



European Network Against Racism
Réseau européen contre le racisme
Europäisches Netz gegen Rassismus

EU Integration Policy - How to move forward?

Preliminary comments of the European Network Against Racism
on the Second European Agenda for Integration

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The European Network against Racism (ENAR) is a network of some 700 NGOs working to combat racism in all EU Member States. ENAR is determined to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, to promote equality of treatment between EU citizens and third country nationals, and to link local/regional/national and European initiatives.

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Introduction

ENAR welcomes this opportunity to contribute to the debate on the shape of the Second European Agenda for Integration. This consultation and the dialogue that has already started to take place through the European Integration Forum is an important opportunity to reshape the way in which the European Union approaches European integration policy and its strategy more broadly. Dialogue with civil society must be a core mechanism of developing future European agenda for integration and a core feature of the strategy itself.

Migration has been recognized as a welcome and necessary development in Europe, particularly as Europe faces new demographic and economic pressures. ENAR is concerned that Europe embraces diversity, and takes action to promote awareness of the benefits and value of diversity. As a network concerned with the rights of all religious and ethnic minority communities in the European Union, ENAR has closely followed the emergence and development of a European common agenda on integration.

In this paper we first identify priority areas for the Second European Agenda for Integration drawn from a wide range of debates within the ENAR network, based upon the evidence that we have gathered over the past 10 years of working together against racism, and then go on to answer the questions for debate posed in the background document distributed at the third meeting of the European Integration Forum in June 2010.

Where the priorities are drawn from specific policy papers or publications, these are referenced and attached in the Annex to this submission.

ENAR priority areas for integration

ENAR firmly considers that the following number of principles must be an integral part of a more comprehensive EU integration strategy:

1. A positive political discourse on migration and the benefits of diversity need to be promoted

Diversity is both a reality and an asset in a globalized world. The EU needs to challenge the underlying perceptions and assumptions surrounding migration which are increasingly enhanced by the negative discourse by politicians, policy-makers and through the mass media. Ethnic and religious minorities are bridges between societies and should be recognised as contributors to majority societies, both socially, economically as well as culturally. An approach framed by the respect for human rights and recognition of the positive nature of diversity in Europe needs to prevail. This should be reflected through the promotion of positive values, conceptions, and principles, including positive language.

2. Mutual integration must be promoted: all actors must engage with the issue, not only the migrant population

Following the adoption of the EU Common Basic Principles on integration (CBPs) in 2004, the debate to date has been informed by a definition of integration as a two-way process. However, ENAR believes that when it comes to the practical implementation of this agenda, the articulation of integration in the majority of Member States has focused on the obligations of

minority groups and not on those of the majority society. *Mutual* integration is a process where both sides need to adapt to each other.

3. The links between anti-discrimination, integration and social inclusion need to be developed to ensure coherent policy making

ENAR is concerned that the current debate on integration has not been adequately connected with broader policies on social inclusion and anti-discrimination. It is important that EU integration policies not only focus on new arrivals, but on the social inclusion of all migrants and minorities, irrespective of when they arrived in the EU. Integration is inextricably linked with anti-discrimination and social inclusion; thus it is not possible to artificially divide them. Policy and decision makers must adopt a holistic and coherent approach to all relevant policy areas for successful integration strategies. Furthermore, integration measures must not be used as a means of restricting the exercise of fundamental rights of minorities and migrants and exclude or discriminate them on any ground, whether on the basis of race, nationality, religion, cultural, social or any other legal status. Special attention should be paid to legislation introducing integration tests as well as 'loyalty oaths' that infringe more often on the right to family life and/or are discriminatory. Such 'integration' tests run counter to their stated aim of promoting integration.

4. Effective and coherent policymaking must be ensured at all levels

As previously argued coherent policy making should be implemented across policy sectors and not through separate one purpose departments. This applies equally to the European, national and local authority levels. There is a need for high level political commitments to these processes at all levels of decision making. Structuring integration policies across departments at EU, national and local levels must also be linked to a policy of equality mainstreaming within departments. Moreover it is imperative that declaratory political statements are put into policy and then effectively implemented in practice.

