



EU Education Policies and their Impact on Racism in Education

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This fact sheet aims to provide an overview of the current EU education policies that are in place and their link to combating racism in education; explain the EU Strategic Framework for Education and Training (ET2020) and its link to the EU2020 strategy; explain the Lifelong Learning programmes; and provide an overview of the supporting networks and funds.

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Introduction

Education policies are an important component of the fight against racism. They facilitate the inclusion of people with a migrant or minority background by providing them with equal opportunities to obtain a job. By developing policies that ensure that migrant children - or children with a minority background - start learning from an early age, they can benefit from obtaining basic skills and from many learning opportunities. In addition, policies can be used to promote the concept of equality and inclusion in education by making intercultural learning at school a priority. This will make for more active citizens and will enhance social cohesion.

The purpose of this factsheet is to provide an overview of the existing EU policies in the field of education and training and highlight those elements of the policies that mention or benefit children or adults with a migrant or minority background. Policies or programmes which encourage intercultural learning in schools will also be highlighted. After introducing the main EU competences in the field of education, two main components will be discussed: the Strategic Framework for Education and Training (ET2020), and the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP).

EU competences in the field of education

The EU has three main types of competences: Exclusive Competence, Shared Competence, and Supporting Competence. The area of education and vocational training falls under Supporting Competence, which means that the role of the EU in this area is to support and to monitor the activities of the Member States¹. It does not have the power to make Member States change or adopt legislation.

One of the main instruments used by the EU to fulfil this role is the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), which is a form of policymaking that does not result in binding measures for EU legislation. Member States are therefore not required to implement it. The OMC has different stages. In the first stage, the EU Council agrees on certain policy areas which the Member States then transpose into national and regional policies. Next, the benchmarks and indicators to measure and monitor progress are agreed upon, and in the final stage results are monitored and evaluated².

¹ Open Society Foundation, *The Education of Migrant Children: An NGO Guide to EU Policies and Actions* (New York: Open Society Foundation, 2010), p. 53

² Eurofound, *Open Method of Coordination*, <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/industrialrelations/dictionary/definitions/OPENMETHODOFCOORDINATION.htm>, accessed 29 June 2011

EU Strategic Framework for Education and Training (ET2020)

The Strategic Framework for Education and Training was developed as a follow-up to the Education and Training 2010 programme, which was part of the Lisbon Strategy. It provides Member States with strategic objectives to further develop education and training policies. Lifelong learning, which covers all levels of education (early childhood education, higher education, vocational education & training, and adult learning) underpins the entire framework³.

The framework addresses the following four strategic objectives:

- ❖ Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality
- ❖ Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training
- ❖ Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship
- ❖ Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training

The Strategic Framework has different working cycles for the period 2009-2020. During each cycle different priority areas will be focused upon. A report has to be drafted at the end of every cycle by each Member State to show progress made and they should use this to decide which areas to focus on during the next cycle. The first working cycle is from 2009 until 2011. The priority areas are chosen on the basis of the strategic objectives set out in the ET2020. It is important to note that Member States are free to choose which priorities they will focus on according to their national priorities. The priority areas will be explained and their links to racism and discrimination in education will be highlighted below.

Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality

Lifelong Learning is about the need for an approach that is receptive to change and open to a wider audience. It has to respond to demographic changes, the need to regularly update and develop skills, and the changing economic and social circumstances.

The European Commission believes that strategies for Lifelong Learning have to be further developed, such as more flexible paths for learning - including increasing transparency and the increased recognition of learning outcomes. This is especially important for migrants and other minority groups, as some of them have gained competences through non-formal or informal learning which might not be acknowledged in every Member State. Moreover, the European Commission wants learning to be more attractive in general through the development of new ways of learning and using new technologies for teaching and learning⁴.

One of the priority areas of this objective is to develop cooperation on expanding learning mobility and to therefore work together with other Member States to gradually eliminate

³ EU Council, *Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ("ET2020")*, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528%2801%29:EN:NOT>, accessed 26 May 2011

⁴ Idem

borders and expand learning opportunities within Europe and throughout the world. Moreover, it aims to ensure higher and more diverse levels of education, while keeping in mind new objectives and ways of financing, and also **considering the needs of disadvantaged people**.

Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training

This strategic objective aims to ensure that everyone acquires key competences and to create high level education in Europe in order to compete on a global level. To achieve this, “greater attention has to be paid to raising the level of basic skills such as literacy and numeracy, making mathematics, science and technology more attractive and strengthening linguistic competences.”⁵

Among others, the priority area of this particular strategic objective is to ensure and promote language learning. Specifically: enabling citizens to learn to communicate in two other languages than their mother tongue, and providing migrants with the opportunity to learn the language of the host country.

Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship

This strategic objective is the most relevant in relation to the impact of the strategic framework on racism in education.

The education and training policy should enable all citizens - irrespective of their personal, social or economic circumstances - to acquire lifetime job-specific skills. Moreover, it should incite citizens to lifelong learning, intercultural dialogue and active citizenship. Educational disadvantages should be tackled by providing early child education and specific support to particular target groups. Promoting inclusive education is an important variable for this strategic objective. Therefore, the EU Council states that “education and training systems should aim to ensure that all learners - including people from disadvantaged backgrounds, those with special needs and migrants - complete their education including, [if needed], second-chance education and the provision of more personalised learning. Education should promote intercultural competences, democratic values and respect for fundamental rights and the environment, as well as combat all forms of discrimination, equipping all young people to interact positively with their peers from diverse backgrounds.”⁶

The first priority area for this strategic objective for the period 2009-2011 is reducing the number of early leavers from education and training. Member States are encouraged to strengthen their approaches to prevent learners from leaving education and training early.

⁵ EU Council, *Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (“ET2020”)*, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528%2801%29:EN:NOT>, accessed 26 May 2011

⁶ Idem

Moreover, they should establish closer cooperation with general and vocational education sectors and “remove the barriers for drop-out to return to education and training”.⁷

The second priority area relates to cooperation on pre-primary education: Member States should promote access to pre-primary education for all, ensure that the quality is the same everywhere, and focus on teacher support.

‘Migrants’ is the third priority area set by the European Commission. Member States are encouraged to develop learning possibilities for migrants by sharing good practices.

The last priority area relates to learners with special needs, which is about promoting inclusive education and personalised training with scheduled support as well as ensuring that special needs are identified early and well coordinated. These services should be integrated in mainstream schooling to ensure that people continue their learning paths.

Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training

One of the key drivers for sustainable economic development is creativity, which in turn is the primary source of innovation. Both creativity and innovation are important elements of the EU’s growth strategy and a means of competing on a global level. One of the challenges for this strategic objective is making sure that citizens acquire key competencies such as digital competence, learning to learn⁸, and cultural awareness. There is a need for broader learning communities where creativity and professional and social needs are promoted, as well as individual well-being.

In this strategic objective, there is no direct mention of anti-racism, anti-discrimination or of migrants and minority groups in education.

A series of benchmarks have been set to monitor the progress of Member States with regard to the above mentioned strategic objectives. It is important to keep in mind that the strategic objectives are not concrete targets that the Member States are obliged to achieve by 2020. The Member States can decide which of the targets fit with their national actions.

⁷ EU Council, *Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (“ET2020”)*, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528%2801%29:EN:NOT>, accessed 26 May 2011

⁸ “‘Learning to learn’ is the ability to pursue and persist in learning.” European Commission, *Proposal for a Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council on key competences for lifelong learning*, http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/keyrec_en.pdf, p. 16, accessed 08 July 2011

European benchmarks

- ❖ Adult participation in lifelong learning
By 2020, an average of at least 15% adults should participate in lifelong learning
- ❖ Low achievers in basic skills
By 2020, the share of low-achieving 15-year olds in reading, mathematics and science should be less than 15%
- ❖ Tertiary level attainment
By 2020, the share of 30-34 year olds with tertiary educational attainment should be at least 40%
- ❖ Early leavers from education and training
By 2020, the share of early leavers from education and training should be less than 10%
- ❖ Early childhood education
By 2020, at least 95% of children between 4 years old and the age of starting compulsory primary education should participate in early childhood education⁹.

