

Seminar Report

What is the impact of the European Integration Agenda on UK Policy?

an EPIM Seminar held on
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Contents

Foreword - Integration, the UK view.....	3
Background.....	5
Plenary Session	6
Sandra Pratt, Immigration and Asylum Unit, DG Justice Freedom and Security, European Commission	7
Sarah Spencer, Compas, Oxford University	12
Anna Visser, European Network Against Racism.....	18
Workshops.....	23
Closing Remarks	29

Foreword - Integration, the UK view

The British model of integration is different from most continental European models. Why? In the 1950s, 60s and 70s there was considerable immigration into the UK from the former Commonwealth - mainly the Caribbean, sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Most Commonwealth immigrants became citizens on arrival. One response to anti-immigration sentiments and race riots was legislation which sought to curb non-white immigration; another was the development of race equality legislation. In turn, integration policy became focused not on assimilation but on promoting a pluralist society by legislating race relations.

Legal restrictions on immigration - combined with an increase in violent conflict around the world, and more accessible international communication and travel - have led to a shift in migration patterns. Now, along with much of the rest of Europe, Britain is receiving people seeking asylum and refuge from war-torn regions. A vibrant economy is also attracting workers from new European Accession states, and elsewhere. In some ways, new migrants are different to former migrants: they come from different parts of the world, speak different languages and may look different. There are also similarities: new migrants are likely to be poorly-paid and exploited, or unemployed, be concentrated in inner-city areas, more vulnerable to poverty and experience structural and personal discrimination.

Now, in 2007, we are living in a culturally and technically diverse country. 8 % of the population identify as ethnic minority and 5% belong to a minority faith¹. Yet black and minority ethnic citizens, whether first generation migrants or not, continue to experience discrimination and many maintain a sense of being 'outsiders'.

In this context, there are real challenges to the design and implementation of successful integration strategies. Much good work has been done: but there is more to do. And Britain cannot and should not do this alone. We are part of Europe. How can we use and adapt European tools to frame our own integration strategies?

"I define integration... not as a flattening process of assimilation, but as an equal opportunity, accompanied by cultural diversity in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance."

Roy Jenkins, Home Secretary, 1966

Linking the European and UK agendas

At European level, the integration of migrants has risen in prominence on the agenda. This is important: a lack of positive integration interventions in one European country can have a real impact in other European states - through economic or social marginalisation, disaffection and radicalisation of minorities.

But integration strategies remain the responsibility of EU member states. As the workshop discussions identified, this can be both a problem and a benefit. At the moment, the EU cannot require any member state to implement specific integration policies: and there is some frustration that the Common Basic Principles on Integration, adopted by all member

¹ Census 2001

states in 2004, lack teeth. But, the lack of a more formal structure could provide the opportunity - if we take it - to be more creative in Britain, developing policies and programmes that work for us. This consultation identified the need for policies that work for settled communities (black and white) as well as migrants; and for all migrants, whether they came to the UK as asylum seekers or to take up work; with or without documents; and from the rest of Europe or the rest of the world.

Migration is complex, and there are now many categories of migrants. Integration strategies need to be flexible. They also need to be included in a wide range of policies. As the

**“It is striking that outsiders are called Auslander in Germany, immigrés in France, and ethnic minorities or etnische minderhenden in Britain and the Netherlands respectively.”
(Bhikhu Parekh, ‘Integrating Minorities, ICA Diversity Lecture 2000)**

European Commission’s Communication in 2005 ‘A Common Agenda for Integration’ identified, this includes not only the legal framework but also employment and education; services; housing and health and participation.

This seminar was sponsored by an ad-hoc group of independent grantmaking trusts based in the UK. Working together, we found common ground, in spite of our different profiles and priorities. Between us, we fund researchers and grassroots activists; organisations working at local, national and European level; groups providing basic services and others advocating for legislative change; faith-based and secular groups; projects which bring communities together and projects focused within single communities. All of us, however, recognise that the changes in migration patterns are having a major impact in the UK; we understand the importance of positive integration strategies; and we know integration policies and practice in the UK cannot happen without at least some reference to what is happening elsewhere in Europe.

Much integration work has to be initiated and funded by the government. At the same time, businesses, voluntary and community organisations are varied, can be flexible and often work best at local level. There are real opportunities for new and exciting initiatives to be developed in all parts of our society and these need to be identified by all the relevant actors of integration. The EPIM Project is one contribution to this important and worthwhile task.

Juliet Prager
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

Background

The European Programme on the Integration of Migrants (EPIM) is a joint venture of the Network of European Foundations. It aims to encourage positive attitudes towards investment in integration policies. EPIM is working to raise the profile of the European integration policy on the agenda of national governments and hopes to engage civil society in this process through a series of national consultations.

This one day consultation seminar was organised as a contribution to debate on integration policies in the UK. The Common Basic Principles were established in 2004 to guide the further development of integration policies in Member States. The Principles recognise that integration is a two-way process and set out rights and possibilities for both migrants and the host societies. How can the UK use these Principles to develop constructive integration policies? How can we promote effective linking of EU policies to UK integration policies at national, regional and local levels?

The objective of this UK consultation seminar was to:

- *Learn* about European initiatives and policy on integration and their relevance to UK integration policies;
- *Share* experience on the impact of UK integration policies on the ground at local level;
- *Identify* concrete recommendations for government to implement a coherent integration strategy, consistent with its EU commitments.

The seminar was established as a tool to help inform national and local UK organisations on the latest European race relations developments and act as a link between UK non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and Europe.

The event was a partnership between UK grant-making trusts and NGOs, with UK Race in Europe Network (UKREN) taking a lead organising role.

This Report

Section 1 of the report consists of *contributions by keynote speakers*, who addressed the development of the European integration agenda and its implementation in the UK.

Section 2 of the report focuses on the *discussion held during the workshops* between speakers and participants on the following topics: Employment and economic inclusion, Citizenship - including representation, faith and language - and Funding and resources.

The European **Common Basic Principles** for Immigrant Integration Policy and the **briefing** circulated before the seminar are both included as appendices.

Plenary Session

Don Flynn, UKREN - Opening Remarks

Integration is one of the biggest issues in the UK and is also high on the agenda of the EU. At the European level, one of the most important steps towards developing a common strategy on integration was taken in 2004, when member states adopted the Common Basic Principles (CBPs), a set of principles to guide and support the development of national and local integration policies.²

The purpose for this consultation seminar is to explore the extent to which the principles laid down in the CBPs are adopted in the UK and to detect a diversion between EU and UK policy directions. The benchmarks against which to analyse policies are the forward-looking policies of the EU which see integration policy as part of a wider strategy for achieving economic growth and competitiveness across the single market, as opposed to the British approach, which has become more concerned with the issue of 'common cultural values' and 'Britishness' and the social sphere that migrants need to fit into in order to be deemed 'integrated'.³

But nothing is set in concrete yet. Policies are under formulation, integration is an evolving policy area. This seminar was therefore organised to consider policy inputs, in particular from grassroots organisations and to come up with recommendations for government to implement a coherent integration strategy, consistent with its EU commitments. Speakers and participants on the panel bring together an invaluable expertise and experience from a wide background, so we will all learn about European initiatives and policy on integration and their relevance to UK integration policies from different perspectives.

² See Appendix 1 for list of Common Basic Principles

³ For further information on the divergence between UK and EU agendas of integration, please see the UKRE Briefing paper prepared in advance of this seminar available on the UKREN webpage:
<http://www.runnymedetrust.org/projects/europe/13%20March%20UKREN.pdf>

Introducing the Common Basic Principles

The policy context

Migration is high on the EU policy agenda because it is seen as one of the most visible challenges of globalisation. Since 1999, we have been developing a European approach - a common policy - which acknowledges the fact that international migration is a reality, that the EU needs immigrants and that the central question for Europe today is how to manage it effectively to bring the maximum benefits for us, for the migrants and for their countries of origin. We believe that our approach must be multi-faceted. Therefore, better management of legal migration includes developing successful policies to integrate the new arrivals. Illegal immigration is being tackled not only by improving border controls, but also by promoting cooperation with third countries on a large number of migration-related issues including the recruitment of labour migrants.

This external dimension of migration has in fact become a permanent feature of the EU landscape as has the merging of the migration and development agendas, both within the EU and at international level. The Global Approach, adopted by EU Heads of State two years ago, provides a new framework in which to bring into the migration debate with third countries a wide range of policy areas with links to migration. Today I would say that we have three main priorities at EU level:

- Border control and preventing illegal migration
- Managing legal migration in partnership with third countries
- The challenge of integration

I want to focus on the third challenge and describe how we are developing a European approach to integration.

