

Who we are and what we do

The Thematic Network on Migrants is the primary platform that enables transnational co-operation in the European Social Fund (ESF) on the issue of migrant integration. The Network enables ESF Managing Authorities and Intermediate Bodies to:

- Exchange mutual learning, knowledge and experience to improve the operation of the ESF
- Coordinate calls for proposals which they will each issue in some or all of the nine themes of the ESF Common Framework.

The network has **four thematic priorities** to guide its work during 2016–2019:

1. Supported pathways to employment
2. Recognition of skills and qualifications
3. The role of employers
4. Pathways to integration

The priorities focus on the labour market integration of migrants and refugees, but also recognise that 'pathways to integration' necessarily involve critical 'first steps' before employment can even be considered as an option – for example, issues around housing, health and legal status.

Our key activities to date have involved study visits to six different projects based in Liège and North Rhine-Westphalia, as well as plenary meetings in Brussels.



A short video is available on the European Commission's website.

Join and contribute to the ESF Thematic Network on Migrants!

The network is open to all stakeholders in the ESF including NGOs, social partners, and local and regional networks involved in transnational co-operation. Our current membership consists of ESF Managing Authorities and Intermediate Bodies from 13 Member States as well as eight national and European stakeholders.

The network meets three times a year in different European cities.

If you would like to learn more about transnational co-operation in the ESF on migrant integration, and would like to join the network, you can:

- Email the Thematic Expert, Dr Rachel Marangozov, at: pillairachel@gmail.com
- Visit <https://ec.europa.eu/esf/transnationality/forums/migrants>

Contact the ESF Transnational Platform: esf@aeidl.eu

Phone the ESF transnational cooperation infoline: +32 2 736 1890

The ESF Transnational Platform is managed by AEIDL – Association Européenne pour l'Information sur le Développement Local, Chaussée Saint-Pierre 260, B-1040 Brussels – www.aeidl.eu.

Image copyrights: www.volker-stephan.net

© European Union, 2018

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged



ESF Thematic Network on Migrants

Facilitating transnational co-operation on migrant integration





What our members say

*“ The Study visits
have been inspiring and
instructive. ”*



*“ Our discussions have
made me reflect on how
and why we do things
the way we do. ”*

What we've learned so far

- **ESF can have a transforming impact** on migrants' and refugees' lives, but individualised and tailored approaches are often resource-intensive and leave little capacity for projects to think about the longer-term sustainability of their good work.
- **Funding projects is not enough.** Member States' Operational Programmes could also consider a 'project plus' approach which directs funding towards projects but also targets the infrastructural changes needed to mainstream good practice arising from these projects. This could include support to systematically develop projects' linkages with relevant stakeholders, policy-makers and qualification frameworks.
- **Employers and social partners can play a key role** in integrating refugees into the labour market, particularly in sectors that are experiencing skill and labour shortages. However, most employers have been slow to recruit refugees, and more effort could be focused on addressing the reasons why, such as employers' uncertainty about the rules governing refugees' and asylum seekers' access to the labour market.
- **Joined-up support is key.** Many refugees and asylum seekers need support with a range of issues before employment is even an option. These issues include housing, legal status, health needs and language training. Yet many of the ministries setting policy, and the agencies delivering services, still work isolated from each other in silos. Thus, the needs of refugees, asylum seekers (and indeed other disadvantaged groups with complex needs) cannot be addressed in a holistic manner.



*“ I've appreciated lively
discussions,
the organisation and
quality of presentations. ”*

*“ I've gained a great insight
into how employers are
engaging and working together
with NGOs or public authorities
to train newcomers. ”*