Links with the Europe 2020 strategy

The Europe 2020 strategy is the growth strategy for Europe for the coming years. Its objective is to ensure the EU becomes a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy by 2020. The aim of making Europe's economy more inclusive entails empowering people through high level employment, investing in skills, and fighting poverty. Another important factor is to make sure that all parts of the EU benefit from economic growth. This shared benefit can contribute to reducing health inequalities and to combating racism and social exclusion.

EU targets

The European Union set five targets to achieve the above mentioned objectives - among which three are linked to the objectives of the ET2020:

- ❖ Education
To tackle the problem of early school leavers, the dropout rate should be reduced from 15% to 10%. Furthermore, the percentage of the population aged 30-34 to have attained tertiary education should increase from 31% to 40% in 2020¹⁰.

⁹EU Council, *Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ("ET2020")*, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528%2801%29:EN:NOT>, accessed 26 May 2011

¹⁰ European Commission, *Communication from the Commission - Europe 2020: a strategy for smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth*, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:EN:PDF>, p. 11, accessed 30 May 2011

❖ Employment

The employment rate of the population aged from 20-64 should increase from the current 69% to at least 75%, for example by involving more women and older workers and by ensuring better integration of migrants in the workforce.

❖ Poverty/social exclusion

By 2020 the number of Europeans living under the poverty line should be reduced by 20 million¹¹.

Here it is also important to keep in mind that each target is adapted to the needs of each particular Member State as defined in their National Reform Programmes¹². The target for education is actually taken from the Framework for Education and Training, combining two priorities - early leavers and tertiary level attainment. Listing it as a target in the EU2020 strategy shows its level of importance.

All these targets are interrelated given that education gives people a higher chance of getting a job and of moving out of poverty. While the targets do not specifically relate to the subject of tackling racism in education, they should have an impact on making education policies more inclusive. Indeed, the targets will not be achieved unless the needs of disadvantaged groups are better taken into account in education and training. Therefore it is worth noting that the employment target explicitly mentions ensuring better integration of migrants in the workforce but that this **does not apply to the education target**.

Flagship initiatives

These initiatives presented by the European Commission set up actions to achieve the Europe 2020 targets. National authorities and the EU are encouraged to work together to achieve the goals of these initiatives¹³.

The EU wants to boost inclusive growth with the flagship initiative 'European Platform against Poverty'. This flagship initiative mentions - among others - that the Commission will work on providing education, training and employment opportunities to minorities in order to promote social innovation. Moreover, the Commission will try to develop new ways of integrating migrants so that they can fully participate in society¹⁴.

It is worth noting that the most relevant flagship initiative for education policies - 'Youth on The Move' - does not mention migrants, minorities or diversity in its programme.

¹¹ Idem, p. 10

¹² Find the National Reform Programmes 2011 of the EU Member States on the following website:
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm#map

¹³ European Commission, *Europe 2020 Flagship initiatives*, http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/tools/flagship-initiatives/index_en.htm, accessed 27 July 2011

¹⁴ European Commission, *Communication from the Commission Europe 2020: a strategy for smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth*, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:EN:PDF>, p. 19, accessed 30 May 2011

In addition to the policies that the EU has developed in the area of education and training, several funding programmes exist in this field. These programmes can have an impact on the fight against racism, as will be further explored in the following section.

The Lifelong Learning Programme

The Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) is an important European Funding programme which enables individuals to take up learning opportunities across the EU. The timeframe for this programme is 2007-2013. The LLP consists of four sectorial sub programmes and four transversal programmes; plus a cross-cutting programme, namely the Jean Monnet Programme.

The four sectorial sub programmes (plus cross-cutting programme) are:

- ❖ Comenius for school education
- ❖ Erasmus for higher education
- ❖ Leonardo da Vinci for vocational training
- ❖ Grundtvig for adult education
- ❖ Jean Monnet Programme

Comenius for school education

Comenius applies to all levels of school education (pre-school, primary and secondary) and aims to improve the mobility of students and teachers through its actions. It helps teach young people about different European cultures, languages and values. Moreover, it ensures that young people acquire job-specific skills, engage in personal development and become active citizens¹⁵.