The EU's role in integration

First I should say that strengthening integration policies for immigrants was one of the original four priorities of the Common Immigration Policy. Discussions on this issue moved very quickly to the top of the political agenda - where they have stayed ever since. Given that this is an area where national competence is very clear, we have come a very long way in agreeing at the EU level what we want to do and how we should get there.

We have begun to sketch out a European vision of the kind of society we want to see in the years to come. The pressure has been strong for the Commission to take a lead, in setting the agenda and in promoting the exchange of experience and good practice, and it has been coming from the Member States.

The European framework for integration

When the European Council adopted The Hague Programme in November 2004 it set a new objective for integration - that of establishing a European framework as a means of strengthening integration policies and in particular to promote cooperation and information sharing among all those who take part in developing and implementing them - especially at local level. The Hague programme recognises that while governments have an important role to play in setting the agenda, ensuring cooperation and coherency between regional and national structures, providing some of the funding, they need the support and input of those at the front line, the local authorities, NGOs, migrants associations and others involved in the daily delivery of services.

Integration takes place when refugees are empowered to:

- achieve their full potential as members of British Society;
 - contribute to their community; and
 - access the services to which they are entitled
- Integration Matters: A national strategy for Refugee Integration, Home Office, March 2005*

At the heart of this framework is a Common Agenda based on a number of Common Basic Principles (CBPs). These were adopted by the Justice and Home Affairs Council in 2004 and are now the foundations of the

European approach to integration. The CBPs provide a first definition of what we mean by integration in the EU, they set some initial objectives and they identify some key actions. The Commission believes that the implementation of the CBPs, at both EU and national level, will play an important role in successfully integrating migrants into our societies and achieving the kind of participative society which is our objective.

Before saying more about the principles I would like to sketch out the European framework. Its purpose is to promote the exchange of information and good practice between Member States and between different stakeholders. The group of *National Contact Points on Integration* is the government level, with senior civil servants responsible for integration coming from different ministries in the 27 Member States, meeting 4 or 5 times per year in Brussels to exchange information and discuss issues of common concern. They make a major input into the *Handbook on integration for policy-makers and practitioners* - a guide of good practice. You can find the first edition on the EU website⁴ and the second edition will be published in May⁵. The Commission also produces *Annual reports on migration and integration* which review and describe national policies.

Two new initiatives will become operational in the near future: an *integration website* where we will put examples of good practice from throughout the EU and a *European Forum* to give a wide range of organisations a chance to take part at EU

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/doc_centre/immigration/integration/doc_immigration_integration_en.htm

⁵ The second edition of the Integration Handbook is now available to download from: http://www.migpolgroup.com/multiattachments/3694/DocumentName/Handbook2_en.pdf

level in the discussions on integration. We hope to include NGOs and migrants associations, involved in developing and delivering integration programmes.

The Common Basic Principles

But the priority for the Commission over the next few years is to promote the CBPs as a basis for integration policy. There are 11 principles in all - some provide definitions, others are about the process of integration and some are about objectives. I would just like to highlight a few of the key issues they deal with.

Perhaps the most important is the definition given in the *first principle* (CBP1) which emphasises that integration is a two-way process - that there is a need for change on the part of both the migrant and the host society - there must be mutual adaptation. Society is not static - it never has been - but there are now new elements to incorporate into that process of social change. This means that policies should not just be directed towards immigrants but involve local people.

The *second principle* (CBP2) sets the boundaries of this change, how we deal with issues where values clash. This is very important at the practical level. The acceptance of cultural, social and religious differences has its limits and these are defined in the principles by national and EU laws and by the basic values of the European Union such as equality, the rule of law, respect for human rights and for the democratic process. Diversity is a valuable and dynamic asset in society but where there is doubt as to how far difference is acceptable, national law and basic European values should fix the limits. The establishment last month of the European Fundamental Rights Agency⁶ will help to ensure that these values become better known in the future.

This idea is underlined explicitly in CBP8 which calls for *respect for cultural and religious diversity* "within the framework of European rights and national law". How this is implemented in practice may differ from country to country to reflect differences in the local context. For example the wearing of religious symbols in schools and in the workplace is not a problem in some countries but it is in others because of different historical and social factors, so different solutions have to be found.

A number of principles deal with some of the key aspects of the integration process. One of the most important is that of ensuring that migrants are able to work and make proper use of their skills and experience. There is great underused potential in the immigrant populations living in the EU today and we need to change this.

Improving the recognition of foreign qualifications is one issue, but we also need new approaches to prevent labour market discrimination, to ensure equal conditions of work and pay for immigrants, and to tackle illegal employment especially with

⁶ <http://fra.europa.eu/fra/index.php>

respect to women. Here the role of employers, trade unions and employment services is crucial.

The CBPs deal with the importance of knowing the language of the host country and also something about its history and institutions, courses which are often provided now in introduction programmes for new arrivals.

They also emphasise the role which our schools and educational institutions have in ensuring that immigrants, especially their children, benefit fully from education and training so that they are well prepared to take their place in society. Equality - in terms of access and opportunity is crucial for the children of immigrants. This of course is a particular concern for cities and local authorities which may have large numbers of migrant children in their schools.

Access to public and private institutions and to goods and services in general is emphasised and here the need for *anti-discrimination and anti-racist measures* to ensure equality of treatment is important. The EU has in place a legal framework designed to prevent discrimination and xenophobia which has now come into effect and the Commission will give priority to ensuring that these laws are fully implemented. The UK has had strong equality and anti-discrimination policies for many years now and has built up a great deal of experience in this area. Looking at experience across Europe it is clear that this is an essential complement to any integration policy.

CBP9 draws attention to the importance of the participation of immigrants both in developing integration policies and in the political process - once again the local level is emphasised. A number of countries, including the UK, are reviewing the role of naturalisation, the granting of nationality as an integration tool. Others such as The Netherlands are trying to develop the concept of civic citizenship or active citizenship which emphasises participation in society including political participation but without going as far as nationality. The preoccupation everywhere is to provide pathways to identity as citizens - particularly for the second and third generation whose parents or grandparents were immigrants.

The challenge for government is to introduce a concern for immigrant integration into the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies across all relevant portfolios. Such a task depends crucially on political commitment and leadership from the top. At the same time it depends on ownership by those actors that need to change to take on board immigrant integration.
Handbook on Integration for policy makers and practitioners, 2nd edition D-G Justice, Freedom and Security 2007

The last two principles are procedural - dealing with targeting and mainstreaming, evaluation and benchmarking. These again are very important issues and while there

are no commonly agreed European integration standards there is now an increasing body of research and some very interesting good practice to help evaluate and monitor the progress of integration programmes. We need to continue to work on the establishment of indicators in a wide range of areas - social, economic, cultural, political.

The European approach to integration

The principles provide for the first time a distinctive European approach to integration. They are drawn from experience and good practice in a large number of countries with different migrant situations. They represent common positions which have proven validity in a variety of contexts. Nevertheless, they are guidelines not commandments and they need to be adapted and implemented at national level taking into account national and local structures and traditions.

The Commission hopes that the Member States and in particular the cities and local authorities in the EU, NGOs and other organisations where the real process of integration takes place, will see new ideas in them and find them useful in working out the specific strategies which are needed at national level.

We recognise that there is no quick fix to ensure integration and there is no single model. It is not surprising that even in countries like the UK and The Netherlands, with long histories of immigration, are learning from their experiences, re-thinking their policies and developing fresh approaches.

From the European perspective two things stand out very clearly. First that successful integration of immigrants is a key to future economic progress and stability in society and secondly that integration is a concern of us all as individuals in our daily life and as professionals dealing with these issues. We need to work together and we must make a long-term commitment. We can learn a lot from each other and that is what the European framework is there to do.

Sarah Spencer, Compas, Oxford University

Relating the European Integration Agenda to UK Integration Policy

We have heard from Sandra Pratt (European Commission) that the EU now has a framework for integration policy, a clear set of principles. The question I am asked is: what relevance does that have for us? Most of the EU's guidance is not obligatory. Discrimination law is the major exception.

Nevertheless, the UK signed up to the Common Basic Principles (CBPs). It chose to sign on the dotted line - and the UK, to its credit, has a reputation for not signing unless it intends to implement the agreement - or thinks it already complies. It is right for us to ask, two years on, which is it?

There is no sign of a new UK 'integration' strategy for migrants on the horizon and no mention of the CBPs as the basis of any re-think of the current approach. In contrast to the Irish government which held an integration conference in February and circulated the CBPs as core principles on which its new strategy should be built - the Principles are never mentioned here. So we have to assume that, when the UK signed up in December 2004, it was confident that it was already doing what the CBPs suggest. Looking at the evidence on the ground, is that the case?

