).
EMFF		<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) with regard to fostering prosperous coastal communities and the growth of a sustainable 'blue' economy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support for the sustainable development of local economies and communities through community-led local development (CLLD), capitalising on and strengthening environmental, cultural, social and human resources.
Rights and Values		<p>Depending on Commission work programmes in the 'Citizens Engagement and Participation' strand (focused on increasing citizens' understanding of the Union, its history, cultural heritage and diversity):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mutual learning through exchange of good practices among stakeholders to improve knowledge and mutual understanding and civic and democratic engagement; • training relevant stakeholders to improve their knowledge of the policies and rights in the fields covered; • strengthening citizen's awareness of European culture, history and remembrance as well as their sense of belonging to the Union; • encouraging and facilitating active participation in the construction of a more democratic Union as well as awareness of rights and values through support to civil society organisations.
Erasmus		<p>Depending on Member States decentralised implementation (indirect management through national agencies) in the youth strand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promotion of active participation among young people, as well as cooperation, inclusion, creativity and innovation at the level of organisations and policies in the field of youth; through • partnerships for cooperation and exchanges of practices, including small-scale partnerships and • policy dialogue and cooperation with relevant key stakeholders.

European Solidarity Corps	<p>Depending on Member States decentralised implementation (indirect management through national agencies):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in-country volunteering, traineeships and jobs activities to provide young people (aged 18 to 30), with the support of participating organisations, with easily accessible opportunities for engagement in solidarity activities while improving their skills and competences for personal, educational, social, civic, cultural and professional development, as well as facilitating their active citizenship, employability and transition into the labour market; • solidarity projects on the initiative of participants.
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9) Seizing opportunities of transnational links & promoting integration as a 'three-way process' including the countries of origin

How to facilitate that social, economic, cultural and political links of migrants with their country of origin contribute to integration and well-being in the country of destination? – Implementation challenges to tackle include

- identifying those transnational/translocal links of migrants, communities, organisations and authorities that can contribute to integration and the economy in receiving countries;
- encouraging civic engagement in transnational migrant organisations as starting point for civic activities and political participation in the destination country;
- removing barriers for inclusive citizenship policies related to legal provisions of country of origin (e.g. not allowing dual citizenship, loss of rights in case of naturalisation) as part of bilateral origin-destination cooperation;
- supporting (in and outside school) bilingualism and the learning of languages of origin to foster inclusion and employment prospects;
- turning 'transnational capital' (in terms of home country language, social and cultural knowledge) into assets for migrant enterprises, to grow businesses and create jobs;
- connecting the support for transnationally active enterprises with overall economic and international trading strategies of countries, regions and cities;
- linking integration and socio-economic advancement in receiving countries with social and economic development processes in the region of origin ('co-development'; e.g. know-how and skills transfer in circular migration, remittance-funded educational, economic etc. programmes).

2021 to 2027 MFF funding opportunities

EU Instrument	Scope & measures
AMIF	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) & Commission work programmes (Thematic Facility: transnational Union Actions etc.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of mobility schemes to the Union, such as circular or temporary migration schemes, including training to enhance employability;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cooperation between third countries and the recruitment agencies, the employment services and the immigration services of Member States.
ESF+	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving the quality, effectiveness and labour market relevance of education and training systems, to support acquisition of key competences (including literacy, multilingualism, citizenship, cultural awareness and expression).
European Solidarity Corps	<p>Depending on Member States decentralised implementation (indirect management through national agencies):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • volunteering, solidarity projects and networking activities open to participants (aged 18 to 30) from countries covered by the European neighbourhood policy (and which have concluded agreements with the Union on their participation in the Union's programmes), as well as of the acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates which benefit from a pre-accession strategy.

10) Supporting place-based community empowerment & setting free local potentials for neighbourhood development

How to foster civic community organizing capacities and support neighbourhoods to achieve increased levels of social involvement, overcome social isolation, reduce tensions and improve access to resources, well-being and economic outlook? – Implementation challenges to tackle include

- establishing inclusive, participatory fora and formats to identify communities' and peoples' needs, reaching out to marginalised groups of all background;
- providing resources (e.g. neighbourhood budgets, participatory budgeting) as incentive for joint engagement, planning and decision-making on activities and projects around shared interest;
- building a dense interaction infrastructure (e.g. youth centres, culture/leisure facilities, public libraries, schools as focal points for parental/community outreach, quality public space, dedicated intercultural centres);
- linking efforts to wider urban regeneration schemes, housing improvement and social mixing policies as well as local (migrant) business support structures, and ensuring cross-sectoral coordination on municipality level;
- providing professionally staffed, well-resourced, trained and interculturally competent social and community work, conflict management and mediation services;
- strengthening the ability of local authorities to monitor social developments on small territorial scales and to intervene preventively in collaboration with stakeholders.

