

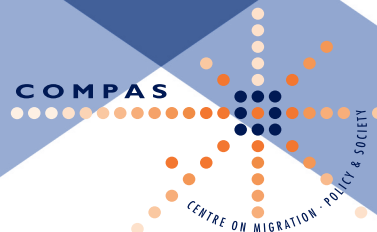
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## Strategic Developments on Migrant Integration Policies in Europe

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COMPAS



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## Introduction

This paper aims to present the major policy trends, the main drivers and future options for the integration of third-country nationals in Europe at the EU, national and local levels. Each policy area briefly introduces the state of play through a mapping of what is already known, presents the most important policy changes and trends and looks ahead to future development.

The increasing number of arrivals and the assumption that the Common European Asylum System is in crisis has accelerated changes in the area of migration and integration, with a rapidly transforming European and national legal frameworks and a growing number of local and regional initiatives. Firstly, the paper presents recent trends and developments at these three governance levels and shows where the focus of the integration debate falls within these levels. Then, it turns to the assessment of the two major European legal migration channels, resettlement and family reunification and analyses their links and impacts for integration. The third chapter presents the major policy areas that are currently the focus of reform efforts on migrant integration. This section points to possible gaps and risks as well as opportunities for innovation in the fields of voluntary initiatives, language and integration obligations, labour market integration as well as refugees' reception conditions, qualification and targeted integration policies. The chapter mainly draws conclusions from the [Migrant Integration Policy Index \(MIPEX\)](#)<sup>1</sup> and international comparative research in order to put European developments into context. The last chapter introduces policy areas that are currently at the margins of integration policy debates but potential drivers of long-term change: active citizenship, anti-discrimination and mainstreaming integration.

The current reforms are drafted with the objectives of reducing refugee arrivals and incentives for secondary movements while at the same time preserving or increasing an individual's integration prospects. These dual objectives can lead to major policy contradictions, which are summarised in the concluding part of the paper, together with the challenges to establish multilevel governance on integration.

## Recent trends and developments at the EU, national, regional and local levels

### EU level: Embarking on far-reaching reforms

As recent as early 2015, most policy observers had concluded that the EU migration legislation had reached a new stage of maturity and stability, with the second generation of EU asylum directives to be transposed in 2013 and 2015. Less than two years later, Europe has witnessed the largest number of refugee arrivals in Europe since the early 1990s and a severe crisis of EU migration governance, **the entire EU legal framework, its goals and standards painstakingly developed since 1999, has been called into question.** The intense politicisation of countries' responses to spontaneous irregular arrivals has even extended to debates about opening legal channels for protection and to improving integration policies. Even though the far-right has little direct influence on EU decision-

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<sup>1</sup> The Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) is a unique long-term project which evaluates and compares what governments are doing to promote the integration of migrants in all EU Member States and several non-EU countries. It identifies and measures integration outcomes, integration policies, and other contextual factors that can impact policy effectiveness; describes the real and potential beneficiaries of policies; and collects and analyses high-quality evaluations of integration policy effects. Now in its fourth edition, the MIPEX has been recognised as a common quick reference guide across Europe.

making as these parties remain marginal in the European Parliament despite their record-high 2014 election results, their pressure on EU decision-making is indirect but intense on the Council, where many national government coalitions are historically weak and face their greatest-ever threat from far-right parties in domestic elections. The European Commission, with its treaty obligation to initiate legislation and its President's current aim to be a 'political Commission', aims to respond rapidly and comprehensively to this governance crisis. These guidelines, agendas, communications, action plans and new reform packages are the subject of this chapter.

### *Reform initiatives*

The European Commission Communication "Towards a reform of the Common European Asylum System and enhancing legal avenues to Europe" (2016) was one of the 10 priorities in the Political Guidelines of European Commission President Juncker. Dimitris Avramopoulos, the new Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship received the task to develop this policy together with the other Commissioners under the coordination of the Vice-President, Frans Timmermans. This upward shift of responsibilities and the clear intent to engage all relevant Commissioners in the development of migration policy suggests an increasing politicisation of migration. The legislative development with likely the greatest consequences for integration is the now third attempt to reform the Common European Asylum System, launched on 6 April 2016.<sup>2</sup> The document states that the overall objective of the proposals is to "*move from a system which by design or poor implementation places a disproportionate responsibility on certain Member States and encourages uncontrolled and irregular migratory flows to a fairer system which provides orderly and safe pathways to the EU for third country nationals in need of protection or who can contribute to the EU's economic development*". To achieve this objective, the Commission puts forward a wide range of proposals, including a few particularly relevant for integration. These proposals suggest a **completely new approach from the Commission, acting on its own initiative and following the lead of a few influential top destination countries**, where one little-discussed 'solution' to the governance crisis created by large-scale arrivals is to reconceive of international protection as a **temporary status**.

*Reception and qualification directives:* The Commission suggests a further harmonisation of asylum procedures, to "**ensure that applicants are granted the type of protection they are entitled to but only for so long as they need it**" across the EU and to "**reduce incentives to move to and within the EU**". Therefore, both the Asylum Procedures and Qualification Directives are to be revised and transformed to a new Regulation, while targeted modifications are suggested to the Reception Conditions Directive. The Commission puts forward a wide range of proposals that aim to sanction irregular secondary movements, including through the restriction of certain rights and reception conditions.

*Resettlement:* The Commission plans to establish a horizontal mechanism for resettlement with common EU rules for admission and distribution, on the status to be accorded to resettled persons, on financial support and on measures to discourage secondary movements. The plan also

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<sup>2</sup> European Commission, *Towards a Reform of the Common European Asylum System and Enhancing legal Avenues to Europe*, COM(2016) 197 final [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160406/towards\\_a\\_reform\\_of\\_the\\_common\\_european\\_asylum\\_system\\_and\\_enhancing\\_legal\\_avenues\\_to\\_europe\\_-\\_20160406\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160406/towards_a_reform_of_the_common_european_asylum_system_and_enhancing_legal_avenues_to_europe_-_20160406_en.pdf).

encourages Member States to make use of other legal entry options for people in need of international protection, such as private sponsorship schemes and humanitarian permits.

*A more coherent and effective model of EU legal migration management:* Beyond the reform of the EU Blue Card, the Commission is planning a REFIT evaluation of the other existing EU legal work migration rules and the launching of a study on the possibility of establishing a pre-screening mechanism accessible to Member States and employers to create a pool of skilled migrant candidates.

*Strengthening cooperation with key countries of origin:* The Commission recommends the continuation of existing policy dialogues and operational cooperation under the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM) to ensure a more effective management of migratory flows and the implementation of the Valletta Action Plan, including the establishment of pilot projects on facilitating recognition of qualifications, increasing the number of Scholarships under Erasmus+ and the support of pre-departure measures.

### *Integration Action Plan*

In June 2016, the European Commission committed to stepping up its action on the integration of third country nationals by putting forward an EU Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals.<sup>3</sup> The document shows a **renewed commitment to coordinating integration**. The actions are carried out with **new commitments from all major European Commission DGs to open up their services and funds to migrants and refugees**. The Action Plan is also a **new attempt at multi-level governance, among others through an Urban Agenda Partnership**. Its potential to relaunch and deepen the immigrant integration policy agenda on EU-level, which is marked by an open coordination method, merits a close look at the policy priorities and provisions for policy coordination set out in this document.

All the Action Plan's policy priorities will be supported by two main tools in order to engage in the process all relevant European Commission DGs, as well as all multi-level stakeholders:

#### **1) Policy coordination**

- a. Upgrading the current Network of National Contact Points on Integration into a **European Integration Network** to support coordination and mutual learning among Member States;
- b. European Migration Forum, as a platform for exchange between civil society and European institutions;
- c. Country Reports and Country-Specific Recommendations of the European Semester including labour market integration, education and social inclusion of third country nationals;
- d. Education and Training 2020 strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training;
- e. EU Work Plan for Youth 2016-2018;

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<sup>3</sup> European Commission, Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals, COM(2016) 377 final [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160607/communication\\_action\\_plan\\_integration\\_third-country\\_nationals\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160607/communication_action_plan_integration_third-country_nationals_en.pdf).

- f. **Urban Agenda Partnership** for developing actions on the integration of third country nationals, led by the City of Amsterdam and including several Commission DGs, Member States, cities and civil society representatives.

## 2) Funding

Most important funding sources:

- a. **Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund** - AMIF national programmes for integration: 765 million euros;
- b. **European Structural and Investment Funds** - ESIF: European Social Fund - ESF (21 billion euros available for promoting social inclusion, combatting poverty and discrimination), European Regional Development Fund – ERDF (21.4 billion euros), and European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development - EAFRD (14.4 billion for job creation, provision of basic services and action for social inclusion);
- c. **European Social Fund Transnational Cooperation Network on Migration**: bringing together ESF Managing Authorities, social partners and other relevant actors for exchanging experiences on how to best use ESF funding for integration.

**The EU Action Plan covers five thematic areas:**

- 1) **Pre-departure and pre-arrival measures** - Actions to prepare migrants and local communities for the integration process:
  - Launch projects supporting pre-departure and pre-arrival measures for local communities, including for resettlement programmes in priority third countries;
  - Engage with Member States to strengthen cooperation with selected third-countries on pre-departure measures, including under the La Valletta Action Plan.
- 2) **Education** - Actions to promote language training, participation of migrant children in Early Childhood Education and Care, teacher training and civic education:
  - Provide online language assessment and learning for newly arrived third country nationals, especially refugees, through the Erasmus+ online linguistic support (100.000 licenses available to refugees for a period of three years);
  - Support peer learning events on key policy measures such as welcome classes, skills and language assessment, support for unaccompanied minors, intercultural awareness, recognition of academic qualifications and higher education;
  - Support the school community in promoting inclusive education and the addressing specific needs of migrant learners through the online School Education Gateway;
  - Remove barriers to the participation of third country national girls and boys to early childhood education through the development of the European Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), including assistance to ECEC staff to respond to the specific situation of families;
  - Support the upskilling of low-skilled people through the New Skills Agenda for Europe.
- 3) **Employment and vocational training** - Actions to promote early integration into the labour market and migrants' entrepreneurship

- Under the New Skills Agenda for Europe:
  - develop a "Skills and Qualifications Toolkit" to support timely identification of skills and qualifications for newly arrived third country nationals;
  - ensure that better information about qualification recognition practices and decisions in different countries is collected through the Europass portal;
  - improve the transparency and understanding of qualifications acquired in third countries, through revision of the European Qualifications Framework.
- Provide specific support for early recognition of academic qualifications of third country nationals including refugees, including through enhancing cooperation between National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC) and training staff in reception facilities;
- Launch projects promoting labour market integration of refugees and women, with 'fast track' insertion into labour market and vocational training;
- Identify best practices to promote and support migrant entrepreneurship and fund pilot projects for their dissemination.

#### **4) Access to basic services such as housing and healthcare**

- Promote the use of EU funds for reception, education, housing, health and social infrastructures for third country nationals;
- Strengthen cooperation with the European Investment Bank to provide funding for temporary accommodation and health facilities for newly arrived third country nationals and social housing;
- Promote peer learning exchanges between Member States and cities in the form of study visits, peer reviews and sharing of best practices on how to address housing challenges, including geographical isolation and ghettoization;
- Support best practices in care provision for vulnerable third country nationals and refugees, including women, children and older persons under the Health Programme;
- Develop pilot training modules for health professionals on health for third country nationals and refugees, with a view to upgrade and strengthen the skills and capabilities of first line health professionals and promote a holistic approach to health care of third country nationals and refugees.

#### **5) Active participation and social inclusion** - Actions to support exchanges with the receiving society, migrants' participation to cultural life and fighting discrimination:

- Launch projects to promote intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and European common values through culture, films and arts ([Creative Europe](#));
- Launch projects to promote social inclusion through [youth and sport \(Erasmus+\)](#);
- Propose to give greater priority, within the European Voluntary Service, to activities dedicated to integration of refugees and asylum seekers;
- Develop handbooks and toolboxes for practitioners on cultural awareness and expression; intercultural dialogue; active participation of third country nationals in political, social and cultural life and sports in the host societies; and of youth work;



- Launch projects under different EU funds promoting: participation in political, social and cultural life and sports; social inclusion through education, training and youth; preventing and combating discrimination, gender-based violence, racism and xenophobia, including hate crime and hate speech, and fostering better understanding between communities, including religious communities;
- Continue to work with the European Parliament and the Council towards the adoption of the anti-discrimination directive.

### *Reform of EU Blue Card for highly-skilled workers*

As one of the European Commission's political priorities on "Towards a New Policy on Migration" the European Commission presented its proposal for the recast of the [EU Blue Card Directive](#) alongside its [Integration Action Plan](#). The recast aims **to improve the integration of highly-skilled third-country national workers and their families by facilitating their family reunification rights, access to long term status as well as eligibility for beneficiaries of international protection**, with the aim to both increase the attractiveness of the EU and facilitate their labour market integration.

#### **1) Family reunification**

Derogations from [Directive 2003/86/EC](#) are provided in order to facilitate family reunification of highly skilled workers. As under Directive 2009/50/EC, no waiting period or integration measures can be imposed before reunification is allowed. As a further new facilitation, family members will be entitled to receive their permits immediately when the EU Blue Card is issued and thereby be able to join the worker without any delay. Moreover, Member States cannot apply limitations regarding family members' access to the labour market, but a labour market test can be carried out before granting access. The stated reason is that integration and waiting periods are not necessary because highly skilled workers and their families are likely to have a favourable starting point regarding integration in the host community.

#### **2) Long-term residence**

Derogations from [Directive 2003/109/EC](#) will give EU Blue Card holders facilitated access to EU long-term resident status. Compared to Directive 2009/50/EC, further facilitations are introduced while building on the existing model. In order to guarantee a sufficient level of integration in the host country, access can be gained first of all through a continuous residence period of three years in one Member State as an EU Blue Card holder. Alternatively, where the EU Blue Card holder has moved to another Member State under the EU Blue Card mobility provisions, the status can be obtained through five years of continuous residence accumulated in different Member States.

#### **3) Beneficiaries of international protection**

The proposed Directive continues not to apply to persons seeking international protection and awaiting decision on their status or to those who are beneficiaries of temporary protection or residing in a Member State on a strictly temporary basis. As a novelty it does cover, however, beneficiaries of international protection under [Directive 2011/95/EU](#), including resettled refugees. They will be able to apply for an EU Blue Card like any other third-country national, while retaining all the rights they enjoy as beneficiaries of protection. Highly skilled beneficiaries of international protection will thus become more accessible to employers and be able to take up employment in a more targeted way in accordance with their skills and education, filling shortages in sectors and occupations in any Member State.

## National level: Piecemeal progress towards improved integration policies

**National integration policies continue to improve little-by-little**, sometimes with great effects on specific aspects of people's lives. **The average MIPEX ([Migrant Integration Policy Index](#)) country increased by +1 point on average on the MIPEX 100-point-scale from 2010-2014** (similar to +1 point trend from 2007-2010). 13 countries made these +1 average improvements by reinforcing current programmes (Portugal and the United States), improving administrative procedures (France, Ireland, Japan, Switzerland, Turkey) or implementing EU law (Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Romania). **10 countries passed more major reforms:**

- Denmark's several reforms catching up with policies in Nordics and international trends;
- More targeted support in Austria and Germany and dual nationality for 2<sup>nd</sup> generation in Germany;
- Adoption of EU-required anti-discrimination laws as well as domestic citizenship reforms in the Czech Republic and Poland;
- Better implementation of EU law in Bulgaria.

**7 countries lost -1 point on the MIPEX scale** (or much more in Greece, Netherlands and UK) **due to restrictions and cuts:**

- Abolition of citizenship reform and local voting rights in Greece;
- Abolition of the national consultative body in Norway;
- Family reunion restrictions in Australia, Canada and South Korea;
- Residence restrictions and targeted support cuts in nearly all areas in the Netherlands and UK.

### *Recent major comprehensive reforms*

#### **Denmark**

Since 2001, centre-right minority governments have been supported by the Danish People's Party in exchange for immigration and integration restrictions, while the opposition has often been galvanized in reaction to these restrictions. The 2011-5 centre-left coalition systematically reduced these restrictions and redirected Denmark towards international best practices and trends. Most of these restrictions are now likely to be reintroduced by the new centre-right minority following the 2015 elections. Rather than adopt one clear reform or system, both centre-right and centre-left governments chose to make many small changes over time, especially before elections, but for different reasons. The centre-right was constantly responding to criticism by the Danish People's Party with new 'restrictive' messages while the centre-left tried to avoid further politicisation of the debate.

For more, see [www.mipex.eu/denmark](http://www.mipex.eu/denmark)

#### **Netherlands**

While few Dutch policies changed from 2007-2010, the far right continued to politicise integration policy, set the terms of the debate and pressure government for restrictions. From 2010-2014, the Netherlands abandoned its traditional commitment to equal opportunities for immigrants and dropped -8 points on MIPEX, more than any other country has from 2007-2014. The Netherlands is largely on its own in its new approach to integration, which could be called a 'policy of no policy.'

Immigrant adults are demanded but not supported to learn the Dutch language and its core civic values, with 'loans' replacing the grants and free courses provided traditionally by the Netherlands and by most other countries. Immigrants are expected to be employed, healthy and civically active but without the targeted support to overcome any specific obstacles they face in Dutch society. According to the current government's understanding of mainstreaming, it is up to immigrants to pay and do it themselves and up to mainstream institutions to respond. While immigrants are required to integrate, mainstream institutions are not required to open up and no role is foreseen for integration policymakers or immigrant civil society to build bridges between the two. This radical reversal has undermined integration policies in nearly all areas of life, especially the labour market, political participation and education. The previous and current Dutch governments have also continued to restrict family reunion.

For more, see [www.mipex.eu/netherlands](http://www.mipex.eu/netherlands)

### **United Kingdom**

From 2011 to 2014, regular changes to the rules significantly restricted the opportunities for families to reunite and the path to settlement and UK citizenship. Separated families now face the least 'family-friendly' immigration policies in the developed world: the longest delays and highest income, language and fee levels, one of the few countries with language tests abroad and restricted access to benefits. One of the most restrictive and expensive paths has been created to settle permanently and become UK citizens, with few free English and citizenship courses for immigrants to succeed. The UK stopped its weak targeted measures for labour market integration at the very time when most in northern Europe and settlement countries are expanding their support. Following the comprehensive 2010 Equality Act, the UK's commitment to equality slipped since 2011/2 with 55% budget cuts for the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the end of mandatory equality impact assessments. After mainstreaming the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant, schools are no longer required to spend and report on the needs of bilingual and underachieving ethnic minority pupils. The National Health Service (NHS) is well-prepared to deal with diversity but the government is now restricting migrants' eligibility and access more so than the large majority of countries.