Common Basic Principles

Before we answer, we should ask whether we actually *want* the CBPs to be implemented. If we had asked that when the first draft appeared, the answer would have been a resounding no! It saw integration as a one-way process with responsibility entirely one-sided. All the focus was on migrants who **will** adapt, **will** respect European values. As if any 'failure' of integration was the result of migrants' failure to change rather than the outcome of a complex set of processes in which the barriers migrants face are a key part of the equation and action by society a key part of the solution.

But the final draft of the CBPs was much better. We may still have some concerns: the CBPs accord only a marginal role to civil society organisations for instance, and deep down there is still a sense that it is migrants who are the problem. But like Sandra Pratt I agree that they are not a bad framework for action. They *could* be used by government to develop a comprehensive programme to facilitate the full economic and social participation of migrants; and be used by stakeholders as leverage to persuade governments to do so.

No integration strategy - except for refugees

The puzzle, however, is that the UK government has not developed any strategy at all. 1500 migrants arrive in the UK each day planning to stay for more than a year. With the exception of one group they are largely expected to fend for themselves.

The exception is refugees - on the grounds that they did not plan to come here and that the UK has obligations towards them. So for refugees there is a plan to support their economic and social integration, with some resources attached and some coordination of service provision.

The complete exclusion of asylum seekers from the programme is an issue, (they have 'integration' needs while in the UK) as are the limited resources in the Sunrise initiative to help each individual.

And the government now says that refugees can't plan long term because their case will be reviewed after five years in case they can be safely returned to their country of origin - undermining the security, the value of any investment in setting down roots, the sense of belonging, on which success in the integration process depends.

I expect that we shall discuss today the strengths and limitations of the refugee integration programme. But the puzzle is that for other migrants - for labour migrants, those who come for family reunion, or come to study - there is no plan at all. There is no integration strategy on the grounds that they *choose* to come and in theory can choose to go home if it does not work out. There are concerns about migrant unemployment, ill health, lack of English skills, and community tensions. But no coherent strategy to address the barriers in the integration processes that lead to those outcomes.

Responsibility dispersed across government

Part of the problem is the lack of clear responsibility in central government for this agenda. Responsibility for migrants lies in the Immigration and Nationality Department in Croydon (IND); but responsibility for social cohesion and equality in the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Responsibility for education, skills and ESOL rests with the Department for Education and Skills - yet the Department of Work and Pensions is responsible for getting unemployed migrants into work. Not to forget the welfare responsibilities of the Department of Health where many migrants also work, and the key responsibilities of local government, who aren't part of the decision making structure at all.

So we end up with different, sometimes competing agendas. The Home Office and No 10, influenced by the security agenda, focusing on 'common values'; DWP concerned about migrants' access to the labour market but no remit to provide access to the ESOL classes that facilitate it; nor to consider what migrants do in their spare time, if, after the hours they work, they have any.

The pre-requisite of any effective integration strategy is a mechanism for joined up thinking in government and for joined up delivery on the ground.

Include migrants in mainstream agendas

The CBPs emphasise mainstreaming of integration objectives into all relevant policy agendas. A strong lead from central government would make that possible:

mainstreaming needs to occur for instance in the affordable housing strategy for instance, neighbourhood renewal policy, the skills agenda, equality, or 'Every Child Matters' - all the strategies affected by migrants and which impact on migrants.

But there is no integration agency or Whitehall directorate knocking on the right doors, making the case for including migrants in those agendas. As I said earlier, there are 1500 people a day arrive in the UK, some facing significant challenges - yet they are not really on the radar of the wider policy agendas.

Constructive steps

This is not to say that there are no steps taken which in practice support integration processes.

- The doubling of the ESOL budget to nearly £280m recognises the overwhelming importance of English to migrants' economic and social participation, in line with CBP4;
- UK anti-discrimination law is the most advanced in Europe with its duty on the public sector to promote race equality and good race relations - in line with CBP6;
- The liberal access of migrants from Commonwealth countries and Ireland to vote in elections, in line with CBP9.

Coherent strategy

But the evidence suggests there is a need for government to do more. To develop a coherent vision, and one which includes temporary migrants as well as those who

Integration... is not about culture or lifestyle. It is about values. It is about integrating at the point of shared, common unifying British values. It isn't about what defines us as people, but as citizens, the rights and duties that go with being a member of our society.

Tony Blair, December 2006

already know they plan to stay for the long term. To clarify what outcomes policy is intended to achieve, and what action is necessary to do so. The CBPs are right in stating that the action needed is not the exclusive responsibility of government. There is a huge potential for NGOs to contribute, but also for employers. The Business in the Community (Northern Ireland) Code of Practice for Employers of migrants has been a catalyst for innovative good practice - employers supporting new migrants' access to English classes, accommodation, meeting other residents. With encouragement, initiatives like this could be replicated elsewhere.

But it needs government to take the lead, to provide the momentum - whether with incentives (a Queen's award for supporting the integration of new migrants?) - or by requirement, perhaps through the proposed system for employer-sponsorship of migrants under the new entry points system.

Towns and cities

The other key players who can feel left out in cold - expected to develop their own systems to manage migration - are our towns and cities; particularly those experiencing migration now from Eastern Europe who have no previous experience on which draw.

Councillors pick up tensions on the streets, some caused by lack of information on what migrants what are expected to do - like putting their rubbish out in the street once a week rather than every day; and that if you go coarse fishing, you are expected to put the fish back, not eat it!

But there are also more serious tensions because sections of the white community feel displaced and hate the pace of change. Their concerns cannot be ignored. 16 million white people live in the 85 most deprived wards where many migrants also live. Their needs and reactions need to be at the *core* of an integration agenda, not only those of migrants with whom integration measures are normally concerned.

The Audit Commission report last month chronicled the pressures on local government. It may perhaps lead to increased resources to meet those needs. But what we need is the answer to some more fundamental questions:

- How should the housing needs of new migrants, for instance, - who are mobile, vulnerable, on low incomes - be met in a way that does not lead to severe overcrowding in the private rented sector nor competition with existing residents who have been waiting years for social housing?
- How should we meet migrants' need for practical information - in a way that avoids each local authority, Primary Care Trust, police force - producing their own, reinventing the wheel? Perhaps the new leaflets the Home Office is producing will begin to fill that gap.

Who in government is asking those questions?

Common values?

What else should be in a new integration strategy, cultural adaptation? CBP8 confirms respect for diverse cultures; but CBP2, in the detailed wording, says that every resident should also respect European values - freedom of speech, equality, human rights. Not just migrants - *all* of us.

Here there is hope on the horizon! The new Commission on Equality and Human Rights is tasked with promoting respect for human rights - for the population as a whole. It does not open its doors until October 2007. The new Commissioners are only now discussing what their priorities should be.

I would hazard a guess that the importance of a human rights culture for the migrant integration agenda - for helping us become 'comfortable with our diversity' as the

CEHR Chair, Trevor Phillips puts it, is not one of the issues they have yet discussed. Perhaps we should send them a copy of the CBPs and suggest they do.

Commission on Integration and Cohesion

Of more immediate hope is the Commission on Integration and Cohesion which will report in June 2007. For the first time, migrants are being included within wider thinking on cohesion, recognising the particular barriers migrants face in the context of wider issues. In the interim report last month - if we see beyond the headlines - there was some sound analysis of those challenges and an invitation to provide more evidence and ideas before the final report is written.

Conclusion

So, to sum up, what is the relevance of the EU agenda for the UK? It provides a framework, a set of principles, ideas - and we need them.

Migration will be a permanent part our future. It will have different shapes and forms - to work, form a family, for study or protection. It is in all our interests to facilitate the full economic and social participation of every resident, including migrants. To do that, we need to take steps to smooth the way. Migrants need information, advice, access to services - like language classes at places, times and at a cost they can afford. But it would be a mistake to put all the focus on them. We also need to identify and address the barriers they face: like public attitudes, discrimination, non recognition of qualifications, and restrictions attached to their immigration status.

There is a huge range of players who can make this happen: voluntary organisations, migrant community groups, employers, unions, local government, and advice agencies. So it is not that we need a top down programme, directed and funded by central government. But we do need a vision; we need a strategy in which all players, including migrants themselves, have a voice. We do need to know where we going and how we intend to get there.

The EU has given us some ground rules for that. The CBPs and the framework for action that the European Commission has set out, provides helpful guidance on where to go from here. But we need to apply it to our own situation, develop our own plan and negotiate our own future - together.

Jonathan Duke-Evans, IND, National Contact Point on Integration

UK Government perspective

Jonathan emphasised his disagreement with the main content of the briefing paper, which rejects the economic importance of migrants from the British perspective and ignored the importance of cohesion, two issues which have been high on the agenda in the UK.⁷

The Common Basic Principles have been very important and indeed supported by the UK Government. However, in his view the main principles of the CBPs were introduced in UK policy a long time ago.