2021 to 2027 MFF funding opportunities

EU Instrument	Scope & measures
AMIF	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) & Commission work programmes (Thematic Facility: transnational Union Actions etc.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • actions enabling and supporting third-country nationals' introduction to and active participation in the receiving society and actions promoting acceptance by the receiving society; • promoting exchanges and dialogue between third-country nationals, the receiving society and public authorities.
ESF+	<p>Depending on Member States national programming (shared management)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fostering integrated territorial development, by employing community-led local development (CLLD) focused on subregional areas; led by local action groups composed of representatives of public and private local socio-economic interests; is carried out through integrated Community-led local development strategies; and is supportive of networking, innovative features in the local context and cooperation with other territorial actors. <p>Depending on Commission work programmes (Employment and Social Innovation strand):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social experimentations in the fields supported by ESF+ and build up of stakeholders' capacity to implement, transfer or upscale the tested social policy innovations; • transnational cooperation to accelerate the transfer of, and to facilitate the scaling of, innovative solutions, in particular for the areas of employment, skills and social inclusion.
ERDF	<p>Depending on Member States national/regional programming (shared management) of policy objective 'a more social Europe' (but limited scope for highly developed regions):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhancing the effectiveness of labour markets and access to quality employment through developing social innovation and infrastructure; • improving access to inclusive and quality services in education, training and life-long learning through developing infrastructure; • increasing the socioeconomic integration of marginalised communities, migrants and disadvantaged groups, through integrated measures including housing and social services; • ensuring equal access to health care through developing infrastructure, including primary care. <p>Depending on Member States national/regional programming (shared management) of policy objective 'a Europe closer to citizens':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fostering integrated social, economic and environmental development, cultural heritage and security in urban areas; • Implementation of ERDF funds to foster integrated territorial development, by employing community-led local development (CLLD) which is focused on subregional areas; led by local action groups composed of representatives of public and private local socio-economic interests; is

carried out through integrated Community-led local development strategies; and is supportive of networking, innovative features in the local context and cooperation with other territorial actors.

Depending on **delegated implementation** (indirect management): **European Urban Initiative** with regard to sustainable urban development):

- support of capacity-building;
- support of innovative actions.

EAFRD	Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) under the rural development pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support for community-led local development cooperation (CLLD) with regard to social inclusion, employment and growth, based on bottom-up, multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral Local Action Groups (LEADER programme strand).
EMFF	Depending on Member States national programming (shared management) with regard to fostering prosperous coastal communities and the growth of a sustainable 'blue' economy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support for the sustainable development of local economies and communities through community-led local development (CLLD), capitalising on and strengthening environmental, cultural, social and human resources.
Erasmus	Depending on Member States decentralised implementation (indirect management through national agencies) in the youth strand : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promotion of active participation among young people, as well as cooperation, inclusion, creativity and innovation at the level of organisations and policies in the field of youth; through • partnerships for cooperation and exchanges of practices, including small-scale partnerships and • policy dialogue and cooperation with relevant key stakeholders.
European Solidarity Corps	Depending on Member States decentralised implementation (indirect management through national agencies): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incountry volunteering, traineeships and jobs activities to provide young people (aged 18 to 30), with the support of participating organisations, with easily accessible opportunities for engagement in solidarity activities while improving their skills and competences for personal, educational, social, civic, cultural and professional development, as well as facilitating their active citizenship, employability and transition into the labour market; • solidarity projects on the initiative of participants.

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Overall conclusions

Wide scope of funding opportunities, but significant limitations

At first glance, matching the focal areas of a comprehensive approach to migrant integration with prospective funding opportunities in the 2021 to 2027 MFF suggests extensive possibilities for receiving EU support, and nearly no funding gap, reflecting the Commission's efforts in mainstreaming integration across the regulations of several instruments. All proposed elements of a holistic approach will see at least three access points to acquire EU means.

However, the applicability of certain funds is limited in several cases (cf. table 1, p.3). For example, the considerable possibilities under ERDF programmes arising from the policy objective 'a more social Europe' (like access to labour markets and quality services) are rather restricted for Member States with a gross national income equal or above the EU average. These countries will be able to spend only up to 9% of nationally available ERDF means on this objective, while hosting large shares of the EU's immigrant population.

In another example, the focus on transnational links and integration as a 'three-way process' including the countries of origin is only partly addressed. Here, funds merely capture some aspects, like the AMIF with regard to training and third-country cooperation in the context of mobility schemes to the EU, the ESF+ with a mentioning of multi-lingualism as a key competence, and the European Solidarity Corps with some possibilities for fostering civic integration via transnational solidarity projects and volunteering in EU neighbourhood and accession countries. Generally, the co-funding requirement weighs in on Member States, but can become particularly challenging for NGOs where governments do not provide for the national contribution.

An additional, general limitation to funding a comprehensive approach stems from the fact that in some of its proposed focal areas, Commission-managed programmes or programme elements have a dominant role. While this opens the possibility that funds under direct management become deliberately programmed with a view to the comprehensive approach, it has to be noted that the overall volume of these monies pale in comparison to the funds implemented via national programmes under shared management. By and large, Commission-managed funds like the Rights and Values programme, the Employment and Social Innovation strand of ESF+, the European Urban Initiative under ERDF and AMIF's Thematic Facility will support a comparatively limited numbers of projects (with a strong focus on transnational partnerships, knowledge transfer, policy innovation and European value added), rather than wide integration programmes at national level.