For more, see [www.mipex.eu/united-kingdom](http://www.mipex.eu/united-kingdom)

The links between integration policies and outcomes are not always clear. Some countries actively improve their policies to respond to problems on the ground, while others ignore them. Some policies are reaching many eligible immigrants, while others are poorly implemented or limited to small-scale projects and best practices. The MIPEX review of statistics and evaluations<sup>4</sup> suggests that ambitious policies are helping immigrants and their children in practice to reunite together, get basic training, become permanent residents, voters and citizens and use their rights as victims of discrimination. This can benefit everyone in society. Researchers using MIPEX around the world find that the countries with inclusive integration policies also tend to be more developed, competitive and happier places for immigrants and everyone to live in.<sup>5</sup>

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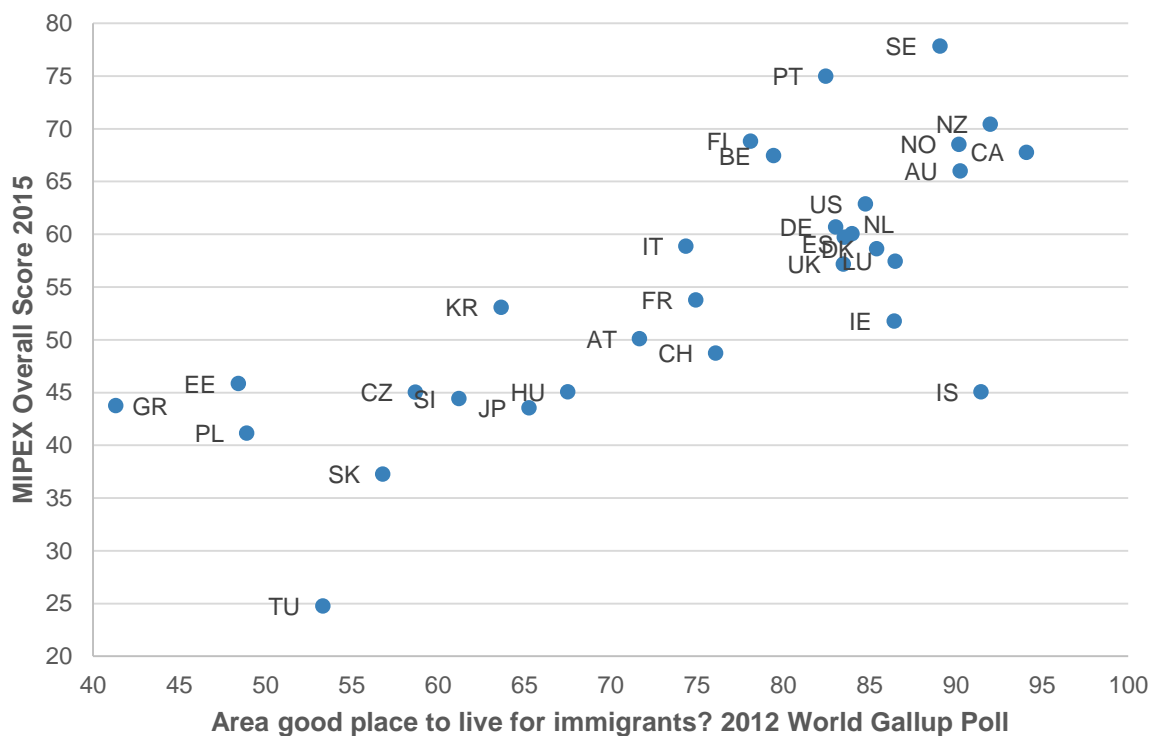
<sup>4</sup> Bilgili, Ozge (2015), *Evaluating impact: lessons learned from robust evaluations of labour market integration policies*, MPG, Brussels [http://mipex.eu/sites/default/files/downloads/files/mipex\\_evaluating-impact-lessons-learned-from-robust-evaluations-of-labour-market-integration-policies.pdf](http://mipex.eu/sites/default/files/downloads/files/mipex_evaluating-impact-lessons-learned-from-robust-evaluations-of-labour-market-integration-policies.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> See the NEWS: MIPEX in Use section of the website [www.mipex.eu](http://www.mipex.eu).

### Link to public opinion

The links between integration policies and public opinion are not only clear, but also perhaps the strongest dialectic driving integration policy development. Callens reviewed 18 multivariate studies using MIPEX and found a consistent positive relationship between integration policies, the general public's level of perceived threat from immigrants and the level of anti-immigrant attitudes. Countries with more inclusive integration policies (i.e. higher MIPEX overall scores) have lower levels of perceived threat and, to some extent, lower levels of negative attitudes towards immigrants. This finding on the relationship between national integration policies and public opinion is even more important since no other national level contextual factor seems to be as significant. This finding supports the normative theory of intergroup relations which assumes that a society's intergroup norms shape the majority's attitudes towards minorities, such as immigrants. Inclusive policies may also help us trust immigrants and see the benefits of immigration to our society, while restrictive policies harden distrust and xenophobic attitudes among the public.<sup>6</sup> A drop in a country's MIPEX score usually signals a rise in anti-immigrant attitudes and the success of far-right parties. Since most studies could not establish a causal link, further research is needed to corroborate the impact of integration policies on public opinion.

Strong correlation between integration policy & public opinion



The MIPEX network hopes to continue monitoring whether integration policies become more ambitious and effective, learning from the latest research and improving its indicators. It aims to

<sup>6</sup> Callens, Marie-Sophie (2015), *Integration policies and public opinion: in conflict or in harmony?* CIDOB and MPG, [www.migpolgroup.com/wp\\_clean/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MIPEX\\_Literature-review\\_Integration-and-public-opinion.pdf](http://www.migpolgroup.com/wp_clean/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MIPEX_Literature-review_Integration-and-public-opinion.pdf).

bring a greater level of maturity and evidence to the often politicised debates about the successes and failures of integration policies around the world.

### Local level: New roles and long-term efforts at comprehensive integration

Europe's immigrant population largely lives in cities, and big cities are where the trends are set for integration policies at the local level. While the overall picture of municipal policy efforts remains highly complex, **comprehensive integration and diversity policies** along the lines of transnationally promoted benchmarks **increasingly take hold** in European cities. The recent arrival of high numbers of humanitarian migrants will take cities into **new areas of refugee reception and integration** policies and encourage intensified efforts on **multi-level policy coordination** at both the national and EU levels.

#### *Integration policy trajectories of European cities*

More than anything else, the **demographic change stemming from migration is the main driver for urban integration policies** and can explain where cities stand in their efforts. Typically, European cities can be found along a trajectory that reaches from new cities of immigration with a low share of immigrants and predominantly recent arrivals, to cities that have undergone a deep demographic transformation after decades of sustained immigration.

Where migration is a more recent phenomenon, urban policymakers mostly regard it as a social policy issue, and typical integration measures are designed to address immediate welfare needs, income poverty, deprivation and social inclusion in the first place. While fully in line with the migration reality in most of these new destination cities, marked by low-skilled labour migration and (in many cases) a high share of irregular migrants, these integration policies tend to be highly compartmentalised and anchored below the top-level of urban leadership. Local integration policy discourses in these places mostly revolve around perceived problems and ways to alleviate the deficits of minorities.

At the other end of the spectrum, **highly diversified cities sooner or later adapt to treating the consequences of migration as core task in all urban policy fields**. With large foreign-born populations that can easily make up more than a third of the citizenry, and big second and third generation communities that can even push the share of inhabitants with an immigrant background beyond 50%, migration and the management of socio-cultural heterogeneity simply force their way across the policy agenda. Be it under the heading of integration, multi- or interculturalism, intercultural opening or diversity and diversity management, such cities pursue mainstreaming policies that broadly aim to reorganise and reform public services, as well as local democracy, in ways to ensure their future functioning under the conditions of ethno-cultural pluralism and the constant inflow of newly arriving people. 'Diversity' and 'openness' increasingly become part of the official self-image and are being projected, or even branded, towards their own population and the outside world as a positive asset and the 'new normal'.

#### *Setting benchmarks for comprehensive integration and diversity policies*

It is these cities that have set the **benchmarks for comprehensive, local-level integration policies, promoted and disseminated on European level**. Working through platforms like EURO CITIES and other city networks and urban interest organisations, or EU-funded project networks, they have been instrumental in shaping a set of policy instruments and assumptions that found their way into

official European Commission and Council of Europe policy statements. The EUROCIITIES 'Charter of Integrating Cities', resulting from the DIVE project<sup>7</sup> and signed by 17 mayors on its launch in 2010, epitomizes this approach and commits cities to develop their policies on all levels and in all roles of municipal government:

- In the *role of leadership-providing policy-makers*, cities are to actively communicate their commitment to equal opportunities for everyone living in the city; ensure equal access and non-discrimination across all policies; and facilitate engagement from migrant communities in policy-making processes and remove barriers to participation;
- In the *role as public service providers*, cities are to support equal access for migrants to services, particularly access to language learning, housing, employment, health, social care and education; and ensure that migrants' needs are understood and met by service providers;
- In the *role as employers*, cities are to take steps where required to reflect the population diversity in the composition of the workforce across all staffing levels; ensure that all staff, including staff with a migrant background, experience fair and equal treatment by their managers and colleagues; and ensure that staff understand and respect diversity and equality issues;
- In the *role as buyers of goods and services*, cities are to apply principles of equality and diversity in procurement and tendering; promote principles of equality and diversity amongst contractors; and promote the development of a diverse supplier-base.

In a similar vein, the Intercultural Cities Programme, launched as a joint initiative of the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the run-up to the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, is promoting its **Intercultural Integration Model with a range of policy recommendations**, from intercultural governance and participation to interculturally adapted public services.

### *From a variegated policy landscape towards new standards?*

Against the backdrop of this overall trend towards the ethno-culturally diverse European city and adequate policies to address the change, other factors as well determine the shape, scope and relevance of local-level integration policies. At close inspection, the **capacity of European cities to pursue their individual integration policies is closely circumscribed by their national contexts**, including cities' legal competencies in different policy fields as well as their financial leeway, the dominant welfare state model as well as the existence (or lack) of a tradition of providing strong public services at the local level. The general economic outlook of a city, and the opportunities for employment and a better life that go with it, can greatly impact on the priorities local politicians may set. Not least, the presence of strong anti-immigrant political forces can have impairing effects on the political leadership shown by mainstream parties in pursuing pro-active policies.

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<sup>7</sup> INTI-CITIES, DIVE, MIXITIES and ImpleMentoring were a series of EUROCIITIES-led city network projects funded from the Commission's DG Home Affairs from 2007 to 2014, mainly with the aim of assessing practices and policies in the promotion of diversity and equality through peer review and benchmarking (cf. [www.integratingcities.eu](http://www.integratingcities.eu)). CLIP Cities for Local Integration Policies was a similar project from 2006 to 2008, entailing research, urban practitioner involvement from 25 cities and recommendations for diversity-oriented policies, funded from the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (cf. [www.eurofound.europa.eu](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu)).

Looking at the urban level in Europe in its entirety, a **patchwork of integration policy efforts** thus emerges where the political salience, sustainability and contestation of integration can differ starkly among cities even within one country. This complexity renders difficult any attempt to assess the state of urban integration policies in a European-wide comparative way, beyond conclusions from single-city case studies<sup>8</sup> and monitoring tools. The Intercultural Cities Index goes some way in addressing this challenge. The review, regularly undertaken by the cities taking part in the network overseen by the Council of Europe, confirms that the champions of comprehensive urban integration policies can mainly be found in established countries of immigration and generally improve over the assessment cycle – thus indicating that cities indeed implement the abovementioned benchmark policies.<sup>9</sup> A 2011 study that correlated city-level ICC findings with national-level MIPEX findings concluded that “the intercultural cities index is, in most cases, related slightly negatively to the MIPEX which suggests that **some cities may adopt the intercultural model to counterbalance national framework conditions**”.<sup>10</sup> In other words, cities tend to be more active and inclusive in countries with restrictive national policies, while cities tend to be less active in countries with more inclusive and active national integration policies.

### *New roles in refugee reception and integration*

For a number of cities, the **2015/16 peak of newly arriving humanitarian migrants brought renewed urgency for integration policies**, as cities were propelled into short-term crisis management when faced with the daily arrival – or transit – of people seeking international protection. Cities along the West Balkan route and in the Central/northern European destination countries were tested in their ability to coordinate their response both horizontally, within the city, and vertically, with the national authorities. The reaction of citizens has seen spontaneous support and a proliferation of voluntary initiatives, but also a wave of anti-immigrant sentiment and tensions in what is likely to become a defining moment for integration policy discourse in many municipalities. A recent EUROCITIES report, drawing on the experience among 34 member cities in 17 EU Member States, is the first comprehensive overview on how cities are adapting to ensure newcomers can be fully integrated into the local community, how they communicate with citizens on this issue, how they collaborate - or do not collaborate - with the regional and national level and what kind of support cities receive or need.<sup>11</sup> In terms of future policy development and the way integration policies are being delivered, a few pointers stand out from the still unfolding events:

- **Cities have found new roles in the migration policy field – refugee reception – that has traditionally been dominated by the national level and its authorities.** The crisis brought to the fore municipal and civic capabilities to independently organise e.g. accommodation, health care and education solutions, even in the near-absence of a national response. Cities and their interest organisations are likely from now on to insist on stronger involvement in the making of these reception policies. As the numbers of spontaneous arrivals have abated, one can observe a shift in focus to improved and timely communication with national authorities, the long-term adaptation of key public services to accommodate the needs of

<sup>8</sup> More recent, e.g. the 2014 KING Knowledge for Integration Governance project, cf. <http://king.ismu.org/>

<sup>9</sup> [www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/about-the-index](http://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/about-the-index).

<sup>10</sup> BAK Basel (2011), *Correlation analysis between the intercultural cities index and other data. A study for the Council of Europe*, Basel: p.19.

<sup>11</sup> EUROCITIES (2016), *Refugee reception and integration in cities*, Brussels [http://nws.euocities.eu/MediaShell/media/RefugeeReport\\_final.pdf](http://nws.euocities.eu/MediaShell/media/RefugeeReport_final.pdf).

humanitarian newcomers (e.g. providing more housing stock in Sweden), issues of dispersal rules (e.g. cities' positions towards Germany's new integration law), or cities' involvement in pre-departure integration measure for resettled or relocated refugees (e.g. through the SHARE network).

- **Cities complement their policy dialogue with EU institutions to include the reception and integration of humanitarian migrants.** After the participation of cities in EU-level integration policy coordination had focused on third-country nationals in general, the urban and EU levels now become visibly more engaged on specific refugee matters. It is a push from both sides: while cities at the height of the crisis have realised that they must carry the consequences of EU policies on asylum and borders, they painfully felt the limitations of the eligibility rules of the AMIF Emergency Assistance instrument which they cannot access directly. Easier use of EU funding for refugee integration across all available programmes has thus emerged as a key demand from the city side. Moreover, refugee housing issues have added further urgency to cities' concerns about the consequences of EU state aid rules for the provision of social housing. From the Commission side, cities are envisaged in the June 2016 Integration Action Plan as key partners for improved multi-level policy coordination, explicitly including the Urban Agenda Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees.<sup>12</sup>
- **There is a new salience for providing strong leadership for migration and integration at the local level.** Urban leaders have learned – sometimes the hard way – that vague communication on the reality of the situation or swerving in the face of public reluctance easily backfire; at the latest when it comes to establishing new reception centres (which almost inadvertently provokes resistance). In some instances, the polarized and heated public climate led cities to pioneer new forms of pro-active and transparent, multi-stakeholder information policies (e.g. in the Netherlands and Germany). Cities also found new leading roles as enabler and partner for civil society initiatives, e.g. by providing matching platforms for volunteers. Not least, strong mayoral leadership was seen in the positioning of cities as welcoming and open to refugees (e.g. in the Netherlands and Cities of Refuge in Spain).

## Links between legal immigration, protection and integration

Resettlement and family reunification are **two major European legal migration channels** with much **potential still to be explored to facilitate the integration process** of third-country nationals and to improve protection for refugees, through **enhanced integration prospects from the very beginning**. Migrants can prepare for the journey to their new home and acquire, at an early stage, the basic knowledge of their host country's language and institutions to more easily get by in daily life from the moment of their arrival. National and local integration stakeholders can also potentially better plan ahead and adjust their services to the profile and needs of the newly arriving migrants. Planning and transparency gives a better chance to prepare local communities for welcoming the new

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<sup>12</sup> The EU Urban Agenda is a major policy initiative to mainstream urban development and policy issues across a range of EU policies, led by the Commission's DG region. To be fleshed out and implemented from 2016 on, negotiations and preparations that led to its adoption in May 2016 long preceded the 2015/16 EU refugee crisis.



residents and address citizens' insecurities, which are often fuelled by an increasingly populist discourse on migration.

However, the number of humanitarian arrivals through these channels remains still very low. While **resettlement is increasingly Europeanised**, the final decision on the number of beneficiaries of international protection to be taken in remains in the competence of national governments. The EU focus has been on incentivising Member States to achieve target numbers, and **less attention is given currently to exploring the potential linkages between resettlement and facilitated integration** (with the notable exception of pre-departure orientation). The EU has been not so forthcoming lately with regard to family reunion, and more and more Member States have introduced stricter family reunion policies with the objective of reducing the overall number of migrants without assessing the eventual negative effects of these policies on the integration of third-country nationals.

### Resettlement: new on the agenda, underused integration instruments

In the current refugee debate, resettlement is generally traded as the 'big other', the major legal alternative to the spontaneous arrival of asylum seekers and the processing of their claims on European soil. With regard to the integration prospects of its beneficiaries, resettlement indeed offers **principal advantages: it gives the possibility to start integration immediately on arrival** without the waiting periods and insecurities associated with asylum procedures; it enables **settling of beneficiaries in well-prepared communities**; it facilitates **structured, coordinated integration activities** with better possibilities to address individual needs, and it gives **access to protection for the most vulnerable**. In particular, resettlement allows for a **chain of interlinked pre-departure and post-arrival measures**, potentially further speeding up the settlement process.

The key trend is the **emergence of a new EU-level resettlement framework** based on a newly proposed **regulation**, building on the **growing experiences with resettlement in Member States** and the **Commission's promotion of it over the last decade**, but driven by current events. This framework will for the first time introduce into an EU instrument, **integration-relevant provisions** for resettled refugees, in particular with regard to **pre-departure orientation**. Further harmonization of the currently very diverse practices in the integration of resettled refugees will have to come from soft forms of policy learning and coordination.

### *The Europeanisation of Resettlement*

The spread of resettlement activities and the firm anchoring of resettlement in European refugee policy discourse has been one of the most remarkable developments over the last decade, albeit actual numbers of resettled humanitarian migrants are still very low. **In 2015, only 8,155 humanitarian migrants were resettled to EU countries, representing 2.7% of all newly recognized beneficiaries of international protection in the EU that year, 0.6% of the number of asylum seekers, 9.9% of all resettled persons worldwide and 0.9% of persons identified by UNHCR as in need of resettlement** in 2015.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the notion of resettlement and the alternative legal ways for refugees to enter the EU that come with it now figure prominently in the European refugee debate.

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<sup>13</sup> UNHCR Resettlement Fact Sheet 2015, UNHCR Refugee Resettlement Trends 2015, Eurostat: accessed on 5 July 2016.

Already before refugee numbers began to peak in 2014/15, the outlines of a new European policy framework on resettlement were in place. At Member State level, the late 2000s saw a proliferation of national resettlement programmes and activities. **Today, 14 Member States implement annual resettlement programmes and only seven Member States have no practical experience in resettlement at all.** That said, 46% of refugees resettled to the EU via national programmes in 2015 still moved to the four traditional resettlement countries Sweden, Denmark, Finland and the Netherlands which established these policies in the 1980s or earlier. The UK, France and Germany started national resettlement initiatives between 2004 and 2009, and were in 2015 between them responsible for 37% of persons resettled to the EU.<sup>14</sup>

At EU level, the European Commission as early as 2000 promoted resettlement schemes as a way to offer rapid access to protection. In a 2004 Communication it suggested a joint EU approach which would allow resettlement to be used as a strategic policy instrument for durable solutions, pursued within the external dimension of the EU's asylum policy. It took however until 2009 that a proposal to establish a joint EU resettlement programme was presented by the Commission,<sup>15</sup> and in March 2012 the programme was finally adopted. It mainly introduced new incentives for Member States to start resettlement programmes or increase the number of resettlement places by providing for lump sum support of between €4.000 and 6.000 from the European Refugee Fund for every person resettled.<sup>16</sup>

### *Proposed new EU Resettlement Framework*

In April 2016, the Commission included a future, **structured EU resettlement framework** in its Communication on the reform of the Common European Asylum System, as one way to enhance legal migration routes to the EU. The legislative proposal for an EU regulation on the new Union Resettlement Framework was released by the Commission as part of the CEAS reform package on 13 July 2016.<sup>17</sup> It provides for a **unified procedure for resettlement across the EU, implemented through annual EU resettlement plans**, adopted by the Council and operationalised by targeted EU resettlement schemes adopted by the Commission. The annual plans will set the broad geographical priorities from where the resettlement will take place and the maximum total number of persons to be resettled in the following year, based on the participation and contributions made by the Member States (and associated Schengen countries, while Denmark, Ireland and the UK are not obliged to participate in the scheme).