Acknowledging that language skills are critical in the integration process, the Government has spent a considerable amount of money on publicly funded English language skills in the past and continues to do so.

There has been important work on the promotion of equality of opportunity through the refugee Integration Strategy, through anti-discrimination legislation and also through scrutinizing race equality across government policies. All this makes the UK a European leader in integration policies. Furthermore, UK policies are compatible with the principles set out in the CBPS.

Jonathan was not convinced that the UK needs a comprehensive integration strategy. There would be a danger of raising negative reactions - which have to be considered in the debate, in any case.

In relation to the Integration Fund, Jonathan stated that a consultation would take place in the UK to discuss how the money should be used. Based on the consultation that took place around the Refugee Fund, this consultation is likely to take place in July, when plans for the Integration Fund have further developed in Europe.

⁷ "What is the Impact of the EU Integration Agenda on UK Policy?" A UKREN Briefing Paper, available from: <http://www.runnymedetrust.org/projects/europe/13%20March%20UKREN.pdf>

A common European integration policy: Pipe dream or scary reality?

The objective of this seminar is to raise the profile of European integration policy and in particular the Common Basic Principles (CBPs). In unashamedly addressing just one of the questions before this panel, namely “would the UK benefit from a common European integration policy?” I want to look at just some of the inherent difficulties with the current integration debate. While there is certainly a discussion on integration at the European level, what is far from clear is whether this does, can or even should amount to a common approach.

From ENAR’s perspective there is much to be gained from the current debate, however we need to recognise the limitations and dangers, and approach European Union action in this area cautiously and strategically. I want to raise three questions this afternoon

- (1) What are the limitations of the lack of European competence in this area?
- (2) How far does the nature of the current debate mask deep divisions between member states which undermine the development of a common approach?
- (3) And finally, is integration and a commitment to a ‘two way process’ really as high on the political agenda as we might like to think it is?

1. European competence

As we know there is no direct legal competence for the European Union in the field of integration. Legitimate arguments have been made that given the link between immigration and integration, and the Union’s other competences such as those for anti-discrimination, integration is a legitimate area of activity for the European Union institutions. There would have been a legal base for integration included in the European Constitution, however in the context of the broader political debate, the future of legal competence in this area is far from clear. This reality leads to many questions when it comes to the significance of an emerging common approach but let me raise two, which have been of concern to us:

How can integration policy be developed in a manner which is open and transparent, if we take the example of the CBPs, which emerged from the Council under the Dutch Presidency? Despite the assertion that migrants should participate in decision making (CBP9), the CBPs themselves are hardly a model of good practice in this regard. They are a product of a series of negotiations between Member States, behind Council doors, and were not subject to either consultation or co-decision making processes normally associated with the emergence of European law and policy.

This leads me to a second question, does integration policy detract from those important policy areas where there is developed EU competence, both in terms of hard and soft law. Here I am thinking specifically of Article 13 and the anti-

discrimination framework, and the Open Method of Coordination on Social Inclusion and Social Protection. By separating integration from these processes, do we run the risk of excluding recently-arrived third country nationals from these frameworks? And potentially undermining their significance?

2. Nature of the debate

The second area I wanted to raise is the nature of the integration debate. In order to accommodate the policy diversity among member states, the principles are in effect broad statements with little substantive content. The Commission communication attempted to address this but the reality remains that the CBPs mask very different approaches, both positive and negative. There are many examples of this, and indeed more and more attention is being given to this question in recent reports and articles. On 1 March 2007, ENAR organised a conference on integration, anti-discrimination and social inclusion in Brussels, also funded by the EPIM programme. During those two days we invited a range of stakeholders at European, local and national level, including a number of national policy makers and officials. We began the first day by hearing about the Portuguese response to integration, including plans to extend voting rights to non-nationals. The second day began with a presentation of the French approach - no doubt the contributor intended to be controversial when he asserted that integration is not a two-way process but rather a one-way one with the emphasis in the responsibility of migrants to learn the French language.⁸ The divergences are clear.

Some Member States such as Portugal and Ireland have relatively recently developed a national integration agenda, others like the Netherlands and France have come to revisit old approaches believing existing responses to have failed. One of the most frequently raised issues relates to the targets of integration. From Member State policy we know that there is very little convergence at the national or local levels. This is reflected in the text of the CBPs which refers to 'immigrants', 'legally residing immigrants' and their descendants', 'newcomers', 'all residents - new and old', as well as references to 'temporary workers', 'permanent residents', 'children of immigrants', 'those who have acquired citizenship', 'long-

Integration is a long-term, two-way process of change that relates to both the conditions for and the actual participation of refugees in all aspects of life of the country of durable asylum as well as to the refugees' own sense of belonging and membership of European societies. The objective of integration programmes and policies should be the establishment of mutual and responsible relationship between individual refugees, civil society and host states which promotes equality, self-determination and sustainable self-sufficiency and acceptance and positive action in favour of refugees by European governments and societies.

Report of the Third European Conference on the Integration of Refugees, Brussels 1999

⁸ Proceedings and speeches for this conference are available from the ENAR website: <http://www.enar-eu.org/en/events/MIGRATION/index.shtml>

term established third country nationals’, ‘highly skilled’, as well as ‘those who have yet to acquire the most elementary skills’. In fact the only area where the CBPs are clear about the targets of integration is the exclusion of undocumented workers, failing to recognise that undocumented workers have fundamental rights.

It is in the nature of political negotiations that high-level, top-down initiatives such as the CBPs mask a wide variety of views and contradictions. As we know often in order to make progress this is the price which needs to be paid, however it does seriously complicate the implementation of these principles through a common approach. This brings me to my final question, is integration really that high on the European political agenda?

3. Integration in the broader policy context

While we have seen much rhetoric on the importance of integration, if you look at the outcomes of European council negotiations in recent years, it is difficult to conclude that they are really being informed by an integration imperative based on a ‘two-way approach’. I want to illustrate this with reference to three key areas:

- Even a cursory glance at the agenda of the European Council is enough to conclude that the key pre-occupation in the area of Freedom, Security and Justice (the remit which integration falls into) is that of security, counter-terrorism and combating ‘illegal migration’. The Commission and the Council spend much more time considering ways to keep immigrants out, than they do on securing effective integration for those already in, or wishing to come to Europe. Many of these initiatives not only have a direct negative impact when it comes to the potential for integration, but also lend themselves to a climate of fear and insecurity which has dominated public debate all over Europe.

- Second, if one looks at those initiatives which have been described as more closely relating to integration, namely the long-term residents directive and the family reunification directive, it is not clear that these would stand up to rigorous testing against the CBPs. When it comes to securing the fundamental rights of migrants, these instruments, while a start, are far from ideal. Indeed the latter was unsuccessfully challenged by the European Parliament on this basis. Rather than being defined as instrument for integration, the long term residents directive includes a provision that migrants comply with ‘integration conditions’. The Commission has indicated that it will produce a draft ‘rights directive’ this autumn. This instrument has the potential to enhance the protection of legally resident third country nationals, however given the track record it is difficult to be overly optimistic about its scope.

- Finally, the adoption of the anti-discrimination legislation in 2000 marked a watershed in the protection of ethnic minority groups in Europe, despite some inherent limitations such as its failure to address nationality discrimination. However in recent years the record on implementation has been less up lifting. In its recent

analysis the Commission has expressed its view that no EU Member State has fully implemented the provisions of the Race Directive. In addition the Council continues to fail to adopt the Framework Decision on Racism and Xenophobia. In a context of continuing concerns regarding the rise of racism and xenophobia in Europe, this failure to act is striking. Frattini himself has linked the Framework Decision to the integration imperative. Anti-racism and anti-discrimination are the foundations of a two-way process. If there continues to be reluctance in this regard it is hard to envisage how softer diversity and 'intercultural' dialogue initiatives such as the 2008 Year on Intercultural Dialogue can really be successful.

Integration is about everyone of every background in the UK finding ways to interact and engage positively for the common good.
Commission on Integration and Cohesion, Our Interim Statement, DCLG 2007

Conclusion

There is much to be welcomed in the emerging European integration agenda. Without doubt the CBPs do offer a benchmark against which national approaches can be monitored and evaluated. Broader initiatives such as the Integration Handbook, the National Contact Points, or even the potential Forum, offer real potential for positive exchange and peer learning. To take a cruder measure, a financial one, the new integration fund will serve to build on the CBPs.