Need to overcome funding gaps

Taking into account past and recent experiences with the actual uptake of EU instruments for integration support, even more challenges for funding a comprehensive approach come into the limelight at closer inspection. Integration support from AMIF is hampered by Member State spending priorities for the migration management, asylum system and return strands of the programme, leading to very diverse implementation across Member States of the integration priority within the 2014 to 2020 MFF. The lack of minimum percentages for allocation and spending (earmarkings) in the current proposal for the next MFF undermines even more the fulfilment of this AMIF objective.

Under the ESF, actual spending on measures that support inclusion and labour market access of third-country nationals and persons with a migrant background is wholly dependent on Member State programming and spending decisions; resulting in a very uneven utilisation of the ESF for integration support across the EU. Certain Member States tend to prioritise other target groups, while others prevent many groups from benefitting from ESF by strictly linking labour market integration policies to access to regular employment. However, as the ESF+ regulation widens the fund's scope beyond labour market integration support, actions supporting people not qualifying for labour market access might be eligible.

In general, flawed needs assessments and contradictory policy choices in the migration/integration field, lacking involvement in programming of integration stakeholders from civil society and local/regional levels, as well as practical obstacles in accessing the funds are the major reasons for the considerable under-exploitation of the potential for integration support through EU means in Member States (Ahad and Schmidt 2019, Beirens and Ahad 2019, EAPN 2016, EC 2015, 2017d, EC 2019b, ECA 2018a,b, Rietig 2016, ECRE & PICUM 2019, ECRE & UNHCR 2017, 2019, EPRS 2017, ESF Transnational Platform/AEIDL 2018a,b, ESN 2017, EUROCITIES 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017b,c, 2018a, Fondazione Brodolini et al. 2016, HLG 2017, Servillo 2017, Social Platform 2016, 2018a, Sweco et al. 2016, Urban Agenda 2018; cf. ReSOMA [Synthetic Report on Future EU funding to support the integration of refugees and migrants](#)).

3.2 Three policy options for better use of EU funds for comprehensive integration

To increase the actual uptake of EU funds for migrant integration and promote a comprehensive approach along the ten proposed focal areas in particular, relevant actors at all levels will need to pursue three policy options:

- **Closing the programming gap:** Member State programming of the EU funds under shared management arguably will be the most decisive factor for how much support eventually will be available for integration in the 2021 to 2027 period. Gaps will emerge if Member State authorities fail to prioritise integration objectives, or do not foresee mainstreaming of migrant inclusion across the policy areas supported by the Structural Funds. In particular, those Member States are called upon which up to now have made only little or no use at all of the ESF for migrant integration purposes. Another key factor for avoiding programming gaps are appropriate needs assessments

based on evidence and thorough consultation of experts and stakeholders in respect of the partnership principle (see below). Funding gaps also threaten to result from improper coordination among the various funds. Such discrepancies will weigh in even more as the increased utilisation of EFS for migrant integration calls for tight coordination between initial programming of AMIF and ESF+, as well as of the ongoing spending decisions as the funds are being implemented. To ensure complementarity and coherence with a view to comprehensive and long-term integration support, Member States therefore should install robust mechanisms. For example, this could involve joint meetings of monitoring committees on integration, assessing proposals for more than one fund, or a single ministerial authority responsible for the integration priority across funds. Not the least, the process of planning the national EU programmes offers a prime opportunity to discuss and advocate for a comprehensive approach in the context of the wider national integration policy debate. Ideally, strategic use of the funds should leverage the objectives of national integration policies.

- **Closing the implementation gap:** The actual use of EU funds by project carriers and beneficiaries will depend on obstacle-free implementation of the programmes in Member States. On the one hand, this refers to the speed in which funds become operational early on in the new funding period and allow for timely access, avoiding the underspending in times of most urgent needs (as seen in AMIF in the current period). It also refers to the accessibility of funds, in particular for local/regional authorities and civil society organisations, with regard to access rules for various target groups and actors, design of calls for projects, reporting requirements, etc. To be able to 'play the game' in the future multi-fund environment, actors in the integration field may need to be empowered, with sufficient information about the various funding channels and opportunities, practical support as well as customer-oriented programme authorities and agencies. Availability of means for technical assistance in Member States has an important role in this regard.
- **Closing the participation gap:** Involvement of key integration stakeholders (such as local/regional authorities, civil society organisations and bodies representing migrants) is a precondition for the design of Member State programmes which address on-the-ground needs at local level and enjoy ownership and commitment across the entire migrant integration field. Only such national programmes will actually be accessed by actors who potentially can make a real difference in terms of integration outcomes. To close the gap that exists in many Member States, stakeholders need to be involved in a structured and meaningful way in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes. By acting on the partnership principle and following the same high consultation standards in AMIF and the Structural Funds, governments will acknowledge the potential for more efficient and better embedded policies that come with the broad participation of local and regional authorities, civil society organisations and refugees/migrant-led organisations. In truly partnership-based programme implementation, stakeholders will be able to point out ways

of using the funds with a view to the long term, and advocate for a comprehensive, holistic approach.

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ReSOMA - Research Social Platform on Migration and Asylum

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

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