This programme is the most relevant to education for migrants as it includes specific actions focusing on the education of migrant youth. It is open to NGOs, universities, teachers, pupils and students.

Comenius actions

- ❖ Multilateral Projects
Reducing Early School Leaving (ESL), Improving the Learning of Students with a Migrant Background and Promoting Gender Equality and Inclusive Approaches to Learning
This action should focus on, among others, developing strategies to keep students that are at risk of ESL and/or are migrants motivated to keep studying. The aim is to focus on

¹⁵ European Commission Education & Training, *Comenius: Europe in the classroom*, http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc84_en.htm, accessed 14 June 2011

developing inclusive approaches for teaching and learning so as to meet the needs of the students, taking into account students from a disadvantaged background¹⁶.

❖ Networks

Development of Pre-school and Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) provision

Networks under this priority should search for ways to identify and help those who have difficulties with learning and need assistance, especially those with a socio-economic disadvantage. The aim is to improve the skills of teachers, trainers and other staff (for example, the IST programme or School Partnership programme¹⁷) and to support early language and literacy development¹⁸.

Development of Special Needs Education (SEN) towards inclusion of all young people, in particular those with disabilities

Under this priority, the focus lies on implementing the principles of inclusion in education; one approach is to train teachers, trainers and other staff in promoting inclusion.

Erasmus for higher education

Erasmus is an EU Education and Training programme developed to enable students to study or work abroad. Moreover, it funds co-operation between universities throughout Europe, assists professors and business staff to teach abroad, and supports teachers to get training¹⁹.

This programme does not have migrants and ethnic minorities as a specific target group, but some actions target people from vulnerable groups.

Erasmus actions

❖ Multilateral Projects

This action supports cooperation between higher education institutions or other stakeholders. Among others, the priority 'Social Inclusion in Higher Education' supports projects aiming to help access to or improve social inclusion in higher education²⁰.

Another priority is 'Modernisation of Higher Education' which aims to improve access to

¹⁶European Commission Education, Audiovisual & Culture (EACEA), *Lifelong Learning Programme - General Call for Proposals 2011-2013: Strategic Priorities*,

http://www.cmepius.si/files/cmepius/userfiles/razpisi/LLP11/prior_en.pdf, p.13, accessed 14 June 2011

¹⁷ For more information about these programmes: Open Society Foundation, *The Education of Migrant Children: An NGO Guide to EU Policies and Actions* (New York: Open Society Foundation, 2010), p. 152

¹⁸ European Commission Education, Audiovisual & Culture (EACEA), *Lifelong Learning Programme - General Call for Proposals 2011-2013: Strategic Priorities*,

http://www.cmepius.si/files/cmepius/userfiles/razpisi/LLP11/prior_en.pdf, p.14, accessed 14 June 2011

¹⁹European Commission Education & Training, *ERASMUS Intensive programme*,

http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc900_en.htm, accessed 14 June 2011

²⁰European Commission Education, Audiovisual & Culture (EACEA), *Lifelong Learning Programme - General Call for Proposals 2011-2013: Strategic Priorities*,

http://www.cmepius.si/files/cmepius/userfiles/razpisi/LLP11/prior_en.pdf, p. 18, accessed 13 June 2011

education for people from non-formal or informal learning backgrounds, or with an alternative qualification.

❖ Structural networks

This action supports several activities, including access to higher education by encouraging mobility and access to education for non-traditional learners, particularly from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds²¹.

Leonardo da Vinci for vocational training

The Leonardo da Vinci programme funds projects and networks in the area of vocational training and education (VET). It supports trainees who work abroad so that they can acquire specific knowledge, skills and qualifications. It also supports VET professionals, graduates and any person working in an organisation that is active in this field²².

This programme does not have migrants and minorities as a specific target group. However, one of the operational objectives of the Leonardo da Vinci programme is to “improve the transparency and recognition of qualifications and competences, including those acquired through non-formal and informal learning”²³. This is reflected in one of the multilateral projects that are funded in which one of the topics for funding is the role of VET professionals and the recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning.

