



European
Commission

COHESION POLICY

How does it help migrants' and refugee integration?

Managing migration better is an explicit priority of the European Commission, as presented in the political guidelines of President Juncker. In this context, the integration and social inclusion of the growing number of migrants settling in Europe will be key to demonstrate that these people should not be considered as a threat but as an opportunity. All means at European level should be mobilised to support the efforts of the Member States and their regions and cities in that area. Migration is a cross-cutting issue, involving different actors and policy areas. Cohesion Policy and its funding instruments, for example, aim to provide meaningful support and opportunities for all disadvantaged groups, including migrants through their economic and social development in the European Union.



@Robinsbalje Centre

Robinsbleje project

The role of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) supports the integration of migrants through various measures such as: investments in social, health, education, housing and childcare infrastructure; regeneration of deprived urban areas; actions to reduce spatial and educational isolation of migrants; business start-ups; etc. These actions could also be turned into integrated urban development programmes.

The ERDF does not focus on specific target groups. However, in order to promote social inclusion and combat poverty, marginalised communities, which may include migrants, are highlighted in the ERDF regulation. Moreover, it can directly help to reduce spatial isolation or it can also respond to the needs of vulnerable groups, for example to improve the access to basic services by marginalised communities.

Even though Cohesion Policy operates with a long-term perspective, funding from the ERDF can still be mobilised, on a case by case basis, to help tackle the migration challenge in terms of emergency measures. For instance it can support the reception system of migrants and asylum seekers complementing the help from the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). This may include building or extending reception centres, shelters or actions to reinforce the capacities of reception services.

Examples of ERDF Support

Entrepreneurship Support

With ERDF financial support, Mingo Migrant Enterprises was created by the Vienna Business Agency to help migrant SME owners and entrepreneurs set up and grow their companies through coaching, networking events and business awards, multilingual services. Between 2008 and 2010, for example, Mingo organised over 1 300 coaching sessions involving 500 start-ups – a third of which had an ethnic minority background.

Total cost: € 3 207 550

EU support: € 645 600

More information: <http://europa.eu/!jP78Tf>

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Education Support

Thanks to ERDF support, a former car park in a deprived neighbourhood has been transformed into a single facility offering education (including German-language courses), health and employment services. Opened in 2010, the Robinsbalje Centre in Bremen is now a benchmark 'learning neighbourhood centre' where public and nongovernment organisations offer residents and migrant families better prospects for the future.

Total cost: € 2 765 000

EU support: € 1 319 000

More information: <http://europa.eu/!Vy49UJ>

Cross-border Cooperation

With INTERREG IVA support, an innovative cross-border cooperation programme ('2 Seas SucceS'), involving five agencies from England, France and Belgium, provides employment support and skills development for unemployed people – including those from migrant backgrounds – from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Job-seekers aged over 16 receive individual support, soft skills and concrete opportunities, including capacity building, mobility and qualifications, to re-engage with the social and economic life of their community.

Total cost: € 2 711 722

EU support: € 1 355 861

More information: <http://europa.eu/!xW34Hw>

Knowledge Exchange

The URBACT programme facilitates the establishment of networks of cities in different Member States around a specific topic. The ARRIVAL Cities network foster migrants' social inclusion by sharing good practices between project partners, in order to facilitate local authorities facing the challenges and problems related with the integration of migrants. In particular, the project has the objective of exchange practices on the following topics: effective use of migrant human capital; access to key services such as housing, health and education; fight against xenophobia; encourage the involvement of the private sector; e-Inclusion (use of the new technologies).

EU support: € 576 501.51

More information: <http://urbact.eu/arrival-cities>

Urban Innovative Actions

The Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) provides urban areas throughout Europe with resources to test new and unproven solutions to address urban challenges, including the integration of migrants and refugees. Four projects on migrant and refugee integration are running: Antwerp, Utrecht, Bologna and Vienna.

In **Antwerp**, the CURANT project (ERDF budget: € 4,894,303.32) will provide integrated services for unaccompanied young refugees once they reach adulthood and are no longer entitled to benefit from social protection as an unaccompanied minor. It will combine co-housing and social integration schemes with volunteer buddies (young local residents aged 20-30 years old) for 1-1 integration and circular integrated individual trajectories.

In **Bologna**, the S.A.L.U.S. 'W' SPACE project (ERDF Budget: € 4,999,738.40) wants to foster the social, cultural and economic inclusion of migrants in Bologna. The Villa Salus, an abandoned former hospital for the elderly, will be refurbished and converted into an innovative reception and neighbourhood centre. The centre will combine a unique set of functions, including social housing (for both migrants and local inhabitants), training, public facilities, and an arts and crafts factory.

In **Utrecht**, the Refugee Launchpad (ERDF Budget: €2,778,313.60) seeks to develop a new way to deal with reception facilities for refugees in neighbourhoods by introducing an inclusive approach. The project aims to create a combined learning and living environment for both refugees and the local community. International entrepreneurship training, business language courses, peer to peer coaching and internships in local businesses will be offered to target groups. Special attention will be given to post traumatic stress with the experimentation of innovative tools to reframe refugees broken narratives, encouraging resilience, and building confidence for entrepreneurship.

In **Vienna**, the CoRE project (ERDF Budget: € 4,786,272) aims to provide refugees with high quality and integrated support to facilitate a positive inclusion in Vienna. Within an abandoned building to be refurbished with the active contribution of asylum seekers, a one-stop shop will be co-designed. It will pool together main services provided by the municipal agencies (education, training, health services, housing counselling, etc.) and citizens' grass-roots initiatives. It will also test a peer-mentoring scheme will be tested (refugees4refugees) in order to recruit and train refugee peers who will then be able to help fellow refugees through the early integration process.

More information: <http://www.uia-initiative.eu/en/call-proposals>

Union Migrant Net