However in asking if the UK, or any member state, would benefit from a common EU integration policy, it is important to recognise the limitations of the existing framework. There is currently no clear legal base for common action. It is far from clear that the philosophical and practical differences between Member States are surmountable. Or that the political will currently exists to overcome these differences. Given these realities, let me conclude by rephrasing the first question raised in the background paper: do we need a strategic approach to integration, for all migrants? What is clear is that as civil society organisations we certainly need a strategy approach to European integration policy, itself.

Leonie McCarthy, Commission on Integration and Cohesion

Experience from the ground

Leonie's message was that important lessons can be drawn from working on the ground with refugees and migrants.

Working with the Red Cross, Leonie gained some 5 years experience in working with refugees before taking on the management of Peterborough's 'New Link New Arrivals Partnership'. One of the most important lessons she has learned came from the negative publicity surrounding these projects. Long-term residents did not see the benefits and have been primarily concerned with the negative impact of new people moving in their areas. More promotion needs to be done on the positive and beneficial effects of migration. Some of our efforts must be devoted to showing settled residents locally "what's in it for them".

The Commission for Integration and Cohesion was set up in August 2006. The Commission puts a strong emphasis on gaining local experiences and consults with local stakeholders. The Commission is exploring what cohesion and integration means at the local level; and what common values people in Britain share. The consultation has shown that interaction is key in building cohesive communities and that a shared vision is needed when looking at the local level. The Commission will continue to examine good practice at local level.

Workshops

Following the plenary session, participants then had the opportunity to discuss issues further in workshops. The three themes for workshops were:

- Employment and Economic Inclusion
- Culture - including citizenship, representation, faith and language
- Funding and Resources

Workshop 1

Employment and Economic Inclusion

Facilitator: *Wilf Sullivan, TUC*

Rapporteur: *Sarah Hayward, Employability Forum*

INTRODUCTION

This workshop considered the relevance of EU policy in employment policies and practices for refugees and migrants.

DISCUSSION

1. Immigration rights and employment rights

- In spite of legal rights, there is still discrimination in the workplace.
- Undocumented workers are most vulnerable.
- Immigration status should be separated from employment rights.
- UK employers are being asked to play the role of immigration officers. Instead, they should be supported in the promotion of integration measures for workers.
- Agency employers can avoid legal requirements: UK law needs to be revised in line with European directives, to hold them to account.

2. Integration in practice

- English language and literacy training is needed, in addition to vocational/occupational English training in the workplace.
- Integration strategies should feed into other campaigns that affect migrants as well, such as the minimum wage and living wage campaigns for instance.
- Public sector procurement should require contractors to demonstrate equality monitoring and good practice.

3. How far has the UK agenda been influenced by the European dimension?

- In the UK the equalities agenda has led the way, although the focus is now moving to cohesion rather than equality.

- There are different views across Europe about who is a migrant. It is important to make a distinction between migrants from other EU member states and third country nationals. Their experiences and status are very different.
- The CBPs are not well known in the UK. They allow Member States to define integration and how to apply them; practical standards now need to be set.
- UK policy should recognise the existence and rights of paperless workers.

4. The role of the media

- It is important to debunk myths about migrants taking “our” jobs.

Conclusions and recommendations

1. Government needs to work with civil society to agree clearer **common definitions of integration**. The word ‘integration’ is contested in the UK: the term should be reclaimed, or other terms will be needed
2. Funding is needed for **English language** and literacy training
3. Ensure **agency employers** comply with European directives
4. **Fundamental rights** must be recognised in legislation, including for undocumented workers.
5. The importance of immigrant integration should be reflected throughout **government policies**.
6. The **Common Basic Principles** need to be strengthened, incorporating practical standards.
7. Incorporate **EU migrants** and **undocumented workers** into integration policy.

Workshop 2

Culture - including citizenship, representation, faith & language

Facilitator: *Tzegai Johannes Deres, Evelyn Oldfield Unit*

Rapporteur: *Sofia Hamaz, Oxford University*

INTRODUCTION

This workshop explored a range of issues including citizenship, representation, faith and language. In an increasingly diverse society, how can UK policy promote integration rather than undermine it?

DISCUSSION

1. Creating a cohesive society: shared values and values that clash

- Society is already diverse: the 'mainstream' is not unified.
- Any debate must be held on an equal basis.
- Cultural pluralism can be framed as diversity rather than a 'clash'.
- We already have tools to address problems, including fair negotiation and democracy.
- The perception of a 'clash of values' may be created rather than a real experience in local communities.
- Policy and practice based on the perception of a 'clash of cultures' can undermine fundamental human rights, such as the right to culture and security.
- Linking the debate to the security issues creates problems.
- Policies must recognise that problems such as poverty and domestic violence are experienced by different groups, not only migrants.
- The two-way nature of integration needs to be stressed, not played down.

2. Should we accept that migrants are inevitably in the minority and have to do most of the changing?

- Migrants are often seen to undermine democratic processes and are blamed for not being active citizens. In reality, the democratic deficit is a problem for all.
- Settled, white communities should be recognised in any integration programme.
- There should be common standards for all: for example, language requirements should be the same for EU nationals and migrants from outside Europe.
- The Common Basic Principles' definition of integration as a two-way process is directly relevant to debates about multiculturalism.

3. Is integration only about values?

- We need spaces to talk about different values in all parts of society - including in the education system.
- Integration policies should address structural as well as cultural issues.
- Business enterprise is a key route to structural and social integration.
- The term 'host communities' should be expanded to incorporate black and minority ethnic communities settled in the UK.

4. The role of civil society in promoting an inclusive Europe

- Primary responsibility for integration matters lies with national and local government (which civil society should monitor and lobby).
- Civil society organisations have a crucial role in reaching and working with the most vulnerable; giving a voice to different groups; and advocating for positive change
- Civil society can provide spaces for dialogue. There needs to be room for conflict, debate and tension.
- The Common Basic Principles are an ideal tool for civil society organisations but also for partnerships between smaller organisations and the EU.
- NGOs need to work together to increase their collective voice and promote common interests.
- Civil society processes must recognise and include migrants in a sensitive, accessible, informative and appropriate way.
- Migrants and the people they represent have a voice in defining civil society.
- Civil society structures must be democratic.

5. Key indicators of better integration

- Labour market participation rates, including types of work undertaken by migrants; equal access to work, equal pay and experiences in work that match other workers.
- Improved recognition of qualifications and provision of retraining mechanisms.
- Political participation.
- Integration is evident when there is no difference between groups in various sections of society.
- Evidence of integration improving for second-generation migrants.
- Soft indicators, such as mixed marriages and other issues in the private sphere do not translate well into the policy field.
- The impact of other government agendas, such as those around security, need to be considered for their impact on integration.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **The role of civil society** (including educational institutions) in creating spaces for debate and acknowledging tension should be recognised in policy and funding streams.
2. **Funding** must reach relevant groups and individuals. Allocating more funding to grassroots organisations rather than umbrella organisations may help.
3. The European Commission should convene a **meeting with representatives of all relevant NGOs** to consult on exactly how funds would be best distributed.
4. When determining **indicators of success**, the UK government should include a range of factors including labour market and political participation.
5. **All government agendas** should be considered in the light of integration policy.

Workshop theme 3

Funding and resources

Facilitator: *Juliet Prager, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust*

Rapporteur: *Kjartan Sveinsson, The Runnymede Trust*

INTRODUCTION

The workshop considered the range of possible integration funding, and in particular the way of how the new Integration Fund should work in Britain. The new Integration Fund will be limited in size; have a limited timescale; and require matching funding.

DISCUSSION

1. Current problems

- Funding programmes are too narrow: in reality, people's status, needs and demands change
- No agreed definition of 'Integration'.
- Policy and funding lags behind reality on the ground
- Local groups feel that central government is out of touch
- Migrants aren't represented in policy development
- Limited funding for some essential work, such as providing advice to new migrants
- Survival not integration: local groups have to help migrants to survive, rather than facilitating integration as a two-way process

2. Priorities for the Integration Fund

The principle of additionally is essential. The new fund must be used to supplement rather than to support existing services. The main needs are:

- Bilingual/trilingual workers
- Advice work
- Accessible English language lessons
- Information in different languages about life in Britain

Other gaps:

- Changing migrants and settled communities' perceptions of each other
- Celebration of migration - fun and humour promote the positives
- Primary school (or earlier) education
- Media [a week of events and activities, showcasing good practice at local level]
- Working with businesses to encourage buy-in
- Training for front-line staff in mainstream services
- The voluntary sector needs information and training (on fundraising, developing strategies, monitoring and evaluation, and advocacy)
- Thinking and development time
- Engagement with the media

3. Who can do the work?

- Channel funds to both specialist and mainstream agencies

- Prioritise impact at local level
- Avoid funding bureaucracy, management or creating partnerships.
- Small, local community organisations; employers; public and voluntary agencies

4. Distributing the fund

- Provide information and time for preparing applications
- Adopt simple reporting requirements
- Recognise the government voluntary sector compact.
- Funding mechanisms should be appropriate, flexible and reflect local experience
- Devolve decision-making to local level (including LSPs, local authorities, and independent grant-making trusts)
- If research is needed, grassroots groups and migrants should be paid to contribute.
- Match funding creates difficulties. Contributions in kind - such as staff time - may be appropriate.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. UK Government must **consult** with migrants, local groups and independent grantmakers before designing the new Integration Fund. UKREN and other networks can help by circulating information about the government's consultation process.
2. **Funding programmes must be relevant**, with simple application and reporting processes and informed decision-making.
3. **Funding programmes should link with each other**, so that grants aren't restricted to migrants with certain status.
4. Funding should be channelled through **a range of organisations**, including public, voluntary and private sector, and the media.
5. Additional **basic advice** and **language lessons** are needed (although the fund should not be used to shore up existing services); but a successful strategy will depend on filling other gaps in creative ways.