Grundtvig for adult education

The focus of this programme is on adults acquiring education or ‘alternative’ education courses and also on the organisations offering these services. It aims to improve the skills and qualifications of adults to increase their employment opportunities. The Grundtvig Programme funds adult learning staff going abroad for training and encourages networking and partnerships between organisations in different countries. The programme is a response to educational challenges, such as when adults leave school early - or in some cases when a migrant is denied the opportunity to go to school. The elderly are deemed another challenge, which should also receive funding.

The aim of the Grundtvig programme is, among others, to “ensure that people on the margins of society have access to adult education, especially older people and those who left education without basis qualifications”²⁴.

²¹ Open Society Foundation, *The Education of Migrant Children: An NGO Guide to EU Policies and Actions* (New York: Open Society Foundation, 2010), p. 153

²² European Commission Education & Training, *Leonardo da Vinci programme*, http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc82_en.htm, accessed 14 June 2011

²³ European Commission Education, Audiovisual & Culture (EACEA), *Lifelong Learning Programme General Call for Proposals 2011-2013: Strategic Priorities*,

http://www.cmepius.si/files/cmepius/userfiles/razpisi/LLP11/prior_en.pdf, p. 22, accessed 13 June 2011

²⁴ European Commission Education & Training, *Grundtvig: practical learning for adults*, http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc86_en.htm, accessed 14 June 2011

Grundtvig Actions

❖ Grundtvig Accompanying Measures

This action supports activities which are not part of the main Actions, but are nevertheless deemed important. One of the aims is to implement activities in relation to “the integration of [...] people with special educational needs, and the promotion of intercultural education and the fight against racism”²⁵.

❖ Multilateral Projects

Acquisition of Key Competences through Adult Education

This priority gives specific attention to the basic skills that people need before acquiring transversal key competencies. Among others, the focus of the projects will be on providing migrants with a second chance to acquire education in order to improve their basic skills. They should also consider innovative and creative ways of teaching immigrants the host country language.

The Role of Adult Education in Strengthening Social Inclusion and Gender Equality

Here the focus is on improving access to adult education for migrants (among others) and to make it more attractive. The projects’ focus should be on motivating learners to start studying and finding ways to (re)integrate marginalised and disadvantaged people into society and the work environment²⁶.

❖ Networks

Promoting Social Cohesion through Improved Adult Learning Opportunities for Specific Target Groups

Networks will have to focus on themes and target groups relating to promoting social cohesion and inclusion. One focus area is migrants and minorities and developing specific training schemes in which the teaching of the host country language is included²⁷.

Jean Monnet Programme

The Jean Monnet Programme promotes education in the area of European integration. It aims to stimulate research, reflection and teaching in this area of studies on the higher educational level. It intends to encourage teachers, students and other members of society to increase their knowledge about European integration.

²⁵European Commission Education, Audiovisual & Culture (EACEA), *Grundtvig Accompanying Measures*, http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/grundtvig/grundtvig_accompanying_measures_en.php, accessed 15 June 2011

²⁶European Commission Education, Audiovisual & Culture (EACEA), *Lifelong Learning Programme - General Call for Proposals 2011-2013: Strategic Priorities*, http://www.cmepius.si/files/cmepius/userfiles/razpisi/LLP11/prior_en.pdf, p. 31, accessed 13 June 2011

²⁷European Commission Education, Audiovisual & Culture (EACEA), *Lifelong Learning Programme - General Call for Proposals 2011-2013: Strategic Priorities*, http://www.cmepius.si/files/cmepius/userfiles/razpisi/LLP11/prior_en.pdf, p. 32, accessed 13 June 2011

The four transversal programmes are:

- ❖ Key Activity 1 - Policy Cooperation and Innovation
- ❖ Key Activity 2 - Languages
- ❖ Key Activity 3 - Information Communication Technologies (ICT)
- ❖ Key Activity 4 - Dissemination and Exploitation of Results

Key Activity 1 - Policy Cooperation and Innovation

This Key Activity supports policy development and cooperation in the context of the Education and Training 2020 work programme (among others). It aims to collect comparative data on educational systems in the EU and to monitor Member States' progress with regard to Lifelong Learning targets and objectives. In addition, areas requiring more attention should be highlighted²⁸.