The proposal further sets out to establish a **common set of standard procedures for the selection and treatment of resettlement candidates**. It also specifies the **common eligibility criteria** for resettlement to the EU under the targeted EU resettlement schemes, as well as **two types of procedure** (ordinary or expedited) which could be used. To support Member States' efforts under the targeted EU schemes, the Commission will provide €10,000 for each person resettled, allocated

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<sup>14</sup> Perrin D. (ed.), Refugee Resettlement in the EU – 2011-2013 Report, KNOW RESET Research Report 2013/05, Eurostat: accessed on 5 July 2016.

<sup>15</sup> European Commission, *Communication on the Establishment of a Joint EU Resettlement Programme*, COM(2009) 447 final <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52009DC0447&from=EN>

<sup>16</sup> Council of the European Union, Council document 6444/2/12. <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6444-2012-REV-2-ADD-1/en/pdf>

<sup>17</sup> European Commission, *Proposal for a regulation on establishing a Union Resettlement Framework*, COM(2016) 468 final, Rapid Press Release IP/16/2434 [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-16-2434\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-2434_en.htm).

from the EU's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). The proposal does not specify, however, how this support is to be used or whether these funds are to be used for integration measures.

**Most relevant for integration debates**, the Regulation would allow Member States under the ordinary procedure (Article 10) to express a **preference** for third-country nationals or stateless persons with (a) family links to a Member State or (b) **socio-cultural links or characteristics that can facilitate integration in a non-discriminatory manner**. After a positive decision, Member States must (Article 10.7) grant refugee or subsidiary protection, make free travel arrangements and **offer pre-departure orientation programmes**.

**Overall, the proposed framework upholds the principle that governments will remain the ones deciding on how many people will be resettled each year, but would add coherence and binding force to the current arrangement as well as conditionality related to good relations on migration between the EU and the third 'host' country concerned.**

### **Towards large-scale resettlement to Europe? – The 2016/16 turning point**

In April 2015 and in the wake of refugee tragedies in the Mediterranean, the Juncker Commission made resettlement part of the immediate actions to be taken under its renewed Agenda on Migration.<sup>18</sup> In early June 2015 the Commission followed up with a Recommendation on a resettlement scheme over a two-year period, with distribution criteria such as GDP, size of population, unemployment rate, past numbers of asylum seekers and resettled refugees, and efforts already made on a voluntary basis by Member States. On 22 July 2015 the scheme was adopted by the Council, after negotiations among governments led to a commitment to admit 22,504 humanitarian migrants. The EU budget was to provide dedicated funding of an extra EUR 50 million in 2015/2016 to support this scheme. One year on, the Commission reported that 8,268 people have been resettled until 13 July 2016 to 20 resettling states (of which 2,056 actually were resettled under pre-existing national quotas in the UK and Finland, and 2,204 persons were admitted to participating non-EU states incl. Norway and Switzerland). A majority of countries participating in the scheme indicated that their efforts were primarily directed at Syrians staying in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey.<sup>19</sup>

By that time, however, resettlement had lost its innocence and had become a bargaining chip in the EU's external migration policies. With the escalation of the European migration policy and governance crisis during the large-scale movements on the Aegean/West Balkan route from summer 2015, resettlement emerged as a key concept to reduce secondary movements from first countries of protection and to frame the policy response that ultimately led to the EU-Turkey deal of March 2016. In the event, the EU-Turkey statement of 18 March 2016 included a "One for One" resettlement mechanism from Turkey to the EU, compensating for every irregular migrant and asylum seeker crossing from Turkey to the Greek islands, and returned after his or her application has been declared inadmissible. Resettlement under the 1:1 scheme was to take place, in the first

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<sup>18</sup> European Commission, *A European Agenda for Migration*, COM(2015) 240 final [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/communication\\_on\\_the\\_european\\_agenda\\_on\\_migration\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/communication_on_the_european_agenda_on_migration_en.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> European Commission, *Fifth report on relocation and resettlement*, COM(2016) 480 final <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2016/EN/1-2016-480-EN-F1-1.PDF>.

instance, by fully honouring the commitment to admit 22,504 refugees taken in July 2015. In the second instance, a similar voluntary arrangement up to a limit of an additional 54,000 persons is to legally admit Syrians from Turkey through resettlement, humanitarian admission or other legal pathways.<sup>20</sup> After adoption of the proposed decision by the Council (following the opinion of the Parliament expected in September 2016), the new arrangements would result in an overall maximum number of resettlements from Turkey of around 70,800. Until 13 July 2016, 802 Syrians have been resettled from Turkey under the resettlement part of the 1:1 scheme to eight EU Member States.<sup>21</sup>

### *European-wide harmonisation of integration policies for resettled refugees?*

If adopted without major changes and along the proposed lines, what would the new EU resettlement regulation mean for the current multitude of Member State practices in the integration of resettled persons? In a nutshell, it would provide for some harmonisation, but also allow for continued variation in the approaches taken by Member States:

#### **Legal integration**

With regard to legal integration, the proposal codifies the practice of some countries to afford residence permits to resettled persons that are less favourable than refugee status, by allowing Member States to either grant refugee or subsidiary protection status in the ordinary procedure (Art.10). The proposed expedited procedure (Art.11) even foresees the possibility to grant subsidiary protection only. The Czech Republic, Denmark, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Spain and Sweden are known to have at least partly afforded subsidiary protection, while Germany in 2012 had introduced a specific permit for resettled persons with (at that time) a shorter duration of 3 years than the 5 years for 'regular' refugees, and much restricted rules for family reunification (as the standard requirements for third-country nationals applied).<sup>22</sup> The shorter validity of the German permit only foreclosed what is now to become the rule for refugees under the recast Qualification Regulation, but in terms of family reunification, Germany is to abide to the more generous provisions for refugees under the Family Reunification Directive in future. On the other hand, the proposed Resettlement Regulation in combination with the Family Reunification Directive would still allow Sweden and (if it were to opt in) Ireland to maintain their arrangements to facilitate reunification with dependents outside the nuclear family, in order to avoid new vulnerabilities for family members left behind. UNHCR, in its recommendations on resettlement, strongly emphasizes that resettling countries should grant full refugee status in all cases<sup>23</sup> – not least because subsidiary

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<sup>20</sup> These 54,000 places were initially earmarked for intra-EU relocation under an October 2015 decision, but after this scheme had faced fierce resistance from Member States, the Commission decided to propose their re-allocation.

<sup>21</sup> This number is included in the overall number of 8,268 people resettled under the 2015 scheme. The actual Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme with Turkey and its operational procedures, to be activated once irregular crossings between Turkey and the EU at least have been substantially reduced, is as of July 2016 still being negotiated between the two sides. European Commission, Fifth report on relocation and resettlement 13.7.2016, COM (2016) 480 final.

<sup>22</sup> UNHCR Resettlement Handbook, [revised Country Chapters 2014](#); Perrin D. and McNamra F., Refugee Resettlement in the EU; Between Shared Standards and Diversity in Legal and Policy Frames, KNOW RESET Research Report 2013/03.

<sup>23</sup> cf. the very definition of resettlement put forward by UNHCR: "Resettlement involves the selection and transfer of refugees from a State in which they have sought protection to a third State which has agreed to admit them – as refugees – with permanent residence status. The status provided ensures protection against

protection does not require Member States to allow family reunification, the absence of which is a major potential barrier for integration.

### ***Integration potential as selection criteria***

Selection criteria which make assumptions about the potential of resettled persons to later integrate is another point of contention between UNHCR and EU governments. Instead of exclusively considering protection needs, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Slovenia are reported to have used criteria like religion, language skills or existing ties to the destination country in the selection process, with Romania dropping its practice after UNHCR insistence in 2008. Denmark even included integration criteria in its legislation, referring to language qualifications, education and work experience, social network, age and motivation.<sup>24</sup>

The **proposed EU Resettlement Regulation is highly ambiguous** in this regard: Art. 10 stipulates that Member States can give preference to persons with family, social or cultural links, or other characteristics that can facilitate integration. At the same time, however, Art. 10 stresses that this is without discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation. If turned into legislation, it would probably be left to the CJEU to define the actual policy corridor (if there is one at all) under the provisions of Art. 10.

### ***Pre-departure integration measures***

A **limited harmonising effect** can be expected from the proposal's provision that Member States *shall* offer a **pre-departure orientation programme** which *may* include information about rights and obligations, language, and the country's socio-cultural and political set-up (Art. 10.7 para c.). On the one hand, it would force those countries which currently do not run such programmes (or which still have to embark on resettlement at all) to introduce pre-departure orientation. On the other hand, **any convergence of actual practice would be left to soft instruments** like guidance from the Commission or the Asylum Agency, or AMIF-funded projects to support effective pre-departure and pre-arrival measures (as called for in the June 2016 Integration Action Plan).

An **analysis of current practice**<sup>25</sup> reveals that pre-departure orientation programmes can last several days (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland Netherlands and Sweden), can be limited to shorter events (Czech Republic, Romania, Slovenia), or even the distribution of brochures (France, Luxemburg, Portugal). Some countries prefer to award a contract to IOM to carry out the programmes (Spain, France in case of larger resettling groups). Language modules are provided only by Denmark, Finland, Germany and the Netherlands. Sweden enables officers of the receiving municipalities to participate in the pre-departure orientation.

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refoulement and provides a resettled refugee and his/her family or dependants with access to rights similar to those enjoyed by nationals. Resettlement also carries with it the opportunity to eventually become a naturalized citizen of the resettlement country." – UNHCR Resettlement Handbook 2011, p.3.

<sup>24</sup> Perrin D. and McNamra F., *Refugee Resettlement in the EU; Between Shared Standards and Diversity in Legal and Policy Frames*, KNOW RESET Research Report 2013/03.

<sup>25</sup> UNHCR Resettlement Handbook, [revised Country Chapters 2014](#); Perrin D. and McNamara F., *Refugee Resettlement in the EU; Between Shared Standards and Diversity in Legal and Policy Frames*, KNOW RESET Research Report 2013/03.

Given this patchy picture, the potential for further alignment of Member State practices is huge; even more so as there is rapidly growing experience from pre-departure measures in place for other groups of migrants (i.e. labour migrants, family reunification). A comprehensive recent assessment of these policies<sup>26</sup> recommends, *inter alia*:

- pre-departure and post-arrival phases that are closely interlinked through involvement and coordination of all relevant integration actors;
- pre-departure needs assessments which help municipalities, schools, health providers; receiving communities etc. to prepare, and later follow up on a case-management basis;
- comprehensive curricula that include languages and employment-related skills, besides of basic orientation knowledge and expectation management;
- use of online-based instruments which can bridge pre- and post-arrival phases, including language learning and kick-starting job search and the recognition of qualifications and skills;
- curricula that are highly sensitive to target groups, and their composition in regard to age, gender, educational and cultural backgrounds;
- involvement of migrants who underwent the same trajectory themselves as the most credible source of information, and employment of inter-culturally adept programme trainers;
- systematic evaluations, including collection of feedback from participants and follow-up assessments of integration pathways for continuous improvement of programmes.

#### ***Other reception and integration provisions***

Beyond the status to be granted and pre-departure programmes, the proposed regulation is silent on the integration of resettled refugees. The June 2016 EU Action Plan on Integration does not mention specific long-term integration needs and measures for resettled refugees either. Little overview, let alone assessment, exists on the integration policies for resettled refugees implemented in the Member States. Some conclusions can be drawn from UNHCR's country-specific Resettlement Handbook,<sup>27</sup> identifying key provisions among 12 EU Member States as of 2014. Strikingly, not all resettling countries manage to immediately settle newly arriving beneficiaries in their destination municipalities. Staying in a reception centre before regular housing is provided is part of the resettlement experience to Belgium (6 to 7 weeks), Ireland (8 to 12 weeks), Portugal (up to 6 months) and the Czech Republic (6 months). Like most of its recognised refugees, France places resettled refugees in temporary accommodation as well. Targeted refugee integration programmes, involving individual assessments of needs, are available in the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Romania, Sweden and the UK. Another path is taken in countries which rather choose to make refugee integration part of general integration policies for newly arrived third country nationals, as in Belgium, Germany, France and the Netherlands. Here, resettled refugees typically are to benefit from compulsory language and civic integration policies. Local authorities are given the lead responsibility for (be it targeted refugee- or mainstream TCN-) integration programmes in Denmark, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden. Coercive elements exist for resettled refugees in Denmark, with the possible loss of income support in case of non-participation in the

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<sup>26</sup> Chindea, Alin (2015), *Headstart to Integration: A Global Review of Pre-departure Support Measures for Migrants*, IOM International Organization for Migration, Budapest.

<sup>27</sup> UNHCR Resettlement Handbook, [revised Country Chapters 2014](#).

integration programme; and in the Netherlands, with the requirement to pay back loans for language courses if beneficiaries fail the test.

### *Stakeholder networks on resettlement: bringing in civil society, cities and regions*

Driven by the initiative and funding of the European Commission and the European Parliament, EU-wide stakeholder networks on resettlement and the integration of resettled refugees have emerged over the last years. The European Resettlement Network (ERN) arose from two joint IOM, UNHCR and ICMC projects from 2011 to 2014 and established a network website,<sup>28</sup> a contact database of resettlement and integration actors both within and outside of Europe and a body of knowledge, resources and publications.

The project SHARE was to establish contacts and a discussion network between municipalities and other local and regional authorities in Member States which have just started a resettlement programme or are experienced in resettlement. Developed by ICMC in partnership with the City of Sheffield, SHARE included regions, cities and their local civil society partners in 24 European countries, and was implemented between 2012 and 2015 as an integral part of the European Resettlement Network.<sup>29</sup>

### Right to family reunification

For the small number of transnational families, family reunion policies are one major factor determining whether or not they reunite in the country. Non-EU families of all types are more likely to reunite in countries with inclusive family reunion policies, like Scandinavia, Spain and Portugal. However several countries are becoming more restrictive, given the influence of populist parties, and expecting transnational families to live up to standards that many national families could not. Most separated families have a legal right to family reunion that is just slightly favourable for their and their families' integration, according to the 2015 MIPEX.

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<sup>28</sup> [www.resettlement.eu](http://www.resettlement.eu).

<sup>29</sup> ICMC International Catholic Migration Commission (2015), Building a Resettlement Network of European Cities and Regions – Experiences of the SHARE Network 2012-2015, Brussels  
<http://www.icmc.net/sites/default/files/documents/building-a-resettlement-network-of-cities-and-regions.pdf>.

Table: The state of family reunification policies in MIPEX countries

	Residence requirements for sponsor: Restrictive or Inclusive	Age limit for spouses higher than age of majority?	Same-sex partner?	Entitlement for parents or adult children	Pre-entry language requirement (CEFR) & sufficient free courses to pass	Post-entry language requirement (CEFR) with sufficient free course to pass	Economic resource requirement	Fees	Equal right to work as sponsor	Equal social rights as sponsor	Facilitated right to autonomous residence for spouses before permanent residence
AT		21 (2009)	Y	N	A1, N (2011)	A2, N	High	120	Y	Y	N
AU		N	Y	Children (P)	N	Voluntary (AMES)	High	Varies	Y	N	Y
BE		N (21 from 2006, overturned in 2013)	Y	Children (P)	N	A2, Y (NL, soon FR)	High	15	N	Y	Y
BG		N	N	Children (P)	N			272	Y	Y	N
CA		N	Y	Children (P)	N	Voluntary (LINC)		350	Y	Y	Y
HR	I	N	Y	N	N			70	N	N	N
CY	R	21 (2007)	N	N	N		High	200	N	N	N
CZ	R	20 years (2006)	Y	Both (Y)	N		High	90	Y	N	N
DK	R	24 (2002)	Y	N	A1, Y (2010)	A2, Y	High	0	Y	Y	N
EE	R	N	N	Both (P)	N	Voluntary		64	Y	Y	N
FI		N	Y	N	N	Voluntary		455	Y	Y	N
FR		N	Y	N	A1.1, Y (2008)	A1, some (CAIF)	High	260	Y	Y	N
DE		N	Y	N	A1, N (2007)	B1, Y		100	Y	Y	N
GR		N	N	N	N	Voluntary (Odysseus)	High	450	Y	N	N
HU	I	N	Y	Parents (Y), Children (P)	N			60	N	N	N
IS	I	N	Y	Parents (Y)	N	Voluntary	High	80	N	N	N
IE	R	N	Y	N	N		High	300	N	N	N
IT	I	N	N	Both (P)	N	A2, Y (Integration Agreement)		174	Y	Y	Y
JP	I	N	Y	Children (Y)	N	Voluntary	High	0	N	Y	N
KR	I	N	N	Both (P)	A1, Some (2014)	Voluntary (KIIP)	High	Varies	N	N	N
LV	I	N	N	Parents (P)	N			100	Y	Y	N



	Residence requirements for sponsor: Restrictive or Inclusive	Age limit for spouses higher than age of majority?	Same-sex partner?	Entitlement for parents or adult children	Pre-entry language requirement (CEFR) & sufficient free courses to pass	Post-entry language requirement (CEFR) with sufficient free course to pass	Economic resource requirement	Fees	Equal right to work as sponsor	Equal social rights as sponsor	Facilitated right to autonomous residence for spouses before permanent residence
LT	R	21 (2004)	N	Parents (Y), Children (P)	N			116	Y	Y	N
LU		N	Y	Parents (Y), Children (P)	N	Voluntary (CAI)	High	50	Y	Y	N
MT	R	21 (2007)	Y	N	N	Not defined, Y	High	25	N	Y	N
NL		21 (2004)	Y	N	A1, N (2006)	A2, N		228	Y	Y	N
NO		23, more requirements (2010)	Y	Both (P)	N	A2/600h, Y	High	632	Y	Y	Y
NZ	I	N	Y	Both (P)	<B2, Y pre-purchase ESOL tuition (1998)	Voluntary (ESOL)		Varies	Y	N	Y
PL		N	N	Children (P)	N	Voluntary for humanitarian migrants (IPI)		95	Y	Y	N
PT	I	N	Y	Both (Y)	N	Voluntary (PPT)		294	Y	Y	Y
RO		N	N	Parents (Y), Children (P)	N			179	Y	Y	N
SI		N	Y	Both (Y)	N	Voluntary for humanitarian migrants		67	N	Y	Y
SK	I	N	N	Both (P)	N			137	N	N	N
ES		N	Y	Parents (P), Children (Y)	N	Voluntary, some regions		26	Y	Y	Y
SE		N	Y	Both (Y)	N	Voluntary (SFI)		166	Y	Y	Y
CH	I	N	Y	N	N	Not defined, some (CIP)	High	Varies	N	N	N
TU		N	N	Parents (Y), Children (P)	N			Varies	N	N	Y
UK	R	N (21 from 2008, overturned in 2011)	Y	N	A1, N (2011)	Voluntary (ESOL)	High	1218	Y	N	N
US	I	N	Y	Children (P)	N	Voluntary (ESL)		930	Y	N	N

Newcomers can secure their family life as the starting point for their integration under the procedures in traditional countries of immigration, most northern European countries and new countries of labour migration (e.g. Italy, Portugal and Spain). In most countries, reunited families acquire both a secure residence and basic equal rights. However, **countries diverge significantly in their family reunification policies**. Policymakers across countries and parties **disagree most on how to define the family and what are the conditions necessary for them to reunite**. On the one end, those with inclusive definitions of the family often keep the conditions to a minimum, out of respect for family life. They then set the conditions to the minimum levels needed and required for all families living in the country (e.g. income at social assistance level, general housing requirements). On the other end, many established countries of immigration are restricting eligibility to the modern nuclear family and expecting transnational families to live up to standards that many national families could not: higher ages to marry, high incomes, no need for social benefits and tests about their language skills and social knowledge, all with disproportionately high fees to pay and little support to succeed (e.g. Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Malta, Netherlands, Switzerland, UK). Increasingly, countries make exceptions to the legal conditions for those most able to meet them (highly-skilled workers and the wealthy), but only rarely for those most vulnerable (usually for minors and beneficiaries of international protection).

