



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 26 May 2014  
(OR. en)**

**9905/1/14  
REV 1**

**MIGR 78  
SOC 365**

**"I/A" ITEM NOTE**

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 2)/Council
No. prev. doc.:	9625/14 MIGR 68 SOC 344
Subject:	Draft Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States on the integration of third-country nationals legally residing in the European Union - Adoption

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1. On 19 November 2004, the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States adopted conclusions on the establishment of common basic principles for immigrant integration policy in the European Union.
2. The common basic principles have constituted a framework for policy cooperation in the field of integration in the EU for 10 years. On this occasion, the Presidency considered it important for Member States to reaffirm their commitment to these principles while setting them in the policy context of today.

3. The Presidency thus tabled draft conclusions on this matter which were examined by the Working Party on Integration, Migration and Expulsion on 29 April and 7 May. A revised version of the draft Conclusions was thereafter subject to two rounds of silent procedure following which an agreement was reached on the text as set out in the Annex to this Note.
  4. The Permanent Representatives Committee is therefore invited to approve these draft conclusions and submit them to the Council for adoption.
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*Draft Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States on the integration of third-country nationals legally residing in the EU*

*Recalling* the specific legal basis for integration in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Article 79.4 TFEU), which enables measures to be established at the European level to provide incentives and support for the action of Member States with a view to promoting the integration of third-country nationals residing legally in their territories, excluding any harmonisation of the laws and regulations of the Member States;

*Recalling* the Conclusions on the Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union adopted by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States on 19 November 2004;

*Recalling* the Stockholm Programme, approved by the European Council on 10 and 11 December 2009, which emphasised the importance of integration in the context of a comprehensive European migration policy;

*Recalling* the Commission Communication on the European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals of 20 July 2011 and the subsequent Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States adopted on 13 and 14 December 2011;

*Recalling* the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund<sup>1</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EU) No **516/2014** of the European Parliament and of the Council of **16 April** 2014 establishing the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, amending Council Decision 2008/381/EC and repealing Decisions No 573/2007/EC and No 575/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Decision 2007/435/EC (OJ L **150** **20.05.2014**, p. **168**. )

*Taking note of* the 11th meeting of the European Integration Forum on 3 April 2014 in which civil society addressed the issue of the Common Basic Principles.

Whereas:

Integration measures are within the competence of Member States and reflect and take into account their needs, history and legal framework. Such measures need to be implemented in accordance with the EU *acquis*.

Well-managed migration as well as effective and balanced integration policies contribute towards achieving the goals of the Europe 2020 growth strategy, given the demographic shrinking in Member States and the shortages in certain sectors of the European labour market.

Integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all migrants and residents of Member States. Such a process requires efforts from both migrants and receiving societies and is critical for tapping into the potential of migration and for enhancing social cohesion.

The Common Basic Principles for immigrant integration policy in the European Union, adopted in November 2004, constitute a framework for policy cooperation on integration in the EU and a framework against which Member States can judge and assess their own efforts. A number of instruments have been developed based on the Common Basic Principles, including EU financial instruments, the European Integration Forum, the European Web Site on Integration, handbooks, indicators and modules covering diverse aspects of integration.

The Member States have developed an important number of good practices on integration in line with the Common Basic Principles with a view to promoting education, language learning, culture, anti-discrimination, gender equality, social, economic and civic participation of migrants in the receiving societies. Nevertheless, the potential of these principles has not been fully exhausted and they can be used to assist Member States to develop further their integration policies and practices in response to the prevailing challenges which migrants and the receiving societies frequently have to face.

New challenges, emanating from the economic crisis in Europe, also have to be tackled such as the high rates of unemployment and the rise of intolerance.

Given the above challenges as well as the shared interest of Member States to agree upon common goals on integration, Member States reaffirm their commitment to the Common Basic Principles.

Recalling the above considerations and objectives

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES:

Reaffirm their commitment to the Common Basic Principles on integration which still remain valid, and their intention to implement them by further developing their integration policies and practices;

Recognise that diversity is an enriching and permanent feature of European societies of which migrants are an essential part. All residents in the EU Member States should respect diversity as well as basic values underpinning European societies, such as human rights, democracy and rule of law;

Recognise that integration is a long-term and multi-faceted process that takes place at a national, regional and local level and in which reception measures play an important role;

Recognise the importance of a holistic approach to integration and of mainstreaming policies and practice in all relevant policy sectors and levels of government;

Recognise that concrete actions, including those funded by EU financial instruments, should be taken with a view to promoting *inter alia* education, language learning, employment, as well as migrants' access to public and private goods and services in accordance with applicable legislation and in line with the Conclusions on the Common Basic Principles of 19 November 2004;

Agree on the following aspects related to the Common Basic Principles to be further developed with a view to strengthening the integration of migrants in the European Union:

- i) Further efforts should be made to find a more balanced approach to safeguard basic values underpinning European societies, to counter prejudices and to respect diversity with a view to enhancing tolerance and non-discrimination in the European societies.
- ii) Voluntary cooperation between receiving countries and countries of origin in a pre-departure phase could facilitate reception and integration at national, regional and local level. Member States could work together with countries of origin to inform the citizens of the countries of origin on the risks of irregular migration and the opportunities of legal migration and to facilitate language learning, vocational training and skills matching.
- iii) An overall, holistic approach to integration presupposes *inter alia* effective reception policies and measures responding to the specific needs of both individuals and different groups of migrants, which are more likely to be exposed to social exclusion, including beneficiaries of international protection.
- iv) EU Member States are encouraged to involve the private sector in the efforts to respect diversity, enhance non-discrimination at the work place and closely cooperate with social partners and civil society.