5. Policy promoting social integration and the fight against discrimination towards migrants needs to take into account all forms of migration, not only for those with legal status

ENAR believes that the specific needs of undocumented migrants must be taken into consideration to build a sustainable and comprehensive integration policy, respectful of fundamental rights. The integration needs of undocumented migration need to be recognized and every effort should be made to protect the rights of migrants who find themselves in undocumented situations. A clear policy and a set of guidelines for the regularization of undocumented migrants in the member states could be the first step towards the integration of undocumented migrants. At the same time basic legal and social protection need to be provided.

6. Effectively implementing equality mainstreaming

For equality mainstreaming to become a helpful tool towards migrant integration it will be necessary to develop a common understanding of the concept across a whole range of perspectives (governments, migrants themselves, civil society), and to establish effective processes and participation of all relevant actors. Applying rights-based principles to EU migration and integration policy implies explicitly linking all relevant policy areas and setting the achievement of human rights as an indicator across the board.

7. Equality in employment and education needs to be ensured

EU Member States should identify and address specific barriers to labour market inclusion faced by migrants, such as lack of language skills or legal/residence status or lack of systems for the recognition of academic qualifications or vocational training opportunities. The necessary policy tools to address such issues should be provided both at national and EU level. Cooperation

between all relevant stakeholders should be mobilised and encouraged to enhance equality in employment for migrants. Additionally it is important to pursue policies that promote education attainment of migrant children as well as the education needs of migrants more generally, including their offspring. In this context, the school system should go beyond the classroom and provide targeted support where needed.

8. The EU must be an inclusive participatory democracy

The EU should operate as an inclusive democracy taking into account all people who are living in its territory. Given the increasing discrepancy between the European population and political representatives within the EU, it is crucial that ways are developed for everyone to fully participate and create a true European public space which is vital for the European integration process. Political rights are important basic human rights that make participatory democracy possible. However, not only do migrants need political rights, but political parties and institutions also need to be representative of all society and reflect the diversity of populations of different regions at local, national and EU level.

9. The media must be recognized as a key actor in promoting cultural diversity

Ethnically diverse workforces within media entities are needed to help present an ethnically diverse picture of society and avoid negative portray of migrants and ethnic minorities. Educational media programs on anti-discrimination, anti-racism, integration and social inclusion of migrants are also essential in promoting cultural diversity and equality within the broader public. Radio and television networks, as well as press agencies, should broadcast such programs by promoting the benefits of multiculturalism and the positive contributions of migrants to European society. Such programs would aim to educate the broader public in a positive way.

10. International human rights conventions and European human rights legislation need to be respected

The EU should commit to International Human Rights Conventions which support migrants' rights, in particular the International Convention for the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families. To date, not a single EU member state has signed or ratified this core UN human rights treaty. The ratification, implementation, and interlinking of these conventions will strengthen European and national policy.

11. Fundamental Rights impact and evaluation of all policies needs to be carried out

The development of indicators is essential in monitoring and evaluating the outcome of integration policies. Great care should be taken to develop indicators that reflect the values of equality and non-discrimination as cross-cutting issues. An effective human rights impact assessment of all existing and new measures with regard to their direct and inadvertent effect on ethnic and religious minorities, including migrant women and children, should also be conducted.

The Background Paper Questions: ENAR's Opinions on the Second European Agenda for Integration

What should be the contribution of civil society to the Second European Agenda for Integration?

Civil society organisations and NGOs play a crucial role in fostering integration at the national, regional and local levels. In particular anti-racist NGOs and those more broadly concerned with the rights of migrants, play an essential role in the integration process through their expertise and grassroots knowledge, and by bringing forward the voices of migrants themselves. ENAR's experience demonstrates that where there is an active NGO sector, there is more likely to be

strategies, activities and awareness on integration and anti-discrimination. It is essential that NGOs are adequately empowered through funding and exchange of best practices to engage in this work and that integration strategies are developed and implemented in genuine partnership. While the primary responsibility lies with the State greater attention must be paid to the role of NGOs in designing, implementing and monitoring integration strategies. Civil society organisations and NGOs can objectively provide an independent assessment of what works and what does not work. Principles of consultation and participation need to be agreed, in full partnership with all stakeholders, leading to an agreed code of practice. Moreover, ethnic minority and migrant associations or organized migrant communities themselves should be strengthened and supported so as to be able to participate effectively in the debate around integration.