**Family reunion allows for the further arrival of refugee children and serves as a precondition for families' and children's integration.** Most significantly, family reunion is Europe's only major channel for the legal immigration of families and children in need of international protection. Beneficiaries of international protection are the immigrants most likely to live in separated families, most interested to reunite in the destination country and most affected by obstacles in a country's laws or procedures. Facilitated family reunion policies and procedures are needed as an alternative to irregular migration for women and children who face greater risks of violence and exploitation as routes have become even more dangerous and deadly for vulnerable groups. Since the end of 2015, families have made up the majority of spontaneous arrivals at the EU's borders, according to UNHCR's monthly data.<sup>30</sup>

**While refugee children and parents seem more likely to reunite than other migrants, the overall number of arrivals was still very low** up until 2014 based on the latest data available. In 2014, only 13,297 Syrian citizens were able to immigrate legally through family reunion with a Syrian national in the EU. This figure includes 8,598 Syrian children. These numbers are significantly lower than for other major refugee-producing countries. Family reunion is also significantly concentrated in a few countries with inclusive policies and long-settled refugee groups, most notably Sweden (accounting for 60% of Syrian family reunions in the EU in 2014), other Nordic countries, Germany and the UK.

Extended family reunification programmes as part of resettlement efforts offer an additional channel for humanitarian migrant families to reunite, next to regular family reunification procedures. According to data gathered by ICMC from 2013 to 2015, such schemes have provided legal access to almost 31,000 Syrian refugees with family members in Europe to come to Europe. These schemes offer the possibility to reunite with non-nuclear family members in Austria, Germany, Ireland and Switzerland. However, these programmes can suffer from low levels of awareness among potential sponsors, a complex and non-transparent application processes and heavy financial and administrative requirements. In particular, the legal status afforded can be

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<sup>30</sup> Download the full data under 'Demographics' at <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/country.php?id=83>.

problematic from an integration perspective. For example, a significant proportion of those granted residence permits under the German regional family reunification programme have claimed asylum to access the same rights and benefits as refugees that arrive under the regular asylum procedure.<sup>31</sup>

Given the current political climate and influence of populist parties, **transnational families face an uncertain future in many EU countries and now also in traditional countries of immigration.** Since 2010, policies have been left largely untouched in 14 MIPEX countries (mostly new and small countries of immigration), improved in 12 and restricted in 10, including Australia, Canada and New Zealand. **Family reunion is increasingly politicised**, with policies changed based on electoral promises, not robust evaluations. Policies are mostly restricted based on statistics about the number of applications, not on evidence of their impact on integration. **Improvements are often based on European law and the results of court cases by transnational families.**

## Areas of focus in current reform efforts

### Language and integration obligations

Any language and integration requirements, according to EU case-law on family reunification and long-term residence, must be proportionate and well-supported for migrants. These guiding principles have since emerged in the European Union's framework on integration through judgments of the European Court of Justice (C-138/13, C-579/13 and C-153/14), activities of the European Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and its predecessor the European Integration Fund as well as the 2011 European Agenda for Integration (COM (2011) 455).

The chart below summarises the current state of language and civic integration requirements and support in EU/EEA countries in terms of their language and civic courses and requirements for family reunion, permanent residence, ordinary naturalisation, employment and social rights. The best source of information on changes to language support for migrants and refugees is the Council of Europe's survey on the linguistic integration of adult migrants, now in its third edition.

Overall across Europe, **sufficient courses are not guaranteed or available in most countries. Migrants are required but not supported to learn the country's language and civics because the legal framework conceives of integration as the responsibility of migrants.** In these cases where migrants are unable to access learning opportunities, language and civic knowledge may actually be an obstacle to rather a facilitator of social integration.

**Half are using language and civics as an obstacle to integration by actively demanding this knowledge without supporting learning through enough free guaranteed courses and materials for all migrants.** Three more EU/EEA countries do not require civic integration courses/knowledge, but still require language learning without sufficient free courses and materials for all migrants. No EU/EEA country can be qualified as inactive on language and civic knowledge, while only one, Ireland, takes a purely 'voluntary' approach by supporting but not demanding language and civic knowledge. Nearly a dozen countries can be qualified as facilitators of language and civic knowledge by both 'demanding and supporting' this learning. This list includes all Nordic countries, Belgium, Luxembourg and a few new destination countries: Estonia, Italy, Portugal and Slovenia. Correlation

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<sup>31</sup> ICMC International Catholic Migration Commission (2015): *10% of refugees from Syria: Europe's resettlement and other admission responses in a global perspective*, Brussels.

analysis of the MIPEX results shows that, **generally speaking, countries supporting free language courses and materials tend to adopt more ambitious integration policies that aim to guarantee equal rights and opportunities for migrants.**

*Table: Approach to linguistic and civic integration in EU/EEA Member States*

		<i>Support for linguistic and civic integration</i>	
		Insufficient/no free courses provided	Sufficient free courses and materials provided
<b>Linguistic and civic integration requirements (courses, citizenship, permanent residence)</b>	No requirements	Inactive ( <i>neither demanding nor supporting</i> )  None	Voluntary ( <i>supporting without demanding</i> )  Ireland
	Linguistic integration required	Language as obstacle ( <i>demanding without supporting</i> )  Bulgaria, Poland	Obligatory ( <i>demanding and supporting</i> )  Finland, Portugal, Slovenia
	Linguistic and civic integration required	Language and civics as obstacle ( <i>demanding without supporting</i> )  Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom	Obligatory ( <i>demanding and supporting</i> )  Belgium (Flanders but FR-speaking to be developed), Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Luxembourg, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Sweden

*Source: Compiled by MPG with MIPEX data for the OSCE and checked against the 3<sup>rd</sup> Council of Europe Survey on linguistic integration of adult migrants*

While most EU/EEA countries now offer some sort of free state-sponsored language and civic or social integration course and test, **few are rights-based, needs-based, education-based, work-based, flexibly timed, child-friendly or sufficient to attain the level of proficiency required** for skilled work, permanent residence or naturalisation. Obligatory language and integration courses remain the exception rather than the rule in most countries, with obligatory language programmes installed in only Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. The traditional countries of immigration and Nordic countries tend to offer the most flexible language and civic courses, usually including part-time/evening/weekend courses, distance learning, one-on-one tutoring, free child-care, transportation subsidies, and continuous intake to avoid long waiting lists. The few who cannot attend classroom-based courses (e.g. because of shift work, illness or lack of local courses, transportation or child-care) are offered free one-on-one lessons for a few hours per week with a trained community volunteer.

## Labour market integration

Labour market integration policies focus on helping immigrants to find jobs, by providing basic information and access to most types of occupations, self-employment and trainings. **Most major destination countries are increasingly investing more in targeted programmes**, but many may be too new or small to reach the many non-EU nationals in need, who rarely access training or unemployment benefits. **Many immigrants with limited language skills do not or cannot access language courses, while most immigrants in Europe do not get a recognition of their foreign qualifications, access to lifelong learning, a new degree in the country or unemployment benefits.**

Targeted labour market support for **beneficiaries of international protection** currently is an area of rapid policy development, focusing on **early skills assessment, introduction programmes that feature cultural and socio-professional orientation and training, intensive language courses and access to general job intermediation services.**

### *Policies driven by insufficient integration outcomes*

Labour market integration and access for migrants to better employment opportunities has been a **weak spot of European migration policies for decades.** Recent MIPEX data show that in terms of employment quality, long-settled non-EU immigrants (10+ years' stay) are often still in worse jobs than non-immigrants, with the **high-educated twice as likely to be over-qualified for their jobs and the low-educated 2.5 times as likely to be living in poverty.** High-educated men and women are much more likely to be working below their qualifications. Low-educated workers are much more likely to experience poverty, with wages and benefits below their needs. More – but not necessarily better – jobs tend to go to immigrants in countries with flexible and growing labour markets and more open labour migration and study channels. **For humanitarian migrants, labour market integration takes more time and effort.** In 2014, more than half of non-labour migrants (family and humanitarian migrants) are working after 10+ years in the country and their employment rates are relatively high in several countries.<sup>32</sup> The long integration pathways on the labour market are mostly due to the forced nature of the migration, traumatic experiences, psychological distress, loss of proper documentation of qualifications or skills and generally weak previous links to the country.

To address the shortcomings, **labour market mobility policies aim to foster employment and social inclusion and to avoid de-qualification** through employment below the actual skills and education level. However, they would barely qualify as slightly favourable in most countries according to MIPEX findings.

*Table: The state of labour market mobility policies in MIPEX countries*

	Immediate equal labour market access for labour & family migrants	Equal access to public sector	Equal access to study grants for all	Facilitated recognition of qualifications and skills (score)	Equal access to social security for all	Work-related targeted training & hiring incentives?	Targeted coaches and staff training required at public employment service?
AT		Partial	None			Training	Both
AU		Partial	None	Strong	Weak	Both	Trained staff
BE		Partial		Partial	Weak	Training	Coach
BG		Partial			Weak		
CA		Yes		Strong	Full	Both	
HR		Partial	None	Partial	Full		
CY	Neither	None		Strong	Weak		
CZ		Yes			Weak		
DK		Yes		Partial		Both	Coach
EE		None		Strong	Full	Training	
FI	Both	Yes				Both	Coach

<sup>32</sup> Huddleston, Thomas (2016), 'Largest-ever European survey of immigrants gives big picture on long-term integration', European Website on Integration, European Commission, Brussels. <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/news/europe-largest-ever-european-survey-of-immigrants-gives-big-picture-on-long-term-integration>.

	Immediate equal labour market access for labour & family migrants	Equal access to public sector	Equal access to study grants for all	Facilitated recognition of qualifications and skills (score)	Equal access to social security for all	Work-related targeted training & hiring incentives?	Targeted coaches and staff training required at public employment service?
FR		None			Full	Training	Coach
DE		Partial		Strong	Full	Both	Both
GR	Both	None	Yes		Full		
HU	Neither	Partial	None	Weak			
IS	Neither	Partial	None	Strong	Weak		
IE	Neither	Partial	None	Weak		Training	
IT	Both	Partial	Yes		Full		
JP		Yes	Yes			Training	Coach
KR	Neither	Yes				Training	Both
LV		Partial	Yes	Partial	Weak		
LT		None			Weak		
LU		None	None		Weak		
MT	Neither	Yes	None	Partial	Weak		
NL		Yes		Strong	Full		
NO		Yes	Yes	Partial	Full	Both	Both
NZ		Yes		Partial	Weak	Both	Both
PL		None		Weak	Weak		
PT	Both	Yes	Yes	Partial	Full	Training	Coach
RO		Partial			Full		Trained staff
SI	Neither	None	None		Weak		
SK	Neither	None	Yes	Weak	Weak		
ES	Both	Yes	Yes		Full		Trained staff
SE		Yes	Yes	Strong	Full	Both	Both
CH		Partial	None		Full	Training	Trained staff
TU	Neither	None	Yes		Weak		
UK		Yes	None	Strong	Weak		
US		Yes			Weak	Training	Trained staff

Source: MIPEx 2015

While most newly-arriving family members and long-term residents can immediately access the private labour market, public employment services and training, those **immigrants looking for the right job or a new degree will have to find one without the help of the social safety net or strong targeted programmes to recognise their skills or foreign qualifications, and orient them to jobs and mainstream services.**

Immigrants have better access and targeted support in traditional countries of immigration in Western Europe, and the weakest rights and opportunities in Cyprus, Ireland and most Central European countries. Access, support and rights differ significantly across countries, even between the traditional countries of immigration. Belgium and France, e.g., are wasting the economic potential of many of their non-EU citizens by providing some targeted support but closing many sectors to them. Countries recently dependent on migrant workers, like the Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Poland and Spain, may treat them equally as workers under the law, but often ignore the specific challenges of the foreign-born. Portugal emerges as the only new country of immigration with a favourable framework for labour market mobility, both for immigrant and emigrant workers.

Labour market mobility is one of the few areas of integration policy where the majority of countries are continuing to invest in reform, with improvements in 20 countries since 2010. Major legal reforms in new countries of immigration use EU law to improve their legislation (e.g. Greece or Hungary) and catch up with basic access and information for immigrant workers and entrepreneurs. More established countries of immigration continued to pilot and expand targeted support, which is relatively new and weak in most countries. Immigrants in Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Portugal and Sweden will see several new targeted support measures, and qualifications may be better recognised in e.g. Canada, Germany and Portugal.

The lack of reliable knowledge about the effectiveness of different kinds of measures or policy practices remains a problem. Most seriously, hardly any countries have systematic follow-up or impact evaluation mechanisms.<sup>33</sup> So far, it seems that countries with ambitious labour market mobility policies seem to reach more immigrants, as the uptake of education and training seems higher in these countries among both non-EU citizen men and women, including among the low-educated. Only a few general and targeted employment policies can be directly associated with better outcomes for immigrants and a lower incidence of employment discrimination. Robust evaluations<sup>34</sup> suggest that what works for non-immigrants also works well for immigrants, especially for the low-educated, although these programmes work better when applied early and targeted to immigrants' specific needs. Besides obtaining a new domestic degree or recognition of their qualifications, immigrants can also boost their employment outcomes by obtaining early work experience. Some evidence also suggests that early work-focused introduction programmes can also boost employment outcomes, so long as their focus is country-specific adapted vocational trainings and the programme is combined with work experience to avoid the 'lock-in effect' of courses. Other rather effective programmes include start-up funds for immigrant entrepreneurs and job search assistance (identifying migrants' skills and helping them look for jobs).

### **European policies and support instruments**

As migrant employment slowly moves into mainstream labour market policies, it has become subject of the European policy cycle on employment and growth. The European Employment Strategy (EES) is part of the Europe 2020 strategy and is implemented through the European Semester, the annual process of policy coordination among EU Member States and institutions to steer and monitor EU countries' economic and social reforms. While the objectives, priorities and targets are agreed at EU level, the national governments are fully responsible for formulating and implementing the necessary policies. The cycle culminates with country-specific recommendations by the Commission. Since 2011, several integration-related recommendations have been addressed to Member States with large immigrant populations and large gaps in employment and education outcomes. The ESF is Europe's main tool for promoting employment and social inclusion. The bulk of the €86 billion available from 2014 to 2020 is spent under shared management, meaning Member States develop and implement their own programmes in coordination with the EU institutions. At least 20% of the European Social Fund will be allocated to social inclusion. The May 2015 European Agenda on

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<sup>33</sup> Ivan Martin et al. (2016 forthcoming), *From Refugees to Workers, Mapping Labour Market Integration Support Measures for Asylum-seekers and Refugees in EU Member States*, MPC at EUI Florence for Bertelsmann Stiftung.

<sup>34</sup> Bilgili, Ozge (2015), op.cit.

Migration mentioned that this 20% can and should include the integration of migrants, with a particular focus on refugees, asylum-seekers and their children.

One of the EU level financing instruments supported by the ESF is the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) programme to promote employment, social protection, combat social exclusion and improve working conditions. The total budget for 2014-2020 is EUR 919,500 million. Several objectives of EaSI are relevant to immigrant integration, including the development of adequate social protection systems and labour market policies, or the accessibility of microfinance for vulnerable groups and micro-enterprises.

### *Reacting to the rise in refugee arrivals*

Against this backdrop, how do Member States and the EU react to the increased presence of humanitarian migrants on European labour markets, and the challenge to quickly integrate them? The most comprehensive studies on these issues—by the European Migration Network, European Website on Integration, and forthcoming NIEM project—have yet to be published. According to the best available comparative sources, **most countries receiving high numbers of refugees seem to be improving the implementation of their targeted policies to facilitate refugee integration into the labour market**, and this regardless of an often tightening stance towards the arrival of new asylum-seekers.<sup>35</sup> Some observers even speak of a sea-change in thinking for many countries, where the current refugee inflow acts as a catalyst for seeing integration as mainstream endeavour across a range of institutions.<sup>36</sup> From a comparison of nine states (Sweden, Germany, Austria and the Netherlands among them) and 85 identified measures it appears that a **'standard package' for the labour market integration of refugees and asylum-seekers is emerging in policy practice, comprising early skills assessment, introduction programmes that feature cultural and socio-professional orientation and training, intensive language courses and access to general job intermediation services**. However, administrative and practical obstacles are widespread and often relate to the coordination with other integration-related interventions (e.g. housing, schooling and health support), a high degree of fragmentation between local, regional and national levels and a lack of coherent strategy or exchange of information.<sup>37</sup>

Initial statistics on the composition and needs of the recently arrived humanitarian migrants point to a certain polarisation in their qualification structure, with both low and high educated persons overrepresented, particularly due to their age structure (i.e. many young people of school or university age).<sup>38</sup> This entails a **need for tailor-made programmes for different target groups among refugees, with different mixes of basic schooling, catch-up or bridging trainings, partnerships with employers, skills and diploma validation**.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Ivan Martin et al. (2016 forthcoming), op.cit, EMN Ad-hoc query on asylum seekers access to labour market, compilation July 2014, EMN Ad-hoc query on asylum seekers integration to labour market, compilation March 2015, OECD (2016), op.cit.

<sup>36</sup> European Commission, Mutual Learning Programme, Thematic Event on measures to support the integration of asylum seekers and refugees, Executive Summary, 22 June 2016, Brussels.

<sup>37</sup> Ivan Martin et al. (2016 forthcoming), op.cit.

<sup>38</sup> Bundesagentur fuer Arbeit (2016), *Typisierung von Fluechtlingsgruppen nach Alter und Bildungsstand*, Aktuelle Berichte des IAB Instituts fuer Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung 6/2016.

<sup>39</sup> OECD 2016, op.cit.



