

General programme "Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows": European Fund for the Integration of Third-country nationals, 2007-2013

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The Commission presents an ex post evaluation reports for the period 2011 to 2013 of actions co-financed under the framework programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows'.

This consists of four instruments (the 'SOLID Funds'): **the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals (EIF)**, the European Refugee Fund (ERF), the External Borders Fund (EBF), and the European Return Fund (RF).

The aim of the SOLID General Programme was to provide financial support to Member States to help them better manage the Union's external borders, and better implement the common policies on asylum and migration.

This summary concerns the **European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals (EIF)**, which aimed to assist Member States in enabling third-country nationals of different backgrounds to fulfil the conditions of residence and to facilitate their integration into European societies, with an emphasis on those who had recently arrived in the country.

The ERF was allocated EUR 486 million under the SOLID funds and had an average absorption rate of 77%. No allocation of emergency assistance was envisaged for the EIF.

The evaluation shows that in the majority of Member States, the EIF had a **concrete positive impact on the immediate integration process**, improving access to services, employment and education in the host country, including language courses central to the integration process. This appeared to be the main focus of the funding used by Member States. The vast majority of Member States reported that the EIF enabled actions to be implemented which could not have been funded via national resources, confirming the added value of the Fund.

The report notes, however, that some Member States felt that the **definition of the target group was too restrictive** and others highlighted a **lack of interest from NGOs/local administrations**. Some Member States indicated that support should not have been limited to newly-arrived third-country nationals as integration measures may still be needed for second and third generation migrants. The Commission makes the following points:

- for 2011-13, the EIF was found to have made a limited contribution to the development and implementation of admission procedures which support the integration of third-country nationals due to the fact that the annual programmes of several Member States did not specifically focus on this objective, which resulted in a limited number of actions implemented in this area;
- whilst contributing to policy capacity-building and coordination within Member States, the EIF had a limited impact on the exchange of experience, good practice and information between Member States;
- Member States considered that the EIF costs were proportional with the outputs of the projects and that it would not have been possible or would have been difficult to achieve the same results at a

lower cost. Furthermore, only half of Member States reported that the effects of the 2007-10 and 2011-13 EIF actions lasted to a great extent after funding ended. The limited level of sustainability was mainly due to factors such as varying political commitment and support at national level;

- projects were also found to be coherent with and complementary to other actions targeting the integration of third-country nationals at national level and supported by other EU financial instruments, with some difficulties encountered due to different timing of EU funds and awareness of Community actions.

The report makes certain observation common to all four funds. In the case of the EIF, most of the main findings have already been taken into consideration under the [asylum, migration and integration fund \(AMIF\)](#), which succeeded the ERF, EIF and RF, while others are given due consideration in the preparation of the next generation of Funds.

The report notes particularly that the absence of effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, common to all Member States, was a critical issue for the evaluation of the SOLID Funds. This problem was addressed for the AMIF and the ISF (which succeeded the EBF), with a first list of common indicators included in the legal base and a common monitoring and evaluation framework. In addition, the Commission notes issues relating the administrative burden, the allocation mechanism and the steering of funding to EU priorities, most of which have been considered under the AMIF.