Closing Remarks

Jan Niessen, Migration Policy Group

The link between the EPIM programme and the CBPs

The European Programme on Integration and Migration (EPIM) is an initiative that strives to link people and organisations, local concerns to the European agenda and the body of knowledge on integration issues with policy measures and the law. This linking exercise is carried out with the particular purpose of raising the standards of integration policies.

The CBPs represent a top-down approach, but still, it includes important and useful guidelines against which Member States can judge their performances. It is equally important however to raise those standards laid down in the CBPs and to flesh them out in concrete standards for areas of concerns of people and to bring those standards together. This is one of the most important purposes of EPIM: to raise the standards of integration policies, for which the CBPs can deem as a useful vehicle together with the Integration Handbooks, which chapters and conclusions aim to contribute to the implementation of the CBPs through practical recommendations.

EPIM also aims to collect good practices from across Europe to support and stimulate exchanging good practices in order to see where commonalities are. The vehicles for continuous exchange of good experiences are technical seminars held in Member States and the setting up of a website by the European Commission establishing a 'Wikipedia of Integration' where organisations could contribute with their specific expertise and experiences.

EPIM partners have also great interest in the coming Integration Fund. Organisations shall be encouraged to think ahead and begin to formulate strategies how to spend the amounts that will be available under the Fund.

Through seminars like today EPIM will know the issues that need to be addressed and think of policy recommendations.

Based on the consultation responses, this user-friendly definition [of integration and cohesion] could have five ingredients:

- 1. Engagement and participation**
- 2. Meaningful interaction across groups**
- 3. Respect for diversity and social trust**
- 4. Solidarity and collective community action**
- 5. Equality of opportunity, access, treatment and services.**

Commission on Integration and Cohesion, Our Interim Statement, DCLG 2007

Emerging Themes and Recommendations

A number of emerging themes can be seen to have been mentioned and agreed on in both the plenary session and the workshops. These can be formulated in recommendations as follows:

1. There is a need for an **overarching strategy** in the UK to **integrate migrants**. Currently, there is only a strategy for refugees, which sends the wrong signal, in particular that migrants aren't here to stay. An overarching strategy would offer greater coherence in policy terms. Central government must also recognise that its approach should be holistic and involve a wide range of government departments (DCLG, DfES, DTI etc...)
2. A progressive integration policy **should involve a maximum of actors**: voluntary organisations, migrant community groups, employers, unions, local government, and advice agencies. In addition, **better consultation** with civil society is needed when devising an integration strategy. Perhaps the setting up of a national forum, along the same lines as the planned European Forum on Integration, would help shape a more coherent strategy and allow for the full involvement of all the actors currently involved in integration programmes in practice.
3. The **two-way process** outlined in the CBP1 and in UK rhetoric **needs to be reflected in practice**. In particular, one must ensure that indicators of integration are not seen as *preconditions* to integration, rather than as *rights and vehicles* for integration. This is exemplified in recent debates on language, becoming the most important condition for integration, this despite the lack of sufficient support mechanisms to allow migrants to access classes.
4. The UK has signed up to the Common Basic Principles, and has a National Contact Point. The **National Contact Point** should be **open and accessible**, providing an effective link between civil society actors, UK government and European institutions. The Common Basic Principles should be publicised and celebrated.
5. Integration policy in the UK should **put less emphasis on cultural adaptation** and should **focus more strongly on economic and social inclusion**. In this way, the forward-looking policies of the EU which see integration policy as part of a wider strategy for achieving economic growth and competitiveness across the single market could be an interesting benchmark for the UK. In addition, there should be greater **policy coherence** across areas, to ensure that one policy (i.e. counter-terrorism policy) does not undermine the positive outcomes of another policy area (i.e. integration of migrants or race equality policy)
6. The **role of civil society organisations** in promoting integration is undermined by lack of funding. In particular, there is a **need for further support** on how to

provide migrants with basic and practical information and advice. Examples of work that needs more support include the celebration of migration, promotion of better understanding and increased interaction between migrants and settled communities and better provision of English classes at flexible times.

7. A holistic integration strategy should also include addressing the barriers migrants face that are linked to the settled community, such as public attitudes, discrimination, non recognition of migrants qualifications, and restrictions attached to their immigration status. **White and settled communities should also be considered in any integration strategy.**

Participant organisations

Asylum Aid	www.asylumaid.org.uk
Birmingham New Communities Network	www.bcen.net/bncn
Birmingham Race Action Partnership	www.brap.org.uk
Bosnia-Herzegovina UK Network	www.bhuknetwork.org
Citizens Organising Foundation	www.cof.org.uk
Commission for Racial Equality	www.cre.gov.uk
Commission on Integration and Cohesion	www.integrationandcohesion.org.uk
COMPAS (Centre on Migration, Policy and Society)	www.compas.ox.ac.uk
Employability Forum	www.employabilityforum.co.uk
European Commission	
European Council on Refugees and Exiles	www.ecre.org
European Network Against Racism	www.enar-eu.org
European Programme on Integration of Migrants	www.epim.info
Evelyn Oldfield Unit	www.refugeestories.org
Forward Thinking	www.forwardthinking.org
God's Time Ministries	
Immigration Nationality Directorate	www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk
Institute of Contemporary Scotland	www.contemporaryscotland.com
Institute of Race Relations	www.irr.org.uk
Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants	www.jcwi.org.uk
King's Lynn Area Resettlement Support	www.klarskl.org.uk
London Refugee Economic Action, London Development Agency	loreca.org.uk
London School of Economics, Gender Institute	www.lse.ac.uk/collections/genderInstitute
Middlesex University	www.mdx.ac.uk
Migrants' Rights Network	
Migration Policy Group	www.migpolgroup.com
National Institute of Economic and Social Research	www.niesr.ac.uk
Network of European Foundations	www.nefic.org
Runnymede Trust	www.runnymedetrust.org
The Fawcett Society	www.fawcettsociety.org.uk
Trades Union Congress	www.tuc.org.uk
Wolverhampton Asylum-Seeker and Refugee Services	www.warsiag.org.uk
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom	www.wilpf.org
Working Lives Institute	www.workinglives.org

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City Parochial Foundation
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation
Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
Lloyds TSB Foundation
Migration Policy Group
Network of European Foundations
Paul Hamlyn Foundation
UK Race in Europe Network (UKREN)

The European Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration policy

1. Integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States.

2. Integration implies respect for the basic values of the European Union

3. **Employment** is a key part of the integration process and is central to the participation of immigrants, to the contributions immigrants make to the host society, and to making such contributions visible.

4. **Basic knowledge** of the host society's **language, history, and institutions** is indispensable to integration; **enabling** immigrants to acquire this basic knowledge is essential to successful integration.

5. Efforts in education are critical to preparing immigrants, and particularly their descendants, to be more successful and more active participants in society.

6. Access for immigrants to institutions, as well as to public and private goods and services, on a basis equal to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way is a critical foundation for better integration.

7. **Frequent interaction** between immigrants and Member State citizens is a fundamental mechanism for integration. **Shared forums, inter-cultural dialogue, education** about immigrants and **immigrant cultures, and stimulating living conditions** in urban environments enhance the interactions between immigrants and Member State citizens.

8. The practice of diverse cultures and religions is guaranteed under the Charter of Fundamental Rights and must be safeguarded, unless practices conflict with other inviolable European rights or with national law.

9. The **participation** of immigrants in the **democratic process** and in the formulation of integration policies and measures, especially at the local level, supports their integration.

10. Mainstreaming integration policies and measures in **all relevant policy** portfolios and **levels of government** and public services is an important consideration in public-policy formation and implementation.