### *Labour market access for asylum seekers*

One of the most contentious policy aspects is when to start the labour market integration of asylum-seekers. States have to decide on the duration of the delay until labour market access as well as the early provision of integration measures to persons who may or may not be able to stay in the country. Current EU law stipulates labour market participation of asylum seekers at the latest 9 months after lodging the asylum request (Reception Conditions Directive, article 15). Most Member States facilitate labour market access earlier than this, though the range is significant, from early access (e.g. Sweden for all asylum seekers with valid IDs, Portugal after 2 months, Italy after 3 months) to more restrictive transpositions of EU law (e.g. France after 9 months linked to obtaining a work permit, Austria after 3 months only for seasonal work in selected sectors and dependant on a labour market test).<sup>40</sup> Policy-makers are often torn between labour market protectionist instincts and perceived ‘pull factors’ on the one hand and **clear evidence of the multiple positive effects early activation on integration, including self-sufficiency and the prevention of skills deterioration and de-motivation.**<sup>41</sup>

The policy dynamic is the strongest in countries most affected by the current inflow. Under the double impression of rising numbers of asylum seekers and shortages of skilled workers, **Germany** already in 2014 **cut the wait period from 9 months to 3 months** and waived the labour market test for shortage occupations and highly skilled jobs. In 2016 the German government went a step further and, for the next three years, **waived the labour marked test** for asylum seekers altogether in all those sectors with a below-average unemployment rate. In **Sweden**, in spite of harsh measures to restrict the numbers of arrivals and related tightening of residence legislation, an **expansion of opportunities for vocational introduction jobs and work experiences** for newly arrived migrants is envisaged.<sup>42</sup> In **Austria**, the very limited labour market access for asylum seekers will at least be alleviated through additional opportunities for **remunerated community work** provided by local authorities and NGOs.<sup>43</sup>

#### **Commission support for facilitated labour market participation**

At European level, the Commission has been taken an active stance in promoting refugee labour market integration as well. Its **June 2016 Action Plan on Integration** suggests a range of renewed efforts, based on EU law, that enforces equal treatment between beneficiaries of international protection and national citizens in terms of labour market access, vocational training, employment-related education recognition and assessment procedures of foreign qualifications (Qualification Directive, Article 26), and the EU’s policy coordination mandate in employment affairs. To facilitate **early integration into vocational training with a strong work-based learning dimension** (thus providing a basis for progression towards a higher level of qualification), the Commission will **mobilise existing policy initiatives and programmes like the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, the European Pact for Youth, Erasmus+ as well as Education and Training 2020**. In another initiative, a ‘Skills and Qualifications Toolkit’ developed under the New Skills Agenda for Europe is to support timely identification of skills and qualifications for the newly arrived.

<sup>40</sup> OECD 2016, op. cit., EMN Ad-hoc queries 2014 and 2015, op.cit.

<sup>41</sup> E.g. OECD 2016, Ivan Martin et al. (2016 forthcoming), op.cit.

<sup>42</sup> EMN Integration of beneficiaries of international/humanitarian protection into the labour market: policies and good practices – National Report Sweden.

<sup>43</sup> Der Standard, *Koalition will Asylwerber beschaeftigen*, 21.6.2016.

At the same time, the Commission welcomes the fact that some Member States give access to the labour market for asylum seekers much earlier than the nine-month deadline in the Reception Conditions Directive, and calls upon governments to remove obstacles to ensure effective access to vocational training and to the labour market for refugees (and, where there are good prospects of granting them protection, for asylum seekers).<sup>44</sup> In its July 2016 proposal for a recast Reception Conditions Directive, the Commission furthermore put forward a reduction of the wait period for labour market access to six months, while still giving Member States the possibility to enact individual labour market tests (see below Reception and Qualification).<sup>45</sup>

## Reception and qualification

### *State of play at EU and national level*

The European reception and qualification system has been governed by the Reception and Qualification Directives since the beginning of 2000s. The Directives were reviewed and changed in 2011 and 2013 and needed to be transposed in national legal system by 20 July 2015. The Directives do not list integration among their main objectives, but the protection standards conferred **key integration rights for asylum seekers, refugees and other beneficiaries of international protection**. The relevant provisions include the **length of asylum procedures, residence permits, access to the labour market, education, vocational training, housing, health care, social assistance and security and the recognition of foreign qualifications and skills**.

The recast Reception Conditions Directive does not include a definition of reception. It only defines the level of material reception conditions, which need to ensure an adequate standard of living, guaranteeing subsistence and protecting the physical and mental health of asylum seekers. The CJEU has judged that reception also needs to be sufficiently stable and adequately satisfy material and health needs of asylum seekers.<sup>46</sup> However, as the European Council of Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) underlines in the 2016 Asylum Information Database (AIDA) report on reception,<sup>47</sup> *“in the current context European countries and EU institutions have too readily conceptualised reception in quantitative terms, focusing on numbers of places as a benchmark for fulfilling their obligations”*. The report also points out that comparable data is difficult to find due to the **diversity of the reception systems throughout Europe. The number of available places often include places in emergency accommodation or places in detention facilities**. Data suggests that Member States were focusing on increasing their emergency capacities, but there is little effort to follow up with facilities that fully respect the obligations under the recast Reception Conditions Directive.

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<sup>44</sup> European Commission, *Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals*, COM(2016) 377 final.

<sup>45</sup> European Commission, *Proposal for a Directive laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection (recast)*, COM(2016) 465 final, Art. 15.

<sup>46</sup> CJEU, C-79/13, *Federaal agentschap voor de opvang van asielzoekers v Selver Saciri and Others*, Judgement of 27 February 2014.

<sup>47</sup> European Council of Refugees and Exiles (March 2016) *“Wrong counts and closing doors. The reception of refugees and asylum seekers in Europe”* [http://www.asylumineurope.org/sites/default/files/shadow-reports/aida\\_wrong\\_counts\\_and\\_closing\\_doors.pdf](http://www.asylumineurope.org/sites/default/files/shadow-reports/aida_wrong_counts_and_closing_doors.pdf).

Table: Reception capacity for asylum seekers, end 2015 (Capacity and occupancy rates differ for Ireland, 30 September 2015, Turkey, 29 February 2016, Greece, 12 March 2016)

	First-line	Second-line	Emergency (not counted)	Capacity	Occupancy
AT	Federal reception centres, distribution centres, special centres for children	Private housing at provincial level	Transit centres, barracks, tents	:	78,884
BE	Collective centres	Private housing at local level	Buffer places, emergency centres, mobile units	33,408	32,366
BG	Detention centres (not counted)	Reception and registration centres, transit centre	-	5,130	717
CY	-	Reception centre, centres for children	Emergency centre	404	387
DE	Initial reception centres	Collective centres, decentralised accommodation	Emergency centres, stadiums, halls, tents	:	:
ES	Refugee reception centres, temporary stay centres	Private housing managed by NGOs	Hotels	2,648	:
FR	-	Centres for asylum seekers, orientation centres	Emergency centres	:	:
GR	First reception centres, temporary reception centres	Reception centres	Stadiums, tents	:	:
HR	-	Reception centres	Temporary admission centre	700	:
HU	-	Reception centres, centres for children	-	1,104	432
IE	-	Direct provision	Emergency reception and orientation centres	5,429	4,811
IT	Hubs, CPSA	SPRAR	Emergency reception centres	:	27,109
MT	Initial reception centre	Open centres		2,200	604
NL	Collective centres	Asylum seeker centres	Emergency reception centres, Crisis emergency reception	:	47,764
PL	Reception centres	Reception centres	-	2,224	1,919
SE	-	Migration Agency housing, Private accommodation, special accommodation	Stadiums, halls, tents	:	181,890
UK	Initial accommodation centres	Private accommodation (Section 95)	Hotels	32,632	33,417
CH	Federal reception and processing centres	Private housing at cantonal level, Zurich test centre (not counted)	Remote locations	4,232	3,352
SR	Asylum centre	Asylum centres	Temporary reception centre	1,060	:
TR	-	Reception and accommodation centres	-	850	:
	-	Temporary accommodation centres (camps)	-	:	282,921

Source: 2016 AIDA Report

Asylum seekers' integration will be severely delayed without immediate access to services, such as medical and vulnerability screening, legal assistance and proper hygienic and washing facilities. The 2016 AIDA report also **finds evidence of increasing discrimination between different nationalities in the reception system**. Those with lower chances of receiving protection are regularly detained throughout the procedure and they often experience longer procedural delays, such as access to registration or transfer from emergency accommodation to reception centres.

The recast Qualification Directive approximated the statuses of refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, but it still allows Member States to grant for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection shorter residence permits and social assistance limited to core benefits. As ECRE's briefing from June 2016<sup>48</sup> reports, only six Member States currently offer a uniform protection status for both refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection.<sup>49</sup> Twenty-one Member States currently offer more favourable standards for the duration of the residence permit than the recast

<sup>48</sup> European Council of Refugees and Exiles (June 2016) "Asylum on the clock? Duration and review of international protection status in Europe"

[http://www.asylumineurope.org/sites/default/files/resources/aida\\_brief\\_permits.pdf](http://www.asylumineurope.org/sites/default/files/resources/aida_brief_permits.pdf).

<sup>49</sup> Finland, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands and the UK.

Qualification Directive. However, the duration of these permits remains widely diverging among the different Member States. Member States have a different approach to granting different protection statuses to different nationalities. For example, Syrians are more likely to receive refugee status in Germany, Greece or UK than in Sweden, Spain or Hungary, where most of them are granted subsidiary protection status.<sup>50</sup> The difference in status influences their integration chances, where beneficiaries of subsidiary protection with more temporary legal status will be less likely to find stable housing and employment or to be enrolled in long-term integration programmes such as language courses and mentoring.

### *Current EU proposals for reform*

With the leadership of first Vice-President Frans Timmermans, the European Commission put forward plans for the reform of the CEAS against this background in the Communication “Towards a Reform of the Common European Asylum System and Enhancing Legal Avenues to Europe”. This Communication was released on the first day of the European Migration Forum, which is the EU’s civil society dialogue platform on migration, asylum and migrant integration, but without any consultation of the civil society actors present. The objective of the proposed reform, as we summarised in the section on recent trends (see page 2), is to **make the protection status more temporary** and ensure that protection is given “*only for so long as the risk of persecution or serious harm persists*”. The 2nd European Migration Forum, which warned that it could represent “*a significant threat to integration*”.<sup>51</sup> It includes:

1. Proposal revising the Reception Conditions Directive with a new Directive;<sup>52</sup>
2. Proposal replacing the Asylum Procedures Directive with a Regulation;<sup>53</sup>
3. Proposal replacing the Qualification Directive with a Regulation.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> European Asylum Support Office (2015) “*Quarterly Asylum Report*” Quarter 3, 2015

<https://www.easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/public/Quarterly-Asylum-Report-2015-Q3.pdf>.

<sup>51</sup> Lixi, Luca (2016), *A long-term approach to sustainable labour migration and successful integration - the voice of civil society*, Final Report, 2nd Meeting of the European Migration Forum, 6/7 April 2016

<https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/index.cfm?action=media.download&uuid=3F6879F1-C140-030B-A75F457447B94ED2>.

<sup>52</sup> European Commission (2016), *Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection (recast)*, COM(2016) 465 final [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160713/proposal\\_on\\_standards\\_for\\_the\\_reception\\_of\\_applicants\\_for\\_international\\_protection\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160713/proposal_on_standards_for_the_reception_of_applicants_for_international_protection_en.pdf).

<sup>53</sup> European Commission (2016) *Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a common procedure for international protection in the Union and repealing Directive 2013/32/EU*, COM(2016) 467 final [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160713/proposal\\_for\\_a\\_common\\_procedure\\_for\\_international\\_protection\\_in\\_the\\_union\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160713/proposal_for_a_common_procedure_for_international_protection_in_the_union_en.pdf).

<sup>54</sup> European Commission (2016), *Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection and for the content of the protection granted and amending Council Directive 2003/109/EC of 25 November 2003 concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents*, COM(2016) 466 final <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2016/EN/1-2016-466-EN-F1-1.PDF>.

### *Revision of Reception Conditions Directive*

The revision of the Reception Conditions Directive aims to further harmonise reception conditions in the EU, reduce incentives for secondary movements and increase applicants' self-reliance and possible integration prospects. Unlike the Qualification Directive, the Reception Conditions Directive would not be transformed into a Regulation, despite the potential arguments for this, because all stakeholders agreed that Member States need to be allowed to grant more favourable conditions in order to guarantee "dignified standards of living" under EU law.

On the one hand, the **focus on integration prospects is placed on more rapid equal labour market access** from a maximum of 9 down to 6 months (Article 15). This period is already in line with the practice in the vast majority of Member States (see section above on Labour Market Integration).<sup>55</sup> The proposal also clarifies the rights and support of asylum-seekers in the labour market (Article 15) in terms of equal working conditions, access to trade unions, at least employment-related vocational training, some branches of social security and qualification recognition procedures. These rights are promoted by a July 2016 European Parliament (EP) resolution<sup>56</sup> and also guaranteed in most Member States. The proposal pays greater attention to unaccompanied minors (Article 23) and people with special reception needs (Chapter IV) in terms of rapid quality support.

On the other hand, sanctions and conditions in terms of reception conditions, residence dispersal and detention are introduced for asylum-seekers, particularly in cases of secondary movement. Failure to comply with compulsory integration measures, nowhere defined in the Directive, can also lead to sanctions (Article 19). Member States are not required to provide access and support to language and integration measures for asylum-seekers, unlike for beneficiaries of international protection. Such a revision could have addressed a major gap in Member State practice.

### *Replacement of Qualification Directive with Regulation*

The replacement of the Qualification Directive with a Regulation will turn the standards in the Directive into a **binding rule across the EU**, which limits Member States' discretion but also their more favourable standards. The proposal **claims that differences in the rights of beneficiaries of international protection creates incentives for secondary movement**. It also argues that international protection is currently given in a de facto 'permanent nature' and creates an incentive for those in need of international protection to come to the EU rather than seeking refuge in other places closer to their country of origin. The aims of the Regulation are to:

- further harmonise the common criteria for recognition;
- create convergence of asylum decisions and recognition rates;
- ensure that protection is granted only for as long as the grounds for prosecution or serious harm persist, without affecting the person's integration prospects;
- Address secondary movements of beneficiaries of international protection;
- Further harmonise the rights of beneficiaries of international protection.

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<sup>55</sup> Cf. OECD (2016), op.cit.

<sup>56</sup> European Parliament resolution of 5 July 2016 on refugees: social inclusion and integration into the labour market (2015/2321(INI)) <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/news/europe-ep-votes-resolution-on-refugee-integration>.

From an integration perspective, the Regulation would:

- clarify the rights and support of beneficiaries of international protection in the labour market (Article 30);
- clarify the possible restrictions of social assistance (Article 34);
- broaden the right to integration measures (Article 38) in particular to language courses, civic orientation and vocational training, all of which must address beneficiaries' specific needs;
- require 'full access' to socio-economic rights, including the recognition of qualifications and validation of skills (Articles 30 and 32).

The transformation of the Directive into a Regulation means that all applicable Member States may not grant more favourable rights and longer permits, even if these rights would create more favourable conditions for socio-economic integration. For example, the proposal will lead to a de facto shortening of the duration of permits for refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, who currently benefit from longer permits<sup>57</sup> than the minimum standards set in the Qualification Directive. These short permits may undermine their and local actors' investment in their integration as well as their effective access to their socio-economic rights. The proposal also draws further attention to residence dispersal systems, despite the ongoing questions about their effectiveness for integration.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, issues remain with the quality, cost and proportionality of integration measures. Although Member States may make effective participation in integration measures obligatory and conditional for access to certain social assistance, Member States are not clearly obliged to provide enough free and accessible courses and materials for all beneficiaries to succeed, regardless of their special needs. Last not least, a potentially grave change (put forward in Art. 17a) would result from the exception from EU standards for cases where an applicant is irregularly present in another Member State than the one in which he or she is required to be present. In this situation, he or she would not be entitled to material reception conditions, schooling and education of minors or employment and vocational training. This could lead to a large numbers of persons seeking international protection de facto falling outside the scope of the regulation.

### **Next steps**

The proposals will now be discussed by the European Council and Parliament. Most Member State, international and NGO stakeholders consulted in the few months before the proposals' publication were reportedly supportive of the revisions of the Reception Conditions Directive, so long as harmonisation did not lead to a lowering of standards. The Qualification Regulation received a more mixed reception. Member States' support for further harmonisation focused on practical cooperation and guidelines. Some Member States raised concerns about the administrative burdens of the permit reviews and the potential for undermining integration by creating a new perception that protection may only be temporary. NGOs were in general not in favour of a Qualification Regulation or of reopening negotiation around the Directive.

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<sup>57</sup> Cf. European Council of Refugees and Exiles (June 2016), *AIDA Legal Briefing on duration and review of international protection status in Europe*.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. OECD (2016), op.cit.

### National and local level changes

Only a few top destination countries have, largely from the pressure of the far-right and electorally weak national governments, started a back-door trend to reconceive of protection as temporary. Belgium, Denmark, Hungary, Sweden have recently introduced more temporary and stricter residence permit schemes.

Table: Changes in the length of residence permits

Country	Refugee status (in years)		Subsidiary protection (in years)	
	Before	After	Before	After
Austria	Permanent	3	1	1
Belgium	Permanent	5	1	1
Denmark	5	2	5	1
Hungary	10	10	5	3
Sweden <sup>38</sup>	Permanent	3	Permanent	1

Source: ECRE “Asylum on the clock? Duration and review of international protection status in Europe”

At the local level, cities have different mandates and legal competences in refugee reception in EU Member States. As the report “Refugee reception and integration in cities”<sup>59</sup> from EUROCITIES underlines, cities often do not have the competence to care for asylum seekers and refugees. Still, the high number of arrivals and **delayed reaction from national authorities “have often left cities at the forefront, forcing them to play a role without having a legal mandate nor any specific budget to do so.”** The local level is often described as more pragmatic with a focus on continuous social cohesion, compared to the national and European levels, where the debates seem to be more politicised.

### Targeted integration policies for refugees

The recent large-scale arrivals have highlighted the existing capacity problems for **early reception and integration** and lead to a wave of **targeted policies** in major destination countries. **EU law has a particular relevance for integration in these early stages** (see above Reception and Qualification section). **Targeted refugee integration policies and practices on housing and schooling diverge significantly among Member States as does the use and impact of EU funding for refugee integration.**

### National realities on housing and dispersal policies

For housing, analysis of the amount and type of housing access and (in-kind/in-cash) support for beneficiaries of international protection emphasises that refugees are strongly affected by the general quality of the country’s existing public and private housing stock.<sup>60</sup> For the reception and early integration phase, a recent OECD study finds that **among 21 assessed EU Member States, 13 countries have a deliberate dispersal policy for asylum seekers, 16 provide for or allow asylum seekers to stay in individually arranged housing** (in 4 of them this however goes along with a loss of financial assistance and 5 countries attach conditions), and **9 provide assigned housing for**

<sup>59</sup> EUROCITIES (March 2016), op.cit.

<sup>60</sup> UNHCR (2013), *A New Beginning. Refugee Integration in Europe and Refugee Integration and the Use of Indicators.*

**beneficiaries of international protection in a specific region or municipality after recognition of their status.**<sup>61</sup>

Housing and the provision of additional housing capacity has generally emerged as a focal point in countries' responses to the high numbers of recent arrivals. One of the countries reforming its dispersal system, Sweden, went so far as to impose an obligation on all municipalities to settle beneficiaries of international protection. This came after a severe housing shortage crisis and a highly controversial political debate. For 2016, extra measures are taken to accelerate the construction of new housing. A more incentive-based approach was chosen in the Netherlands through the introduction of subsidies for landlords to make premises suitable for habitation, funding for local authorities for new buildings and a possibility to use government buildings. In a similar vein, Finnish municipalities are encouraged to provide more housing space by entering agreements with the central government to receive reimbursement for ensuing integration costs.

In **Germany**, a national debate was sparked on the forced dispersal of refugees, oscillating between notions of responsibility-sharing, integration capabilities of local labour markets, fears of ethnic concentrations in disadvantaged urban areas and the revitalization of structurally weak regions through refugee settlement. The **new integration law** that came into force in July 2016 includes – highly contested – **provisions for the states to impose residence requirements even for recognised refugees, either by prescribing concrete places of residence or by denying moves to specified cities or regions**. Imposed for a maximum of three years, beneficiaries of international protection who find employment or an education opportunity in another place shall be excluded from the provision. The law **explicitly frames these restrictions in terms of furthering and supporting integration processes, by pointing to the social exclusion that is feared in places where “the foreigner cannot be expected to use German as the main language of conversation.”**<sup>62</sup> How this law will be implemented in administrative practice, and whether it complies with EU law, is an open question. Whatever the case, the law reflects the will of a broad political alliance including many cities and state governments concerned about large-scale secondary movements to urban agglomerations.