Priorities for action

- ❖ Study visits for education and vocational training specialists and decision makers
For this action the focus lies on sharing good practices and peer learning. It encourages discussion on specific themes and aims to increase participation of policy and decision makers. One of the priorities of the study visit is to “promote social inclusion and gender equality in education and training, including the integration of migrants”²⁹.
- ❖ Studies and comparative research
The objective of this action is to obtain data about the different educational systems in the EU and to make a comparative analysis. One of the priority topics is ‘Social Inclusion in Education and Training, Including the Integration of Migrants’. The focus of the study should be on effective measures to reduce early school leaving, the role of early childhood education and inclusion, measures that increase the participation of underrepresented groups in higher education and the role that adult education can play against the marginalisation and exclusion of certain people³⁰.
- ❖ Networks
The objective of this action is to create networks that promote mutual policy learning, share good practices and information and develop innovative ideas for improving Lifelong Learning. It also aims to achieve personal development, employment and social inclusion for all citizens. This could be done (among others) through the development of schemes to validate non-formal and informal learning, and through actions broadening participation and ensuring equal opportunities in access to education for citizens with a disadvantaged socio-economic background and non-traditional learners³¹.

²⁸European Commission Education, Audiovisual & Culture (EACEA), *Policy cooperation and innovation in Lifelong Learning (KA1)*, http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/ka1/policy_cooperation_innovation_en.php, accessed 16 June 2011

²⁹European Commission Education, Audiovisual & Culture (EACEA), *Lifelong Learning Programme - General Call for Proposals 2011-2013: Strategic Priorities*,

http://www.cmepius.si/files/cmepius/userfiles/razpisi/LLP11/prior_en.pdf, p. 34, accessed 13 June 2011

³⁰Idem, p. 35

³¹Idem, p. 36

Key Activity 2 - Languages

The objective of this activity is to promote language learning and to raise awareness of the importance of language diversity. It also aims to improve access to learning new languages and encourage the development of teaching materials.

Priorities for action

❖ Multilateral Projects

These projects should at least target two out of the four educational sectors of the lifelong learning programme. Moreover, they should promote language learning and show the advantages of a multilingual Europe. One priority for these projects is the development of learning methods for immigrants to learn the language of the host country.

❖ Networks

Networks have to contribute to the implementation of language policies in Europe. One priority for these networks is to promote language learning of the host country amongst immigrants³².

Key Activity 3 - Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

This activity does not focus on the development of ICT, but on how ICT can enhance learning environments and experiences. It can be a way of attracting students who have dropped out to start learning again and to make Lifelong Learning more flexible.

Priorities for action

❖ Multilateral Projects

One priority is to develop Innovative Pedagogy and Assessment Methods for Diverse Learning Paths. Projects could focus on developing a social networking tool to re-attract individuals that are at risk of being excluded (early school leavers, ethnic minorities, migrants, etc.³³). In addition, sharing best practices concerning virtual mobility across education and taking into account non-traditional paths of education are important.

❖ Networks

Networks should focus on 'European-wide Stakeholders Communities Tackling Socio-Economic Digital Divide'. Topics under this priority would include analysing, disseminating and reinforcing data on how digital competence can help people that are at risk of exclusion. Working together with other stakeholders to find the best ways of acquiring digital competences for groups at risk of social exclusion could also be a priority. In addition, a focus area could be developing guidelines and recommendations to overcome the digital divide and to include otherwise excluded individuals³⁴.

³²European Commission Education, Audiovisual & Culture (EACEA), *Lifelong Learning Programme - General Call for Proposals 2011-2013: Strategic Priorities*,

http://www.cmepius.si/files/cmepius/userfiles/razpisi/LLP11/prior_en.pdf, p. 38, accessed 13 June 2011

³³ Idem, p. 40

³⁴ Idem, p. 41

Key Activity 4 - Dissemination and Exploitation of Results

The main objective of this activity is to create a clear framework to present the results of the Lifelong Learning programme. Within this activity, there is no mention of migrants or minority groups.