11. Developing clear goals, indicators and evaluation mechanisms are necessary to adjust policy, evaluate progress on integration and to make the exchange of information more effective.

These Common Basic Principles were signed by European member states in November 2004.

More information about the Principles and how you can use them in your work is available from:

The EC's Freedom, Security and Justice website http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home; The European Programme on Integration and Migration www.epim.info; Migration Policy Group www.migpolgroup.com; European Network Against Racism www.enar-eu.org

APPENDIX: BRIEFING PAPER circulated in advance of the seminar

What is the impact of the European Integration Agenda on UK Policy?

European Programme for Integration and Migration Consultation

UKREN Briefing paper

INTRODUCTION

This Paper has been prepared ahead of a consultation seminar to explore the developing UK integration agenda in the context of European policy. The researchers found that whilst both the EU and the UK are paying more attention to integration policy, the UK has started to develop a markedly different focus for its policy work. The EU tends to see integration policy as part of a wider strategy for achieving economic growth and competitiveness across the single market, whilst the UK policy has become more concerned with the issue of 'common values' in the social sphere that migrants need to fit into in order to be deemed "integrated".

This consultation seminar will highlight ways in which practice on the ground both at local and national level can contribute to a more progressive integration policy for the UK, which and explore how a more European approach to integration policy would allow economic integration as well as full participation of migrants in British society.

The emergence of Immigration and Integration as a European issue

Increasingly, since the Tampere Council of 1999,⁹ immigration is seen as a key policy area for the European Union. Whilst Member States have different histories and approaches to migration, there is growing consensus that it is needed to contribute to the EU's economic development and has to be effectively managed. In its Green Paper in 2005 the European Commission put forward an 'EU approach to managing economic migration' stating that 'while immigration in itself is not a solution to demographic ageing, more sustained immigration flows could increasingly be required to meet the needs of the EU labour market and ensure Europe's prosperity'¹⁰. Already in 2000¹¹ the European Commission stressed that the 'zero' immigration policies of the past 30 years were no longer appropriate. It has been recognised that the growing migratory pressures are accompanied with an increase in 'illegal' immigration, smuggling and trafficking which requires urgent and appropriate and *coordinated* action but more importantly, that immigration should not be viewed strictly as a problem, but also as a positive phenomenon as mentioned above. The latest European policy developments (see table in Appendix 1), whilst accommodating the strict controls insisted upon by the leading Member States, (border controls, visa policy, detention action programmes, plans to combat illegal immigration, etc.) also urges positive action **to allow for integration of legal immigrants**.

This emphasis on integration is a very recent area of European policy, having appeared on the European agenda four years ago. Previously treated as subordinate to other issues, it has now emerged as an important element in its own right. This was emphasised by Franco Frattini, Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner responsible for Justice, Freedom and Security, in a recent speech:

A key objective is better management of legal immigration, with better attention paid to the needs of the diverse labour markets of the Member states. [...] At the same time we are extending our integration measures for immigrants lawfully residing in the EU. There can be no immigration without integration."¹²

However, despite these recent policy developments, there is *no legal competence on integration* in relation to third country nationals to be found in the treaties. Therefore, the European Union has taken a pragmatic and incremental approach to the development of integration policies over the recent years.

⁹ See Appendix 1 for a table of recent EU developments in the field of integration and immigration

¹⁰ Green Paper on an EU approach to managing economic migration COM(2005)

¹¹ Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on Community immigration policy COM (2000) 757

¹² Frattini, F. (2007) "The future of EU migration and integration policy", Lecture given at the London School of Economics, 23 February 2007 Accessed on 05 March: http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/LSEPublicLecturesAndEvents/pdf/20070223_Frattini.pdf

Common Basic Principles on Integration

One of the most important steps towards developing a common strategy on integration was taken in 2004, when the Member States adopted a set of principles with the view to support the development of national and local integration policies by offering a non-binding set of principles against which they can assess their efforts. These Principles aimed to serve as a basis for Member States to explore how EU, national, regional, and local authorities can interact in the development and implementation of integration policies. The **Common Basic Principles** (CBPs) recognise that the development and implementation of integration policies is the primary responsibility of individual Member States and that these policies will differ significantly from Member States to Member States reflecting each country's history and legal framework. Nonetheless, the failure of a Member State to develop and implement successful and effective integration policies may have negative effects on the economy of other Member States and undermine respect for human rights. The implementation of the common basic principles on integration is therefore viewed as essential given the shared interests of Member States.

The Lisbon Agenda

Another key driver impacting EU immigration and integration policy is the so-called Lisbon Agenda, which aims to boost employment and economic growth, and make the EU "the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world". In this sense, integration policy is seen by the EU as a means to equal and full participation in the labour market of migrants to the EU, as explained by Jan Niessen:

The Lisbon Agenda is a vehicle for the EU and its Member States to stimulate growth and productivity, and to promote sustainability and social cohesion. Immigration and the integration of immigrants are beginning to find their way onto the agenda, not only because they pose particular challenges but also because they may contribute to achieving those goals.¹³

The Common Basic Principles and other integration measures promoted by the European Union should therefore be examined with this objective of economic development in mind, as this is the key policy driver for the EU for the next 5 years.

Recent UK policy on integration

Although the UK government acknowledges the positive economic asset of migration (while maintaining a tough security framework to combat irregular immigration), its recent direction in relation to integration indicates a growing difference with the underlying framework of EU policy. The CBPs and the Lisbon Agenda provide the basis for a progressive policy on integration that aims to ensure full and positive participation of migrants to the economic growth of all EU Member States. In the UK, integration policy is coming to focus more heavily on "values" as the main indicator of integration. In his lecture on multiculturalism and integration 'The Duty to Integrate: Shared British Values' in December 2006¹⁴ Tony Blair made it clear that the government puts 'a duty to integrate' and accept British values on immigrants. He asserted that 'the right to be in a multicultural society was always, always implicitly balanced by a duty to integrate'. However the government has so far failed to deliver clear definitions of integration and who it applies to. Debates on integration and what that means on the ground have emerged, which focus on common values, knowledge of English, duties put on immigrants, community cohesion, civic participation and social inclusion. However, this approach has done little to clarify the nature of the *obstacles to integration*, which have historically arisen in the form of the entrenched poverty of some immigrant groups, and their absence of influence in shaping equality outcomes in such key areas as the labour market, housing, health and educational policies, and the particular interests of women from those communities.

The newly established Commission on Integration and Cohesion was set up to bring clarity to the debate on integration. However, its interim report seems to continue along the lines of determining "cultural integration" indicators as being the most important ones to define integration strategies.

How far has the UK implemented the Common Basic Principles?

¹³ Niessen, J. (2005) *Migration governance and the Lisbon Agenda*, Brussels: European Policy Centre. Accessed on 27 February 2007: <http://www.epc.eu/en/ce.asp?TYP=CE&LV=177&see=y&t=42&PG=CE/EN/detail&l=2&AI=447>

¹⁴ Available on www.runnymedetrust.org

Language

One of the important elements of the definition of integration provided in the CBPs is that it is a dynamic, long-term, and continuous two-way process of mutual accommodation, not a static outcome. It demands the participation not only of immigrants and their descendants but of every resident. This seems to be increasingly challenged in the UK, the most recent illustration being the suggestion by the Chair of the Commission on Integration and Community Cohesion that candidates to family reunification should speak English before even reaching the UK borders. This would significantly challenge the proposition that integration is a two-way process, requiring adaptation on the part of the host society to ensure that the needs and interests of newly-arrived migrants are properly accommodated.

Language is being identified as the major barrier to integration by the Commission on Integration and Community Cohesion. Whilst it is true that literacy is crucial in ensuring full participation and integration of migrants (and non-migrants for that matter), the emphasis put on their duty to learn English contrasts with the failure of government to develop a comprehensive strategy for ESOL which includes language training in the work place and courses focused on women at home and in the community. Recent developments in ESOL training are regarded as counterproductive by the language tutor community, in particular plans by government to remove existing universal entitlement to free ESOL training up to level 2; free remission will only be available to people receiving means-tested benefits and tax credits; and from 2007-08 asylum seekers aged 19+ will no longer be automatically eligible for publicly funded Further Education provision. It is important therefore to go back to the European framework of integration which sees the importance of learning the language of the host country as a means to participate more fully to this society, rather than as a way to assess whether a person is integrated or not in this society.