A variety of other Member States, including new countries for asylum and relocation, have been or are currently discussing housing within new, comprehensive integration policies in response to the refugee arrivals (e.g. Estonia, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Finland and Slovakia). Some Member States however struggle to ensure the most basic standards. For example, in France the problem persists that only about half of beneficiaries of international protection have an independent housing solution, temporary accommodation plays an outsize role and access to social housing proves difficult in most cases. The recent 'migrant plan' aims to mobilise 5,000 additional places.

#### **Support for targeted refugee integration from EU funding programmes**

In terms of EU funding support, the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) is the EU's major instrument for targeted integration policies from 2014 until 2020, endowed with EUR 825 million for integration purposes. As a programme under shared management, national programmes (88% of the Fund) run on the basis of multiannual programmes. At least 20% of these national programmes should be dedicated to integration actions, which can be used for all types of third-country national legal residents, including beneficiaries of international protection. At EU level, the Commission

<sup>61</sup> OECD (2016), op.cit.

<sup>62</sup> Art. 12a para.4, Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache 18/8615.



manages the remaining 12% of the Fund, divided between Union actions and emergency assistance. The Regulation establishing the AMIF calls for the adoption of a more targeted approach to integration, in support of consistent strategies to be developed at the national, local and/or regional level. The Regulation also stresses the need to develop integration measures targeted to beneficiaries of international protection, through a comprehensive approach taking into account the specificities of those target groups. Integration actions under the AMIF must be implemented in accordance with EU law and with the Common Basic Principles for immigrant integration policy in the European Union.

In the context of the 2015/16 crisis, the Commission started efforts to make stronger use for targeted integration of other funds as well. Beyond stressing the opportunities offered by the European Social Fund (see above labour market integration), synergies are sought between AMIF and e.g. the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD), although asylum seekers must be defined as beneficiaries in the Member State Operational Programme (OP), and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), as far as national OPs make provision for use in urban regeneration and in dedicated sub-programmes like URBACT and Urban Innovative Action.

### *National realities on access to education and language learning for minors*

Access to education systems and language learning of minors is another area of great divergence. Firstly, newly arriving refugee pupils enter **education systems that are to very different degrees already marked by ethnic diversity**. While the first and second generation now make up the majority of all pupils in a few major capitals and cities in north west Europe, these countries have relatively small numbers of first generation pupils and mostly second generation pupils (around 6-10% of all pupils). In contrast, first-generation foreign-born children make up around 8.5% of pupils in major new destinations like Ireland and Spain, while in Central Europe the share of pupils with migrant background ranges from minimal (e.g. Poland 0.2%) to moderate (e.g. Czech Republic 3.3%).<sup>63</sup> Not surprisingly, the existing approaches in dealing with newly arriving immigrant pupils vary widely in scope and quality. German-speaking countries offer early and additional German language training and support to find apprenticeships. The Nordic countries offer various language and literacy support in national and immigrant languages as well as targeted support for under-represented groups to access pre-primary, vocational and higher education.<sup>64</sup>

As a short-term 'emergency' capacity issue, the use of separate 'induction' classes—language induction that prepares for the regular classroom—has re-emerged in several countries' practices. Education systems believe that they have no other choice than to expand this option (e.g. in Germany under the heading of 'welcoming classes'), even though research indicates that induction programmes are not as advantageous as is tailored support in a mainstream classroom.<sup>65</sup> Overall, the spectrum ranges from countries that offer quality induction classes with gradual transition into the mainstream classroom based on individual assessment, good monitoring and continued

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<sup>63</sup> MIPEX 2015.

<sup>64</sup> MIPEX 2015.

<sup>65</sup> Sirius European Policy Network on the Education of Migrant Children and Young People with a Migrant Background, Literature Review: Brussels 2013, Sirius Policy Brief No. 4, Language support for youth with a migrant background: Brussels 2014.

language support after the transition (e.g. Denmark) to countries where preparatory classes are criticized for postponing real integration through an overt focus on language while few other subjects are taught, belated interaction with same age children from the host country and an early and unjust categorization of refugee pupils as having deficiencies and weaknesses (e.g. Belgium). Education systems that avoid separate induction classes partly provide for targeted language development opportunities in the mainstream classroom (e.g. United Kingdom), but also can lack any additional language support from the side of the state school system (e.g. France).

## Voluntary initiatives

Large numbers of volunteers are most often not included in integration policies and practices, except in times of large humanitarian arrivals, from the Vietnamese Boat People in France in the 1980s, Yugoslav refugees in Austria and Germany in the 1990s and most recently in southern Europe (e.g. Malta in 2008, Bulgaria in 2013, now Italy and Greece). In 2015, thousands of ordinary people in all EU Member States spontaneously welcomed newcomers and provided emergency front-line humanitarian assistance, such as food, clothing and emergency shelter. The European Website on Integration will soon publish the first-of-its-kind analysis of the new voluntary initiatives in all EU Member States, including an overview of the initiatives country-by-country.

Volunteer-based initiatives are often rare, new or small-scale so that relatively few immigrants and non-immigrants meet and support each other within the scope of their country or city's integration policies. Most long-standing volunteer-based initiatives can be found in northern Europe, among Europe's wealthy longstanding destination countries with extensive national integration policies. There, general volunteering levels can be high and one or two humanitarian/refugee charities mobilise large networks of volunteers to work specifically on migrant integration and refugee reception. In southern and Central Europe, where integration and social support is often limited, volunteer-based initiatives are slowly expanding, particularly humanitarian or religious charity networks. Volunteer-based humanitarian actors are often present or running the major reception and integration centres and therefore able to reach large numbers of newcomers. Most established volunteer-based initiatives provide people-to-people learning or leisure activities with non-immigrant organisers and groups of mostly newcomer adults or children. One-on-one mentoring schemes are still relatively new and rare as a core part of the nationwide integration offer in a few EU Member States. In addition, a few longstanding initiatives mainly aim at public awareness-raising and advocacy, often in partnership with migrant leaders and associations.

Following the large-scale humanitarian arrivals in 2015, many more people volunteered to support refugees and integration in all countries affected, from the major frontline to transit and destination countries, with a limited resource in countries experiencing few arrivals or transits. These new volunteers are little different from the traditional profile of integration volunteers, with greater diversity in terms of age, profile and geographical location. Generally speaking, practitioners observed an over-representation of young people and students, tech/creative people and many immigrants themselves. Their more rapid and informal initiatives have mostly concentrated efforts on arrival and reception through the provision of transit, shelter, food, clothing and donations. Small-scale donations were easier for the system to handle than the large number of volunteers willing to donate their time. As a result, some existing initiatives and NGOs opened up their services and platforms to include more volunteers. This happened less among governments at local/regional and even less at national level. Countries with large long-established volunteer networks were better

able to train and incorporate this massive supply of volunteers, though even the best resourced had to turn many away. In most cases, these volunteers turned to new citizens initiatives:

- Austria: Train of Hope ;
- Belgium: Citizens' Platform for support to refugees;
- Bulgaria: 'Friends of the Refugees' ;
- Czech Republic: 'I'm helping Refugees in the Balkans';
- Denmark: Venligboerne 'Friendly Neighbour';
- Estonia: Salliv Eesti 'Tolerant Estonia';
- Finland: 'Refugees Welcome Finland';
- France: Help the refugees and SINGA web-based platforms;
- Germany: Refugees Welcome;
- Greece: Refugees Welcome;
- Hungary: MigSzol Migrant Solidarity Group;
- Italy: Refugees Welcome Italy;
- Lithuania: Assistance for refugees in Lithuania and Welcome Refugees;
- Luxembourg: Two 'Refugees Welcome' platforms ;
- Portugal: Plataforma de Apoio aos Refugiados 'Platform to support refugees', PAR Familias, Refugees Welcome ;
- Sweden: Refugees' Welcome Sverige.

As integration becomes the top priority for arrivals, these volunteer networks are often looking for new ways to provide:

- Accessible multi-lingual information and translation;
- Short-term private housing as a stepping stone;
- Mentoring and leisure activities via better individual matchmaking;
- Means to fill gaps in training via adapted & accessible courses (e.g. Massive Open Online Courses);
- Business and tech start-up support;
- A 'Welcoming culture' via mass awareness-raising events, petitions, or crowdsourcing;
- Information, services, training and networks in all areas of life: access to available services and community life, education and lifelong learning, translation and language learning, leisure activities, in-kind housing support, support for job hunting and career development, public awareness-raising and advocacy, and so on.

These new volunteer-based initiatives are often perceived as 'innovative' because of their:

- Large diverse volunteer base (especially from tech, creative and business);
- Quick, flexible and collaborative 'start-up' structures allowing for own-initiatives and virtual participation;
- Greater visibility and reach through greater focus on communication, especially social media for organising;
- Preference for solutions based on citizens' participation and crowdsourcing, use of private social networks and new technology including Apps and online platforms;
- More transnational than established initiatives (e.g. Refugees Welcome, tech/business start-up, and mobile EU citizens volunteering in frontline/transit states).

The major added value of these new initiatives is the increase in the number, diversity and reach of new volunteers, new organisations and new funders expressing some interest in integration. This trend can be observed across Europe, even in countries with few immigrants or a generally hostile public debate. The initial phase of exchanges and immediate actions led to greater brainstorming and a new burst of activism and creativity for integration practitioners. Reporting that welcomed these initiatives may have improved media coverage of refugees and integration and reached a wider public to support integration practitioners. Most importantly, these rapid, low-cost and interactive ‘emergency’ responses helped alongside state and NGO actors to avoid many potential humanitarian disasters in 2015.

The critical question now is whether innovative voluntary initiatives are effective for integration and can become a structural part of the integration offer for all newcomers across Europe. Unfortunately, these new initiatives were not designed in ways to evaluate their impact robustly. So far, most of these new initiatives are not linked up with the main integration practitioners, neither with state agencies responsible for integration programmes, nor the main NGO service-providers. Available voluntary initiatives are rarely organised nationwide. These schemes are often small-scale, far below the potential level of demand. While these initiatives have filled gaps in NGO and state services, these structures have not necessarily opened up to fill these gaps themselves and absorb these and more potential volunteers.

The challenge of sustainability may be explained by the lack of networking and structural cooperation between initiatives and with established practitioners. Regardless of whether the fault for this lay with the former or the latter, the result is that many initiatives were designed without training or involvement from policymakers, NGOs or refugees themselves. Just a few examples can be found across Europe of the coordination of new volunteer-based initiatives, often built on existing integration policy coordination platforms:

- France: Call for ‘Solidarity Cities’ among socialist-run cities linked together through their Foreigners’ Councils and integration activities;
- Portugal: Plataforma de Apoio aos Refugiados (PAR) building on the previous networking achievements of the Commissioner for Migration (ACM) and Gulbenkian Foundation;
- Spain: Red de Ciudades refugio (‘Network of Refugee Cities’) and Acord Ciutadà per una Barcelona Inclusiva (‘Citizens’ Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona) built on existing networks between local and regional policymakers;
- United Kingdom: Cities of Sanctuary movement linked up with several longstanding citizens’ initiatives on refugees and integration and inspired by similar networks in Canada and the US.

Structural schemes, with sufficient volunteers to meet demand, require resources and coordination for outreach to potential volunteers and beneficiaries as well as training, tools and support for the mentoring process. In the future, perhaps a second phase of redesign and piloting may lead to greater coordination among volunteers and with practitioners in order to build capacity and preparedness for refugee arrivals and a more two-way approach to long-term integration.

## Missing perspectives in the current debate: the potential drivers of long-term change

### Active citizenship

Active citizenship, as defined by the European Commission’s Handbook on Integration, is the exercise of the rights and responsibilities that come with being a member of a liberal democratic community. The concept of active citizenship is relevant for many of the EU Commons Basic Principles on Integration, especially #9: *“The participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies and measures, especially at the local level, supports their integration.”*

Active citizenship is a **major area of weakness** in integration policies across Europe. It is a policy area heavily **dependent on national political will and the national electoral situation, influenced very little by European or international law**. However, these trends are **positively influenced by European or international norm diffusion**.

**Policies largely determine whether immigrants are settling down permanently, becoming voters and equal citizens. Restricting permanent residence and citizenship (e.g. Austria, Cyprus and Greece) leads to large numbers of ‘permanently temporary’ foreigners** who are legally precarious and socially excluded. **Facilitating permanent residence but restricting citizenship** (e.g. Denmark, Estonia, Italy, Latvia, Switzerland) **means most immigrants are secure in their status but treated like ‘second-class citizens’ in national politics and several areas of life**. Equal rights are not guaranteed in practice in countries whose policies privilege certain national or ethnic groups over others (e.g. Hungary, Japan, South Korea, Spain). In contrast, confident countries of immigration like New Zealand, Sweden, Norway, Belgium and Portugal opened up these opportunities, so that most immigrants enjoy equal and secure rights that boost their integration outcomes in many areas of life.

### Political participation

Political participation is **an area of weakness for integration policies at national, local and regional level**, according to the MIPEX 2015 results:

*Table: The state of political participation policies in MIPEX countries*

	Voting rights at local, *regional or **all level(s)	Right to stand as candidate	Allowed to join political parties	Name of national consultative body	Name of consultative body in capital
AT	None	N	Y	N	Foreigners' Advisory Boards (Graz & Linz)
AU	Owners/ renters in SA & VIC	N	Y	Australian Multicultural Council (AMC)	Offices of Multicultural Affairs
BE	5 years + declaration	N	Y	Consultative Council of Foreigners	CBOE (Brussels), Minderhedenforum (Flanders)
BG	None	N	N	N	N
CA	None	N	Y	N	N
HR	None	N	N	N	N
CY	None	N	Y	N	N

	Voting rights at local, *regional or **all level(s)	Right to stand as candidate	Allowed to join political parties	Name of national consultative body	Name of consultative body in capital
CZ	None (no reciprocity treaties)	N	N	N	Migrant Platform (Prague), Commissions for Integration (Mlada Boleslav, Plzen)
DK	3 years* or IS/NO citizen*	Y	Y	Council for Ethnic Minorities	Citizenship Committee (Aarhus)
EE	Permanent residence	N	N	Roundtable of Nationalities	N
FI	2 years or IS/NO citizen	Y	Y	Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO)	ETNOs at city level
FR	None	N	Y	N	Citizenship Council of non-EU Parisians, CCPNC and Consultative Citizenship Councils of Foreigners (Grenoble, Lille, Strasbourg, Toulouse, etc.)
DE	None	N	Y	Integration Advisory Board of Federal Commissioner	Foreigners' Advisory Boards
GR	No (Permanent residence option repealed in 2013)	N (repealed in 2013)	Y	N	Councils for Migrants' Integration
HU	Permanent residence	N	N	N	N
IS	5 years	Y	Y	N	Intercultural Council (Reykjavik)
IE	All residents	Y	Y	N	NCP Integration Forums
IT	None	N	Y	N	Elected Foreigners' Advisors and Foreigners' Consultative Bodies
JP	None	N	Y	N	Consultative bodies of foreign residents
KR	3 years' permanent residence*	N	N	Foreigners' Policy Committee	Foreigners' Policy Committees
LV	None	N	N	N	N
LT	Permanent residence	Y	N	Consultative Forum of Integration	N
LU	5 years	Y	Y	National Council of Foreigners (CNE)	Consultative Councils of Foreigners
MT	None	N	Y	N	N
NL	5 years	Y	Y	N (former Landelijk Overleg Minderheden, LOM)	Advisory Council on Interculturalisation (Utrecht), Foreigners' Advisory Commission (Nijmegen), Participation Council (Haarlem)
NO	3 years* or IS citizen*	Y	Y	Annual Dialogue Conference (replaced Contact Committee for Immigrants & Authorities)	Council of Immigrant Organisations (Oslo), Minorities Council (Drammen)
NZ	1 year's permanent residence**	N	Y	N	Ethnic Peoples Advisory Panel (Auckland)
PL	None	N	N	0	N
PT	Reciprocity* (3 years BR**; 4 years CV; 5 years AR, CL, IS, NO, PE, UY, VE)	Y	Y	Consultative Council for Immigration Affairs (COCAI)	City Council for Interculturalism and Citizenship (Lisbon), Consultative Council of Communities (Porto), etc.
RO	None	N	N	N	N
SI	Permanent residence	N	N	N	N

	Voting rights at local, *regional or **all level(s)	Right to stand as candidate	Allowed to join political parties	Name of national consultative body	Name of consultative body in capital
SK	Permanent residence	Y	N	N	N
ES	Reciprocity* (3 years NO; 5 years BO, CV, CL, CO, EC, IS, NZ, PY)	Y	Y	Forum for Social Integration of Immigrants	Integration Forums
SE	3 years* or IS/NO citizen*	Y	Y	N (support for Cooperation Group for Ethnic Associations in Sweden, SIOS)	N
CH	5 years in 8 cantons*	Y	Y	Federal Commission for Foreigners	Integration Consultative Commissions (e.g. Bern, Geneva, etc)
TU	None	N	N	N	Foreign Citizens' Council (Alanya)
UK	Permanent residence for Commonwealth citizens**	Y	Y	N	Migrant and Refugee Advisory Panel (London), Cross-Party Group on Racial Equality (Scotland), All Party Group on Ethnic Minority Communities (NI)
US	None	N	Y	N	Councils for New Americans (IL, MA, MD, NY, WA)

Source: MIPEX 2015

Most immigrants, especially foreigners, have few opportunities to inform and improve the policies that affect them daily, since most authorities design policies 'for' them and are not informed by or accountable to them. On average, immigrants are slightly more discouraged than encouraged to participate through the standard civic channels: limited local voting rights for (non-EU) foreigners, weak consultative bodies and poorly supported immigrant organisations. Immigrants' political opportunities differ enormously from country-to-country, especially between Western and Central Europe. Generally in Western Europe, immigrants enjoy greater voting rights, stronger consultative bodies, more support for immigrant organisations and more outreach from mainstream organisations and authorities. Outside Europe, political participation policies are further ahead in Australia and New Zealand than in Canada and the US and in South Korea than in Japan. In contrast, immigrants in Central Europe, Baltics, Cyprus, Malta and Turkey enjoy nearly none of these rights unless they (can) naturalise. Political participation is missing from their integration strategies, despite European norms and regional promising practices (e.g. Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Slovenia). **While political participation policies are more inclusive at local level (i.e. more voting rights, consultative bodies and funding), the types of policies adopted are often the same** at local, regional and national level, due to a rapid diffusion of ideas and norms across a country and the often nationwide nature of integration public debates.

**Immigrants' political opportunities are not getting much better over time.** Among the few major changes, Denmark and Luxembourg took a greater lead, while Norway and the Netherlands undermined this area of strength in their integration policies. One new country of immigration (Czech Republic) started the process of political participation, while another (Hungary) further restricted opportunities for foreigners. **Overall, promoting political participation is slowly becoming part of integration strategies, as countries show renewed interest in voting rights and consultative bodies.** Voting rights are long fought for (currently debated in Austria, France, Germany, Greece, Malta and Switzerland) and hard won: in Czech Republic in 2001, Estonia, Lithuania and Slovenia in

2002, Luxembourg and Slovakia in 2003, Belgium in 2004 and again in Luxembourg in 2011. Movements are even pushing for the revival of these long-repealed rights in Canada and the United States. Restrictions on foreign citizens' political liberties are also slow to change and depend on courts or politicians seeing immigrants as benefits to the country's democratic order (e.g. 2012 Czech revision) and not as threats (e.g. 2012 Hungarian political party restriction). In contrast, immigrant consultative bodies and funding for immigrant organisations can quickly come and go, based solely on whether or not governments are willing to listen and not based on community needs. Government disinterest recently led to the closure of KIM in Norway and LOM in the Netherlands and funding cuts in Denmark, Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom. **In general, reform will often require greater political will or constitutional reforms/cases.**

### *Permanent residence*

Most residents living legally in a country for around 5 years can apply for a permanent status and equal rights, but only if they prove that they can make their own way in society, often without any state support. Those needing help or unable to pay the high fees are kept on their temporary status, without the needed support and opportunities to invest in their integration. Permanent residence is a normal part of the integration process in countries with ambitious and inclusive integration policies, such as Belgium, Nordics, south west Europe as well as in a few Central European countries. Australia, Canada and New Zealand traditionally grant permanent residence upon arrival or after just a few years, so that migrant workers, families and refugees can start their settlement process with secure and near-equal rights. Elsewhere, most newcomers are kept ineligible to become permanent residents in Cyprus and Turkey, while many may be unable to pass the restrictive and costly conditions in a long list of countries: Austria, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Slovakia, South Korea, Switzerland and the UK.