Supporting networks and funds

The following networks and funding programmes are funded by the European Union or the European Commission, and provide information or funds in the area of Education and Training:

- ❖ Eurydice Network
- ❖ European Training Foundation (ETF)
- ❖ European Social Fund (ESF) and PROGRESS

Eurydice Network

The Eurydice Network provides information and analyses on educational policies and European education systems. This network is managed by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACA). Its main focus is on how the educational systems throughout Europe are structured and organised. It provides different types of information including detailed descriptions and overviews of national education systems, thematic studies focusing on specific topics that are of community interest, indicators and statistics, and a series of facts and figures related to education³⁵. An example of a thematic study undertaken by the Eurydice Network in 2009 is 'Integrating Immigrant Children into Schools in Europe: Measures to foster communication with immigrant families and heritage language teaching for immigrant children³⁶'.

European Training Foundation (ETF)

The European Training Foundation supports developing countries to ensure the full potential of their citizens through the reform and development of education, training and the labour market³⁷. The Foundation is an agency of the European Union. The activities of ETF focus on different projects taking place in their partner countries. Several topics are included in the strategy of ETF, including Equal Access to Education and Lifelong Learning.

For Equal Access to Education, the ETF focuses on trying to increase inclusive education in countries in the South Eastern part of Europe, as well as in former communist countries. It aims to achieve this by looking at the role of the teachers and the school, the role that the curriculum can play in breaking down prejudices, how physical and financial barriers can be

³⁵ Eurydice, *About Eurydice*, http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/about_eurydice_en.php, accessed 30 June 2011

³⁶ Link to study: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/101EN.pdf

³⁷ European Training Foundation (ETF), *ETF - Who We Are*, http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/Who_we_are, accessed 30 June 2011

overcome, and by looking at the status of Vocational Education and Training in a particular country³⁸.

European Social Fund (ESF) and PROGRESS

The **European Social Fund** is one of the EU's Structural Funds that was initially set up to eliminate differences between EU Member States concerning prosperity and standards of living. By doing this, the ESF aims to promote economic and social cohesion³⁹. The ESF has different fields of activity, including Education and Training and Fighting Discrimination.

Within the Education and Training activity, the main focus is on improving Education and Training so that people can develop their skills and increase their chances of obtaining a job. However, the ESF funds additional projects that focus on raising awareness of the importance of education, in particular Lifelong Learning. They also fund projects that aim to increase participation in Lifelong learning by, among others, decreasing the amount of early-school leavers⁴⁰.

The other activity linked to migrants and minority groups is fighting discrimination. Within this activity, the main focus is on funding projects that aim to fight discrimination in the work field. Even though education is not the main focus of this activity, it is mentioned that Education and Training for individuals - including migrants - is considered as an opportunity keeping in mind the focus of the EU on a knowledge-based society⁴¹.

The **PROGRESS** programme is complementary to the ESF. This programme financially supports EU Member States in achieving the objectives outlined in the Social Agenda concerning employment, social affairs and equal opportunities. There are five target areas set up amongst which, one is social inclusion & protection and one is non-discrimination⁴².

³⁸European Training Foundation (ETF), *Equal access to education*,

http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/Equal_access_to_education, accessed 30 June 2011

³⁹European Social Fund, *What is the ESF?*, <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=35&langId=en>, accessed 30 June 2011

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Useful links and bibliography

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Useful links

National Reform Programmes 2011 of the Member States
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm#map

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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.

PROGRESS is managed by the Directorate-General for Employment, social affairs and equal opportunities of the European Commission. It was established to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment and social affairs area, as set out in the Social Agenda, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Lisbon Strategy goals in these fields. The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA-EEA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

PROGRESS mission is to strengthen the EU contribution in support of Member States' commitment. PROGRESS will be instrumental in:

- 1. providing analysis and policy advice on PROGRESS policy areas;*
- 2. monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in PROGRESS policy areas;*
- 3. promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; and*
- 4. relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large*

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