How can the current EU tools for integration be improved?

The policy move towards a common European framework on integration has led to the creation of a number of EU activities. ENAR welcomes the tools for integration that have been created in the last years, in particular:

- The **'Handbook on Integration for policy-makers and practitioners'** provides a good compilation of good practices. However, methods used to achieve good practice need to be seriously considered by Member States and should be implemented in future undertakings.
- The **website on Integration** provides valuable information however a network of national organisations responsible for updating the national pages should be established given the lack of updates regarding some countries.
- The **European Integration Forum**: This forum is indeed a key opportunity for civil society and migrants' organisations to participate in the policy debate, but they must be listened to and not just "consulted" - tick the box, and move to something else. The work of the forum should be continuous and not restricted to one-off meetings if it will have an added value. If ongoing dialogue with civil society is crucial to the good functioning of democratic societies, the topic of integration is definitely one where taking into account all stakeholders' perspectives is most decisive.
- The **European Fund for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals** provides financial support for integration. However there is a clear need to assess the way the European Integration Fund is being administered in the Member States and address the various barriers and challenges to the successful implementation of the Fund. Issues such as the procedures followed by the authorities at national level in setting their priorities which more often exclude NGOs, problems with access to the funds by NGOs and migrant community organisations need to be dealt with. Finally, the European Fund for Integration should not exclude certain groups on the basis that they are covered by other funds in cases where projects may want to address a specific spectrum of migrants (such as protected persons).

Which Common Basic Principles should be prioritised?

Integration is a multi-dimensional process where no one element can be considered as more important than others. However, considering limited resources and commitment, ENAR feels that the definition of integration as a two-way process as "a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States" should take priority. This implies that both sides need to adapt: society needs to adapt as do migrants, all actors must engage with the issue, not only the migrant population. However, in practice this is not applied. Member States have restricted the application of the principles to specific groups of migrants, or have placed the burden on migrants themselves. A clear emphasis on integration as a two-way process is therefore needed.

The Common Basic Principles are a useful benchmark against which to assess the integration policies of the EU member states and underline the importance of a holistic and inclusive approach, but in ENAR's view their impact has been limited. Many of the ENAR shadow reports note how the Common Basic Principles have not had the desired effect on integration strategies at the national, regional and local levels. In order for these principles to reach their full potential, all member states should undertake a substantive analysis of action needed to fully implement them in line with the definition of integration mentioned above.

How would you coordinate national integration policies?

An EU Open Method of Coordination on anti-discrimination, integration and migration issues could be put into place to enable benchmarking and ensure a holistic approach. It is essential that EU Member States exchange both good and bad practice, and develop a *common understanding* of what it means to promote integration of ethnic minority groups and migrants. ENAR is aware that there are a wide variety of approaches to integration across the EU Member States and it is essential that the EU develop minimum standards for integration policy based on respect for fundamental rights. Moreover, the European Commission's integrated impact assessment procedure is a useful tool as it tries to ensure that social, environmental and economic impacts are taken into consideration in all policy proposals - such initiatives should be encouraged and extended to member states' governments.

How should integration be measured?

ENAR believes that the development of specific indicators is essential to monitor and evaluate the outcome of integration policies and thus identify areas that require improvement. Great care should be taken to develop indicators that reflect the values of equality and non-discrimination as cross-cutting issues. Such indicators could include for instance: participation of immigrants in continuing education or training; access to the labour market of ethnic minority and migrants compared to access of the population as a whole, job/qualifications relationship among foreign citizens compared with the population as a whole, including the type of jobs acquired; access to social and political rights and finally, access to language courses. The indicators developed for measuring social inclusion under the Open Method of Coordination on social inclusion and social protection could be used for measuring integration where relevant given the interconnections between integration, social inclusion and anti-discrimination. Alongside quantitative and qualitative indicators, improved data collection is also needed.

ANNEXES:

1. ENAR General Policy Paper on Migration and Diversity
2. ENARs 15 Principles on Framing a Positive Approach to Migration
3. ENAR General Policy Paper on Third Country Nationals
4. Results of an ENAR policy seminar, Promoting Integration: migration, integration, social inclusion and anti-discrimination (published 2007)
5. ENAR European Shadow Report 2008 (published 2009)