*Table: The state of long-term residence policies in MIPEX countries*

	Years of residence	Not include all major groups or count stay for students	Language (CEFR) requirement (I) with sufficient free course to pass	Integration requirement (I) with sufficient free course to pass	Economic resource requirement	Fees	Duration	Equal socio-economic rights
AT	5	Temporary residence permits	B1, N	Course, N	High	150	5	Y
AU	0-2	Limited for students	Varies / Course, some (AMES)	None		Varies 100+ - 1000+	Permanent	N
BE	5		None	None		15	5	Y
BG	5		None	None		522	Permanent	Y
CA	0-5		Varies, Y (LINC)	None		366	Permanent	Y
HR	5		B1, N	Assessment, N		116	Permanent	Y
CY	5	Workers (4 years max), Limited for students	A2, N	Assessment, N	High	427	Permanent	N
CZ	5		A1, Y	None	High	90	Permanent	N
DK	5		A2, Y	None/Course, Y		732	Permanent	Y
EE	5		B1, Y	None		67	Permanent	Y



	Years of residence	Not include all major groups or count stay for students	Language (CEFR) requirement (I) with sufficient free course to pass	Integration requirement (I) with sufficient free course to pass	Economic resource requirement	Fees	Duration	Equal socio-economic rights
FI	4	Fixed-term permits, Limited for students	None	None		158	Permanent	Y
FR	5	Certain temporary workers, Limited for students	A1.1, some	Course (CAI), some		260	10	Y
DE	5		B1, Y	Course & test, N	High	135	Permanent	Y
GR	5		B1, N	Assessment, N	High	300-900	5	Y
HU	3	Certain temporary permits	None	None		34	Permanent	Y
IS	4	Temporary workers	Course (150h) or test, some	None	High	80	Permanent	Y
IE	Varies	No entitlement, Limited for students	None	None		500	5	Y
IT	5	Limited for students	A2, Y	Course & test, Y	High	274	Permanent	Y
JP	10	Short-term/ low-skilled work (e.g. trainees, technical interns)	None	None	High	63	Permanent	Y
KR	5	Short-term/ low-skilled work (e.g. industrial trainee, working visit)	None	None		172	Permanent	N
LV	5		A2, N	None	High	100	5	Y
LT	5		A2, N	Test, N		49	5	Y
LU	5		None	None	High	50	5	Y
MT	5	Certain temporary permits, Limited for students	A2, Y	Course (100h) & test (75%), Y	High	125	5	Y
NL	5	Permit for temporary purpose, Limited for students	A2, N	Test, N		152	5	Y
NO	4		Course (250 or 550h), some	Course (50h), some		220	Permanent	Y
NZ	0-2	Limited for students	Varies (B1-B2), some	None		128	Permanent	N
PL	5		None	None		168	Permanent	Y
PT	5		A2, Y	None		216	Permanent	Y

	Years of residence	Not include all major groups or count stay for students	Language (CEFR) requirement (I) with sufficient free course to pass	Integration requirement (I) with sufficient free course to pass	Economic resource requirement	Fees	Duration	Equal socio-economic rights
RO	5		No standards, Y	None		88	5	Y
SI	5	Certain temporary permits	None	None		114	Permanent	N
SK	5		No standards, N	Assessment, N		166	Permanent	Y
ES	5		None	None	High	42	Permanent	Y
SE	0-4		None	None		111	Permanent	Y
CH	5-10		Varies, N	Varies, N		Varies	Permanent	Y
TU	8	All humanitarian migrants	None	None	High	Varies	Permanent	N
UK	5	Certain Tier 2 and Tier 5 migrants	B1, some (ESOL)	Test, some (ESOL)	High	2072	Permanent	Y
US	0-1	Temporary workers, Limited for students	None	None		928	Permanent	N

Source: MIPEX 2015

**Countries rarely reform their entire path leading to permanent residence.** The two major reforms in recent years were driven by the politicisation of immigration, as Denmark undid previous restrictions and the UK imposed them. **Immigrants in MIPEX countries have been slightly more likely to face a few new restrictive conditions** than to see minor improvements in their eligibility, support or rights. The restrictive trend is to extend the conditions once reserved for access to citizenship onto permanent residence. For example, language requirements expanded from only one EU country in 1999 (Germany) to 18 by 2014. Many of these requirements are more likely to deter more immigrants from applying (e.g. Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Slovakia, Switzerland and Netherlands) than to stimulate more to learn the language (better support in Czech Republic, Estonia, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Portugal and recently Denmark). Overall, these **new language, integration and high income requirements make it as difficult for immigrants to become permanent residents as it is for them to become citizens.** Some minor improvements to policies and fees were made to comply with EU law and court cases.

### *Access to nationality*

Naturalisation policies remain **a major weakness** in national integration policies for many European countries, according to MIPEX:

Table: State of play of access to nationality policies in MIPEX countries

	Years of residence	Language level, CEFR	Sufficient courses to succeed	Integration requirement	Sufficient courses to succeed	Total fees
AT	10	B1	N	Test	N	1000+
AU	4	≈A2	Some (AMES)	Test	Y	210
BE	5	A2	TBD	Course	TBD	150
BG	5 (+5)	A2	N	No		175
CA	4	≈A2	Y	Test	Y	220
HR	8	B1	N	Test	N	200
CY	7	A2	N	No		550
CZ	10	B1	N	Test	N	72
DK	9	B1	Y	Test	N	134
EE	8	B1	Y	Test	Y	13
FI	5	B1	Y	No		350
FR	5	B1	Some (CAI)	Interview	N	55
DE	8	B1	Y	Test	Y	255
GR	7	A2	N	Interview	N	700
HU	8 (+3)	High (no standards)	N	Interview	N	0
IS	7	A1/A2	Some	No		150
IE	5	No		No		950
IT	10	High (no standards)		Interview	N	200
JP	5	≈A2	N	No		0
KR	5	≈A2	Y	Test	Y	76
LV	5 (+5)	B1	N	Test	N	30
LT	10	A2	N	Test	N	0
LU	7	A2/B1	Y	Course	Y	4
MT	5	High (no standards)	N	No		70
NL	5	A2	N	Test	N	789
NO	7	Course (550h) or A2	Some	Course (50h)	N	315
NZ	5	Low (no standards)	Some	No		325
PL	3 (+5)	B1	N	No		50
PT	6	A2	Y	No		175
RO	8	High (no standards)	N	Interview	N	45
SI	10	A2	Y	No		150
SK	10	High (no standards)	N	Test	N	664
ES	10	High (no standards)	N	Interview	N	0
SE	5	No		No		160
CH	10	High (no standards)	N	Interview	N	1000+
TU	5	High (no standards)	N	Interview	N	36
UK	5	B1	Some (ESOL)	Test	N	1235
US	5	Low (no standards)	N	Interview	N	625

Source: MIPEX 2015

The **highly discretionary and costly path** to citizenship often discourages rather than encourages immigrants to apply and succeed as new citizens. The local and regional level has rarely stepped into the process to inform, inspire and support immigrants to become citizens, despite the obvious

importance for their enfranchisement as full local, regional and national citizens. The 2012 CITIMP data demonstrates that local and regional authorities are rarely involved in the application checking or assessment procedure while few immigrants benefit from local citizenship preparation courses or high-visibility citizenship ceremonies involving local or regional authorities.<sup>66</sup>

Yet this area of weakness and divergence is also highly dynamic. Only a few countries have not yet caught up with **international reform trends on dual nationality** (25 MIPEX countries, now Czech Republic, Denmark and Poland and by exception now in Bulgaria, Germany, Latvia and Lithuania) **as well as on citizenship entitlements for children at or after birth** (18 MIPEX countries, most recently Czech Republic and Denmark). Basic elements of the rule of law also now apply across most countries, such as the right to a reasoned decision and appeal (31 MIPEX countries, most recently Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg and Poland). Since 2010, reform efforts were completely undermined in Greece, while policies were slightly restricted in the Netherlands and, to some extent, Belgium. At the same time, **immigrants' opportunities to become citizens have improved in 11 countries** from all corners of Europe, with significant reforms accomplished in Denmark and Poland. More specifically, immigrants in Poland enjoy a secure path to citizenship since 2012, with the option to obtain dual nationality, bringing Poland up to the EU average. Denmark finally followed international trends and opened up to birthright citizenship in 2013 and dual nationality in 2014, although immigrants are still confronted with higher language and economic resource requirements in Denmark than in most European countries. In 2013, Greece's Council of State annulled the major 2010 reform, which had brought Greece up to the EU average. Immigrants and their Greek-born children again face one of the most restrictive naturalisation policies compared to the other major destinations in northern or southern Europe.

## Anti-discrimination

**Strong anti-discrimination laws have spread across Europe, thanks to the EU, but remain relatively new and under-resourced.** Potential victims are often uninformed and poorly supported to access justice because equality policies, bodies and NGOs have few powers and little reach. The time has come for enforcement. Most victims are not coming forward with complaints, so countries still have to take the first steps in the long path to justice.

Following the adoption of the EU anti-discrimination law in 2000 (Directives 2000/43/EC and 2000/78/EC), the creation of dedicated anti-discrimination laws and equality bodies in EU Member States and accession states has been the greatest and most consistent improvement to integration policies across Europe in the past 15 years. For example, since 2007, 15 MIPEX countries made major positive reforms (+10 points on average), with only few minor reversals (e.g. FR, UK). **The greatest progress had to be made in new countries of immigration and Central Europe** (e.g. most recently, Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Malta, Poland, Slovakia). The European Migration Network

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<sup>66</sup> Huddlestone, T. (2012), 'The naturalisation procedure: measuring the ordinary obstacles and opportunities for immigrants to become citizens', Working Paper RSCAS PP 2013/16, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies EUDO Citizenship Observatory, Fiesole, Italy:  
[http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/28122/RSCAS\\_PP\\_2013\\_16.pdf?sequence=1](http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/28122/RSCAS_PP_2013_16.pdf?sequence=1).

also reports widespread efforts to ensure non-discrimination of migrants in almost half of the EU Member States, including legislative changes and new policies, strategies and measures.<sup>67</sup>

The European Commission put forward a proposal in 2008 for a new Directive, ensuring equal treatment on the grounds of age, disability, sexual orientation and religion or belief beyond the workplace, in the areas of social protection, education and access to and supply of publicly available goods and services, including housing. The Commission continues to reiterate the importance of a horizontal anti-discrimination directive, including most recently for integration in its June 2016 Integration Action Plan. However, the proposal is still blocked on the level of the European Council and risks being withdrawn under the European Commission's Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT) programme.

**Data on discrimination experiences and complaints are improving** across Europe thanks to many public and civil-society initiatives at national and European level, including the EU-MIDIS survey of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights<sup>68</sup> and the three phases of the Equality Data Initiative by the Open Society Foundations, Migration Policy Group and the European Network against Racism (ENAR).<sup>69</sup> However, as the report “Ethnic Origin and Disability Data Collection in Europe: Measuring Inequality—Combating Discrimination”<sup>70</sup> notes, the misconception is still widespread that the collection of ethnic data is categorically prohibited. These data sources confirm that **most migrants who have been victims of discrimination do not know and use their rights in practice**. The majority of people experiencing discrimination do not report the incidents to the authorities because they believe that discrimination is widespread and nothing will happen. Generally, not reporting discrimination is the norm for almost all migrants and ethnic minorities, with few exceptions. Migrants experiencing discrimination are slightly more likely to report it if they have been repeatedly experiencing it, are long-settled in the country or naturalised as citizens. Their likelihood to report is only marginally related to their age, education, gender, income, job situation, language or neighbourhood. Complaints seem to be more common in the countries with stronger, longstanding and well-resourced anti-discrimination laws and bodies. One complaint is received for approximately every 150-250 people experiencing ethnic or religious discrimination in France, the Netherlands, Ireland and Sweden. Similar levels of complaints are estimated in Belgium (391) and Cyprus (515). Hardly any complaints seem to be made across other parts of Europe, especially **Central Europe**, even in the countries with **new, strong but poorly supported anti-discrimination laws and bodies**: around 1 in 3,000 in Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Slovenia; 1 in 5,000-6,000 in Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Poland and hardly any in Bulgaria and Romania.

**Weak state equality policies and weak support for equality bodies mean that victims are too poorly informed and supported to take even the first step in the long path to justice.** MIPEX data

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<sup>67</sup> European Migration Network (June 2015) “EMN Annual Report on Immigration and Asylum in 2014” [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/2014/00\\_emn\\_annual\\_report\\_on\\_immigration\\_and\\_asylum\\_synthesis\\_report.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/2014/00_emn_annual_report_on_immigration_and_asylum_synthesis_report.pdf).

<sup>68</sup> Following the first round in 2008, the full-scale survey of EU-MIDIS II was carried out in 2015, with results still to be published.

<sup>69</sup> For more information: <http://www.migpolgroup.com/anti-discrimination-equality/equality-data-initiative/>.

<sup>70</sup> I. Chopin, L. Farkas and C. Germain (November 2014), *Ethnic Origin and Disability Data Collection in Europe: Measuring Inequality—Combating Discrimination*, Open Society Foundations [http://www.migpolgroup.com/wp\\_mpg/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/ethnic-origin-and-disability-data-collection-europe-20141126.pdf](http://www.migpolgroup.com/wp_mpg/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/ethnic-origin-and-disability-data-collection-europe-20141126.pdf).

shows that **commitments to equality come** (e.g. Austria, Denmark, France) **and go** (e.g. Hungary, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Spain, UK), **depending on the government**. Equality policies are often limited to voluntary initiatives, such as Action Plans and Diversity Charters, without any obligations or monitoring. **Many equality bodies are relatively new and chronically under-staffed**. Since 2007, several faced major funding cuts (e.g. Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, UK) **and mergers** into larger bodies (France, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden, UK), which may reduce their capacity to receive and handle discrimination complaints.

*Table: The state of anti-discrimination policies in MIPEX countries*

	Nationality discrimination explicitly prohibited	Multiple discrimination explicitly prohibited	Racial/ethnic/religious discrimination prohibited in all areas of life?	Shift in burden of proof required?	Class action and actio popularis allowed?	Strong & independent equality body?	Strong state actions to promote equality?
AT	Weak	Yes	Yes	Full	No		
AU	Yes		No	No	Yes both	Partial	Partial
BE	Yes		Yes	Partial	No	Partial	
BG	Yes	Yes	Yes	Full	Yes both	Yes	
CA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partial	Yes both	Yes	Yes
HR	No	Yes	Yes	Full	Actio popularis		
CY	Weak		Yes	Partial	Class action	Partial	
CZ	No		Yes	Partial	No	Weak	
DK	No		Yes	Partial	Class action		
EE	No		No	Partial	No		
FI	Yes		Yes	Full	No	Partial	Yes
FR	Weak		Yes	Full	No	Partial	Yes
DE	Weak	Yes	Yes	Partial	No	Weak	
GR	No		Yes	Full	Actio popularis	Partial	
HU	Yes		Yes	Full	Actio popularis	Yes	
IS	No		No	No	Class action	None	
IE	Yes		Yes	Partial	No	Yes	
IT	Yes		Yes	Partial	No	Weak	
JP	No		No	No	No	None	
KR	No		Yes	No	No		
LV	No		No	Partial	No	Partial	
LT	No		No	Full	No	Partial	
LU	No		Yes	Full	Actio popularis		
MT	No		Yes	Full	No		
NL	Yes		Yes	Full	Class action	Yes	
NO	No		Yes	Full	Class action	Partial	Yes
NZ	Yes		Yes	No	Class action	Yes	
PL	No		Yes	Full	Class action	Weak	
PT	Yes		Yes	Full	Yes both	Yes	Yes
RO	Yes	Yes	Yes	Full	Actio popularis	Yes	
SI	Yes		Yes	Full	No		
SK	Weak		Yes	Partial	Yes both		
ES	Weak		Yes	Partial	Yes both	Weak	Partial
SE	Yes		Yes	Full	Class action	Yes	Yes
CH	No		No	No	No	Weak	
TU	No		No	No	Class action	None	
UK	Yes	Yes	Yes	Full	No	Partial	Yes
US	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partial	Yes both	Partial	Partial

Source: MIPEX 2015

**On the local level, few countries have established networks of local anti-discrimination bureaus** (within the EU, see Belgium, France, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden).<sup>71</sup> **More broadly, implementation and monitoring has been improving through the development of toolkits** such as the MIXITIES Anti-Discrimination Toolkit<sup>72</sup> or the Integrating Cities Toolkit.<sup>73</sup> However, EUROCITIES reported recently concerns about the rise of anti-immigrant groups. **An increasing number of assaults and threatening behaviour have been reported** towards refugees and volunteers. Vandalism of refugee shelters has been reported in Germany, Finland, France, the Netherlands and Sweden. Clashes between pro-migrant groups and far-right movements have increased security concerns.<sup>74</sup>

## Mainstreaming across policy areas

### *A major long-term strategy for change*

**Mainstreaming is about closing gaps:** Gaps between the socio-economic situation of immigrant and native populations, and gaps in general policies (like education, health, housing, welfare or employment) to address these inequalities. It is about making **immigrant integration a major concern across all policy fields**, and by doing this, lifting integration up the overall policy agenda. It sets clear and measurable benchmarks, as it is achieved when immigrants and their descendants attain the same access and uptake of public services as non-immigrants in similar situations. Mainstreaming integration means to overcome silo thinking and to achieve well-coordinated policy responses which do not contradict each other, or create unintended barriers, but are mutually reinforcing. Eventually, mainstreaming entails the continuous reform of all relevant policy areas, to retain the capacity to govern in contemporary immigration societies.

In practice, rendering immigrant integration a cross-cutting policy goal faces numerous challenges. **Successful mainstreaming rests on strong horizontal policy coordination mechanisms**, which typically entail ministerial-level responsibility for integration, the drafting of national integration plans or strategies, and the creation of a broad commitment through sectoral and civil society stakeholder involvement. It is a question of political leadership and priority-setting to ensure **long-term commitment to implementation across all government portfolios and public services**; and it is here that mainstreaming policies are most likely to fail. Another major challenge is to strike the fine balance between eradicating the deficits of general policies, making them work for a diverse society on the one hand, and providing those targeted, immigrant-specific measures needed to fully ensure equal access and counterbalance disadvantages on the other hand. If this balance is not struck, integration concerns **risk being 'mainstreamed away'**. Not the least, mainstreaming asks for **close monitoring and impact assessment** in order to actually know about policy gaps, socio-economic disadvantages of immigrants as well as the effectiveness of policies.

On all these counts, European countries and the EU are at the very beginning of this process. At **EU level**, mainstreaming was acknowledged as a policy goal in the **Common Basic Principles** on

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<sup>71</sup> For more, see the national reports of the European Equality Law Network at [www.equalitylaw.eu](http://www.equalitylaw.eu).

<sup>72</sup> EUROCITIES (2012) "*Integrating Cities Toolkit – Anti-Discrimination*" <http://www.eurocities.eu/media/fbook/antidiscrimination/index.html>.

<sup>73</sup> EUROCITIES (2014) "*Integrating Cities Toolkit*" <http://nws.eurocities.eu/MediaShell/media/Managing%20and%20promoting%20diversity.pdf>.

<sup>74</sup> EUROCITIES (March 2016), op.cit.

Immigrant Integration in 2004, and much progress has been made on EU-wide comparable integration indicators for monitoring purposes. However, the inclusion of immigrant integration in **major policies formulated at EU level has been a slow and incremental process**. Only from 2010 on, the integration of migrants from outside the EU found its way in, e.g. into the EU 2020 growth and jobs strategy or the ET 2020 education and training strategy (cf. the chapter on labour market integration). The **June 2016 Integration Action Plan** of the Commission gives **another impetus** for mainstreaming, with its cross-cutting intervention areas and stress on improving multi-level policy coordination.

**At national level**, most governments at least acknowledge that mainstreaming should be a priority of integration policies, with some countries like Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain and the UK even framing their overall approach to integration as mainstreaming. **National integration strategies or plans** have proliferated in countries where there were none before, as in Austria (2010), Finland (2012), Poland (2012), Portugal (2007), Slovakia (2014) and Spain (2007); notably including both emerging and more traditional destination countries. Only few countries however, can already look back on a track record of well-functioning coordination and implementation structures. Germany is a case in point, with its National Integration Plan first adopted in 2006, bringing together general and specific policymakers and stakeholders from all government levels and civil society. Crucially, the process in Germany includes annual integration summits, the setting of clear targets and monitoring of implementation. The actual quality of policy coordination in immigrant integration (with a particular focus on the labour market) across Europe was assessed and scored for a recent Eurofound study, finding that the most comprehensive coordination mechanisms, involving a broad range of actors and stakeholders, is to be found in the Scandinavian countries, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain, with the lowest-scoring countries including Hungary, Poland, Latvia and Lithuania. In general, high-scoring Member States seem to show a preference for a mix between internal horizontal coordination (in the form of inter-agency, inter-ministerial cooperation) and vertical coordination (multi-level government). Moreover, Well-scoring countries are mostly the same that also score high on their integration policy outcomes as evidenced by MIPEX.<sup>75</sup>

What is the **evidence for successful mainstreaming of immigrant integration in Europe? Data from MIPEX provides the best indications in the key areas of education, housing and health** reveal stark development contrasts across countries, but also remaining gaps in policy monitoring tools.

### *Mainstreaming Education*

As countries become more diverse, schools are slow to adapt to immigrants' specific needs. Few staff are trained, equipped or required to respond. Immigrants' basic access to these services depends a lot on their legal status. Traditional countries of immigration and a few in northern Europe are offering more personalised general and targeted support, which seems to reach larger number of immigrants in need and may help explain their progress over time.

Schooling and support of educational achievement are one of the best, most effective immigrant integration strategies available. If the educational system, from pre-school to tertiary levels, is able to take in and successfully promote newly arriving immigrant children and youth, later integration costs are pre-empted. From the receiving society's perspective, investing in interculturally mainstreamed schools and competent teachers is much more efficient than carrying the costs of

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<sup>75</sup> EUROFOUND (2015): *Challenges of policy coordination for third-country nationals*, Luxembourg.



unemployment, adult training, social exclusion and estrangement of people who have failed at school age. From the point of view of immigrant children and youth, schools which are capable and confident to meet their needs are a main avenue for arriving at a better future.

Yet, according to MIPEX findings, **education emerges as the greatest weakness in national integration policies in most countries.**

Table: The state of immigrant education policies in MIPEx countries

	Equal access for undocumented pupils to all levels of education	Advice & orientation for newcomer pupils/parents	Additional language courses for migrant pupils	Additional systematic finances or support for schools with many migrant pupils	Any teaching of immigrant languages	Intercultural education as part of stand-alone course or cross-curricular priority	Teacher pre- or in-service training required on migrants' needs or intercultural education
AT	Partial			Support	Wide range (mother tongue)	CC	No
AU		Strong	High standards	Both	Wide range (LOTE)	CC	Needs
BE	Partial	Strong	High standards	Both	FR-speaking: Partnership with few countries of origin, NL-speaking: few languages or schools with bicultural education	SA	Intercultural
BG		Weak	Weak	None	Only EU citizens	CC	No
CA	Partial	Strong	High standards	Both	Wide range of heritage languages in most provinces	SA	No
HR		Weak		None	Only EU citizens	CC	No
CY	Partial	Weak		Support	None	CC	Needs
CZ			High standards	Both	Only long-term residents & EU citizens	CC	No
DK			High standards	Both	Piloting bilingual education	Not included	Needs
EE	Yes		High standards	Both	Several languages through Sunday schools	CC	Needs
FI		Strong	High standards	Both	Wide range of native tongues	CC	No
FR	Yes			None	Partnerships (LCO) with few countries of origin	Not included	No
DE				None	Wide range of native-languages in some states, sometimes partnerships with several counties of origin	CC	No
GR	Yes	Weak		None	Mother tongue options	CC	No
HU		Weak	Weak	None	HU-Mandarin bilingual school through partnership with China	Not included	No
IS	Partial	Strong		Financial	None	SA	No
IE			High standards	None	None	CC	Needs
IT				Support	None	SA	No
JP	Partial			Support	None	CC	No
KR	Yes	Strong		Both	None	CC	No
LV		Weak		None	Bilingual education, supplementary courses, and partnerships with countries of origin for major languages	CC	No
LT		Weak		None	None	CC	Both
LU	Partial	Strong		Support	Mother tongue PT through partnership	CC	Both

	Equal access for undocumented pupils to all levels of education	Advice & orientation for newcomer pupils/parents	Additional language courses for migrant pupils	Additional systematic finances or support for schools with many migrant pupils	Any teaching of immigrant languages	Intercultural education as part of stand-alone course or cross-curricular priority	Teacher pre- or in-service training required on migrants' needs or intercultural education
MT	Partial	Weak	Weak	None	None	CC	Needs
NL	Yes	Weak		Financial	None	SA	Both
NO	Partial		High standards	Both	Wide range of mother tongue teaching for language minorities	CC	Both
NZ	Partial	Strong	High standards	Both	None	CC	Intercultural
PL			Weak	Support	Options for partnerships with countries of origin	Not included	No
PT	Partial	Strong		Support	Mother tongue options for major languages	CC	No
RO				Support	None	CC	No
SI	Partial	Weak		None	Options for partnerships with countries of origin	CC	No
SK			Weak	None	Only EU citizens	CC	Intercultural
ES	Yes			Support	Some state support for major languages and partnership with MO, PT, RO	CC	No
SE	Partial	Strong	High standards	Both	Wide range of first language and bilingual instruction	SA	No
CH	Partial			Support	LCOs in some cantons, some partnerships with countries of origin	CC	No
TU		Weak	Weak	None	None	CC	No
UK	Partial	Weak		Both	GCSE exams in community languages	SA	Needs
US	Partial	Strong	High standards	Both	Limited bilingual education in states	CC	Intercultural in only few states

Most migrant pupils have little extra support to find the right school and class, catch up if they are behind, quickly learn the language or even learn some of the rules of the language that they use at home. Teachers and other pupils are lucky if they learn anything about diversity or immigrants. Most countries leave it up to the general education system to fix (or exacerbate) any problems. The most significant factors determining the educational attainment of migrant pupils are their parents' educational background, their language skills, the composition of their school and the general structure and quality of the country's education system.<sup>76</sup> Migrant pupils and other vulnerable groups appear to do better with an early and long duration of compulsory education, limited school choice, late ability tracking, less differentiated school systems and more teaching hours.<sup>77</sup> **The policies that matter most for the outcomes of immigrant and non-immigrant pupils is whether the school and education system addresses or reproduces inequality.** Although targeted immigrant education policies adopted at national level do not display consistent results across countries in terms of pupils' tests scores, most studies conclude that inclusive schools and education systems are more successful when they also target the specific needs of immigrant pupils.

**This combination of inclusive general and targeted policies seems to increase the reach of policy across the country and school system.** For example, MIPLEX analysis of the PISA findings indicates that low-literacy immigrant pupils are more likely to benefit from extra out-of-school literacy courses in countries where these courses are generally available for all pupils and where their targeted education policies are strong for migrants.

**Education policies are generally more targeted in countries with large numbers of pupils** with an immigrant background, but not in all cases. Denmark, Norway and Sweden take an **individualised needs-based approach for all pupils**. In contrast, the education systems in German-speaking countries and France seem less responsive to their relatively large number of immigrant pupils. New destination countries with small immigrant communities usually offer only ad hoc projects for a few groups and schools (e.g. Central and south east Europe). In the major new destinations such as Greece, Ireland, Italy and Spain, weak targeted education policies have not caught up with the now relatively large numbers of immigrant pupils. More developed policies in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland and Portugal better serve these countries' relatively small number of immigrant pupils.”

**Policies are very slow to adapt to target the needs of immigrant pupils.** Since 2010 only eight European countries made minor improvements, opening the system to all legal migrants (Romania) or to undocumented migrants (Switzerland, Sweden), setting basic standards for language support (Czech Republic, France), opening up to non-European languages (Belgium), and promoting diversity in school or society (Austria, Denmark). A few leading countries lost some of their political will and resources to promote diversity or target migrant pupils' specific needs (Netherlands, Spain, UK).

### *Mainstreaming Housing*

Housing is another key area where migrant integration in Europe must succeed in the long term. Housing and living conditions have a major effect on immigrants' employment outcomes, educational opportunities, social interaction, and even their residence, family reunification and

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<sup>76</sup> Bilgili et al. 2015.

<sup>77</sup> Sirius European Policy Network on the Education of Migrant Children and Young People with a Migrant Background, Literature Review: Brussels 2013.

citizenship rights. Mainstreaming is far from being achieved. Migrants are generally vulnerable on the housing market, disproportionately dependent on private rentals, more likely to be uninformed of their rights and discriminated against on the housing market, and face greater obstacles to access public housing or housing benefits. They are more likely to live in poorer quality and poorly connected housing, with less space available and at a higher rental cost burden than on average in the country.<sup>78</sup> Thus, housing policies that are interculturally mainstreamed can have a wide-reaching multiplier effect for immigrant integration.

At the same time, **few integration policy fields are as diverse across Europe as housing**, ranging from countries with big rental sectors (to different degrees public or publicly-controlled) to those marked by private ownership. Actual regulation often takes place at local or regional level, making it even harder to assess housing integration on a European-wide scale. MIPEX housing-related policy indicators show that in only 8 Member States temporary workers, family members and long-term residents have equal access to housing benefits, while in 12 Member States equal access is denied to all three groups. Housing discrimination is prohibited on grounds of nationality in 14 Member States and on grounds of only racial, ethnic and religious origin in another 11 Member States.

Access to housing and the anti-discrimination framework are only part of the picture. Mainstreamed housing policies in an immigrant society entail a mix of interventions, bringing together fields as diverse as urban development and planning, anti-discrimination or legal rules on access to housing and housing benefits. Comprehensive monitoring of housing integration in Europe would also have to assess the active role of public authorities in the housing market to make available affordable housing, access to bank loans, effective anti-discrimination enforcement mechanisms, urban renewal and public spending on disadvantaged neighbourhoods, policies to achieve social balance in neighbourhoods, or the intercultural opening of institutions and organisations in the housing field by, for instance, providing multilingual services.

### *Mainstreaming Health*

According to the results of this new MIPEX strand, **targeted migrant health policies are usually stronger and services more responsive in countries with greater wealth (GDP), more immigrants and tax-based as opposed to insurance-based health systems**. For example, 8 of the 9 countries with the most responsive policies to achieve this change have national health systems (Australia, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Spain and UK), the only exception being the US. Links also emerge between migrant health policies across most countries. First, the most responsive services are found in countries with good mechanisms for mainstreaming on migrant health (Australia, New Zealand, UK, US). Some countries offer migrants legal entitlements to healthcare, but make little effort to adapt services to their needs (Estonia, France, Japan and most south east European countries), while others seem to have the opposite priorities through a restrictive but diversity-inclusive health system (Australia, UK, US).

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<sup>78</sup> Eurostat EU Indicators of Immigrant Integration; OECD 2015, Indicators of Immigrant Integration based on EU-SILC data.

Table: The state of migrant health policies in MIPEX countries

	Strong entitlement for undocumented migrants & legal migrants /asylum-seekers	Groups without documentation/ discretion obstacles	No reporting or sanction required for serving undocumented migrants	Strong Information Policies	Uses of cultural mediators (M) & interpreting (I)	Elements of migrant health policy leadership
AT	No	Legal / asylum	No sanctions	Y	I	Regional level
AU	No	None		N		
BE	All	Legal		Y	M&I	
BG	Legal	None	No sanctions	N		
CA	No	None		Y	I	Regional level
HR	No	None		N		
CY	No	None	No sanctions	N	I	
CZ	No	Asylum	Neither	N	I	
DK	Legal	None	Neither	N	I	Regional level
EE	Legal	None	No sanctions	N		
FI	No	Legal	No sanctions	N	I	
FR	Legal	Legal / asylum	Neither	Y	M&I	
DE	No	Legal		N	I	
GR	Legal	Asylum		N		
HU	No	None	No sanctions	N		
IS	No	Legal	Neither	Y	M&I	
IE	No	None	No sanctions	Y	I	HSE Social Inclusion
IT	All	None	Neither	Y	M&I	Regional level
JP	All	Legal / asylum	No sanctions	Y	M&I	
KR	No	None	No sanctions	Y		2nd Basic Immigration Policy Plan
LV	No	None	No sanctions	N		
LT	No	None		N		
LU	Legal	None		N	M&I	
MT	No	None	No sanctions	Y	I	
NL	Legal	Legal	No reporting	N	I	
NO	Legal	Legal	Neither	N	I	National Immigrant Health Strategy
NZ	Legal	Legal		Y	I	Settlement/ Refugee/Pacific health Strategy
PL	No	Legal / asylum	No sanctions	N		
PT	No	None	Neither	Y	I	
RO	All	Asylum	No sanctions	N		
SI	No	None		N		
SK	No	Legal	No sanctions	N		
ES	Legal	None	Neither	Y	I	Health Equity/ Citizenship & Integration Plan
SE	All	Legal	No sanctions	Y	I	Refugee reception system
CH	No	All	Neither	Y	M&I	Migration & Health national programme
TU	No	Legal		N		
UK	Legal	None		N	I	Minority ethnic equalities policies
US	No	None	No reporting	N	M&I	Office of minority health

Source: MIPEX 2015

**Attention to migrants' health needs is fairly recent in integration policies.** On one end, health systems are usually more 'migrant-friendly' in countries with a strong commitment to equal rights and opportunities. Policies are at least slightly favourable in most English-speaking countries (Australia, New Zealand, UK, US), the Nordics (Finland, Norway, Sweden) and major regions of destination in Austria, Italy and Switzerland. At the other end, health systems are rarely inclusive or responsive in countries with restrictive integration policies, such as in most of Central and south east Europe. **Where numbers of migrants are very low, little or nothing may be done to adapt service delivery** to their needs. **Austerity measures also play a major role** in countries like Greece, Portugal and Spain.

## **Conclusion: Policy contradictions and challenges for multi-level governance**

Three major contradictions emerge in the new trends on migrant integration policy, particularly at national and EU level. Migration and integration is at the forefront of the policy agenda for citizens, all levels of government and an ever-wider variety of stakeholders. Policy-makers are faced with major policy dilemmas and the pressure to find quick solutions to this manifold phenomenon. Awareness and action to address these underlying inconsistencies may help policymakers to overcome short-term 'crisis' thinking and focus on a long-term plan to progress towards a more quick and comprehensive integration process for refugees, immigrants and the receiving society, including those who feel vulnerable or hostile to immigration.

**EU-level migration, asylum and integration policies find themselves in a renewed cycle of changing rules and norms, but the EU risks undermining its own standards achieved so far.**

Contrary to many positive trends, the challenge from the far-right and weak national governments in major destination countries may risk undermining the approach to integration at national and EU level. The perceived importance of ambitious and inclusive integration standards and policies has shifted recently as some destination governments search in vain for so-called 'pull factors' that they can control to restrict refugee flows. Increasingly, Europe's self-perceived attractiveness for people seeking asylum and for low- and medium-skilled migrant workers has a negative connotation among national policymakers. Therefore, within this logic, the answer is to restrict legal channels, integration policies and access to social protection, despite the lack of evidence on pull factors and the overwhelming preponderance of push factors in the major countries of origin and transit. A key challenge will be to overcome these non evidence-based assumptions.

**Events are driving rapid policy and legislative change, but long-term consequences for coherent integration policies are overlooked.**

The politicisation of migration and integration is making **evidence-based policy-making increasingly difficult**. Decisions are increasingly made at prime minister or foreign minister level, where political and electoral interests and bargaining outweigh consideration of the country's migration needs, policies, realities or obligations. Although immigrant integration goals spread across policy fields, policies are largely hampered by a **lack of monitoring and impact assessment**. In some cases, political choices are made even contrary to the evidence, as politicians feel the duty to adopt symbolic policies to reassure the perceived fears of European citizens. However, these political choices do not take into account that fear from migration will not go away if the number of arrivals decrease, but by seriously limiting integration prospects, they do erode social cohesion. Still, legal

and policy changes are currently following the logic of short-term, emergency thinking and they risk undermining the achievements of the past decades' enormous policy and financial efforts. For example, with resettlement, European policy-makers are slow to explore piloting new untested channels for humanitarian migration while, at the same time, rapidly restricting or delaying family reunification which is Europe's largest tried-and-tested legal channel. Resettlement would offer opportunities for faster integration of humanitarian migrants, but the potentials of interlinked pre- and post-arrival policies are not fully used. Similarly, facilitating access to the labour market could contribute to better socio-economic integration of humanitarian migrants, but shorter permits and status reviews undermine effective access to employment. Going beyond the emergency thinking will be essential for a better focus on long-term solutions for integration.

**The relevance of integration for all levels of policy-making creates new needs for multi-level policy coordination but European, national and local responses are weakly linked.**

While immigrant integration is firmly placed on everyone's agenda, policy coordination across different sectors and levels of government is still at the stage of development and exploration in most countries. Willingness and infrastructure is not necessary the problem. Integration actors have enjoyed over the past decade the benefits of tightly knit policy frameworks with good communication patterns, frequent interaction and involvement of all relevant sectoral actors. Previous attempts at horizontal forms of governance have focused on overcoming the limits of sectoral policy-making and bringing in civil society and social partner stakeholders. Yet investment in the development of a true multi-level joint-up coordination mechanism can align local, regional and national levels and allow for bottom-up policy learning and innovation transfer. Network-based policy-making also informs the governance debate in the EU multi-level setting, where immigrant integration is mainly the subject of a loose coordination framework. Future choices in the next few months will tell whether this framework – which recently received a fresh impetus through the EU Action Plan – is sufficient at a time when migration tops policy agendas Europe-wide and when crisis-thinking has created major disruptions in the attempts towards multi-level cooperation. The pace of unfolding events and policy change is at the same time calling for intensified multi-level governance, while its underlying drivers may drive it apart. Stakeholder consultations are fewer and shorter, with civil society struggling to inform the drafting and policymaking, especially as decisions are taken at such a high level. From the local perspective, a similar picture of disconnectedness prevails: municipalities have to deal with the front-line consequences of policies and norms ultimately set at national and EU level. Consequently, own-initiative, ad hoc reception and early integration solutions are designed in the face of underprepared national system. Securing a reliable structure for multi-level governance remains a key challenge to maintain Europe's focus on more ambitious and effective integration policies.





# Global Exchange

on Migration & Diversity

The Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity is an ambitious initiative at the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) opening up opportunities for knowledge exchange and longer term collaboration between those working in the migration field.