Values and “the duty to integrate”

In his lecture on multiculturalism and integration ‘The Duty to Integrate’ referred to above, the Prime Minister gave an account on his views on the balance between integration and diversity. He foresaw a policy direction which put duties on both the immigrant and host community to respect and obey to UK laws and shared values. The Prime Minister explained that integration is not just about culture or lifestyle; it is, more importantly about essential values: belief in democracy, the rule of law, tolerance, equal treatment for all, respect for UK and its shared heritage. He underlined that obedience to the rule of law is not optional; being British carries rights and also duties. To achieve this he stressed the need to talk openly about the problem and to precisely define common values and make it clear that all citizens are expected to conform to them.

Critics of the Prime Minister’s approach regard interventions of this kind as potentially dangerous in that they have the effect of generating controversy in areas where there is essentially broad agreement between immigrant communities and the host population. The issue is not that of a marked divergence in commitment to democratic values, tolerance and the rule of law between the various communities, but the fact that, under the prevailing conditions of British society, democracy, tolerance and the rule of law produce very different outcomes for the various parts of British society. The existence of gross inequalities, with the experience of migrants and black and minority ethnic communities providing examples of forms of disadvantage which extends to wider sections of marginalised, predominately poor communities, continues to disfigure many aspects of civic life. Public discussion about tackling inequality is poorly served by rhetoric which claims that significant differences exist between the basic values adhered to by the vast majority or people living in the UK.

The CBPs also talk about the importance of all citizens to abide by the basic values enshrined in European Treaties. This includes respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law. However, it could be argued that the European perspective encourages these to be seen as powerful instruments placed within reach of civil society which would assist its work in achieving a better integrated society, robust enough to ensure that equality of opportunity is entrenched within the working of the European labour market. In contrast to the position currently being developed by the British government, respect for common values would be less of tick list condition for joining a club, and more of a vital mechanism for being about progressive change.

These basic values and rights are enshrined in UK legislation. The Human Rights Act 1998 which incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights into English law provides for basic protection to ethnic minorities and lays down minimum standards. Discrimination has been outlawed on the grounds of gender, race, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation and age. Respect

for these basic values in terms of integration policies means that it has to be assured that all residents, including immigrants, understand, respect and benefit from and are protected on an equal basis by the values, rights and responsibilities established by the EU and the UK.

Economic integration and political participation

Whilst recent debates on integration in the UK have very much focused on the “cultural” agenda, there has been a lack of focus on other indicators of integration, such as the benchmarks indicating the eradication of discrimination, recognition of skills, wage parity, improved health and education, and equal participation in the prevailing standards of growing prosperity and standard of life. One area where this is particularly seen as a missed opportunity is that of the engagement of employers in integration policy. Indeed, insufficient economic incentives, campaigns or measures are offered to employers, which would facilitate the insertion of long-established third-country nationals or their descendants into the labour market. Employers are only provided with a helpline to deal with their enquiries about employing migrants.

Similarly, the participation of immigrants in the democratic process, which could be considered as an important benchmark for integration, is heavily dependent on their status. Immigrants from the EU member states are entitled to vote and stand as candidates on European and local elections only, whereas Commonwealth citizens and Irish citizens can stand for election as a local councillor, Member of Parliament or Member of European Parliament and can vote in a local election, general election or European election. Third country nationals (with the exception of Commonwealth and Irish citizens) are entitled to limited voting and representation rights.

Continuous lack of definition and measurement of integration

The Commission on Integration and Cohesion has recently published its interim statement in which it recognises the need to find some agreement on a definition of integration and what that means in practice. The suggestion by the Commission is to include the following 5 “ingredients” in the definition:

1. Engagement and participation
2. Meaningful interaction across groups
3. Respect for diversity and social trust
4. Solidarity and collective community action
5. Equality of opportunity, access, treatment and services.¹⁵

Whilst these “ingredients” remain vague at this stage, it is hoped that the Commission’s work over the next few months will provide greater clarity on indicators of and benchmarks for integration.

¹⁵ Commission on Integration and Cohesion (2007) *Our Interim Statement*. Wetherby: CIC

The EPIM consultation

The European Programme on the Integration of Migrants (EPIM) is a joint venture of the Network of European Foundations. It aims to encourage positive attitudes towards investment in integration policies. The EPIM project therefore hopes to raise the profile of the European integration policy, in particular the Common Basic Principles on the agenda of national governments and hopes to engage actors of civil society in this process through a series of national consultations in Member States.

The one day seminar has been organised to open up debate on the development of constructive integration policies and promote effective linking of UK integration policies at national, regional and local levels with those of the EU.

It aims to:

- Learn about European initiatives and policy on integration and their relevance to UK integration policies;
- Share experience on the impact of UK integration policies on the ground at local level;
- Come up with concrete recommendations for government to implement a coherent integration strategy, consistent with its EU commitments.

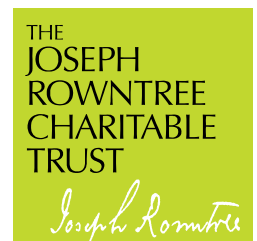
Questions to consider during the roundtable

During the consultation seminar, participants are asked to think about the following questions, which will be discussed on the day, in the various plenary and workshop sessions:

1. Do we need a strategic approach to integration, for all migrants?
2. Is UK policy primarily about equality, or about good relations?
3. How do funding strategies promote integration?
4. Is anti-discrimination and anti-racism one element of the integration strategy or should it be the foundation of integration?
5. Would the UK benefit from a common EU integration policy?
6. Do we need clear definitions or would a debate on terminology overshadow policy actions?
7. While promoting a cohesive society based on common values how do we deal with values that clash? Should we accept that migrant are inevitably in the minority and have to do most of the changing?
8. What is the role of the civil society – is there a real opportunity to respond to the challenges and opportunities facing diverse societies and to promote a vision of an inclusive Europe?
9. What does the definition of 'migrant' encapsulate? In the UK, there's a tendency to think of recent arrivals as migrants; yet in other parts of Europe second and third generations are often included. This is particularly relevant in the UK in terms of community cohesion and race relations.
10. To whom does integration policy apply to? Recently arrived migrants? Children and grand-children of immigrants? The society as a whole?
11. Is integration only about values?
12. How can we benchmark integration?
13. What would be the key indicators suggesting that the UK is moving towards a better integrated society?

Appendix 1: Recent European policy developments

Date	Stage	Outcome
1999	European Council meeting in Tampere (Finland)	Agreement on the development of a <i>common asylum and migration policy</i> including partnership with countries of origin, a common asylum system, fair treatment of third country nationals (TCN) and management of migration flows with the aim to grant legally resident TCN rights and obligations comparable to those of EU citizens. Detailed indications on how this policy should be developed and implemented were not given.
2000	Communication from the Commission on Community Immigration Policy	Puts forward the concept of civic citizenship, guaranteeing core rights and obligations to immigrants but these may be incremental and related to their length of stay, so that eventually they are treated the same way as nationals of their host state, without being naturalised. The proposed common policy is a new framework for co-operation at Community level, which would be based on co-operation, exchange of information, and reporting and would be co-ordinated by the Commission.
2000	Anti – discrimination legislation	A package of anti-discrimination measures were adopted in 2000 consisting of two directives – directive on racial discrimination (2000/43/EC) and a directive on discrimination in employment (2000/78/EC) together with a Community action programme.
2000	Charter of Fundamental Rights	Sets out a number of fundamental rights, which, because of their universal nature, apply to TCN. Particularly important are <i>social rights</i> such as protection against unjustified dismissal and the application of national and Community laws concerning working conditions. It also includes the possibility, on the conditions set out in the Amsterdam Treaty, of <i>free movement and stay</i> for TCN legally resident in a Member State.
2002	National Contact Points on Integration	Long-term objective of the network is to develop and enhance a common European framework for integration with a view to defining common objectives and principles and strengthening co-ordination and coherence of national and EU policies through continuous exchange of information and best-practice.
2003	Communication from the Commission on immigration, integration and employment	Pointed out that labour migration to the EU will become increasingly important to fill job and skill shortages but unless policies haven't been developed to ensure their full participation in social, cultural and civic life immigrants will not be able to fulfil their potential nor make their contribution to economic development.
2003	Directives on family reunification and status of TCN	Directive 2003/86/EC determines the right to family reunification of TCN who reside lawfully in the territory of a Member State and the conditions under which family members can enter into and reside in a Member State in order to preserve the family unit. It also determines the rights of the family members once the application for family reunification has been accepted. According to Directive 2003/109/EC the status of long-term resident will be obtained after legal and continuous residence of 5 years. It gives long-term residents a more secure status and also allows them to move under certain conditions from one Member State to another while maintaining the rights and benefits acquired in the first Member State.
2004	The Hague Programme and Common Basic Principles	Closer co-ordination of national integration policies and EU initiatives was agreed on by the European Council. The Hague Programme (covering the period of 2005-2010) states that a framework based on common basic principles should form the foundation of future EU initiatives, which were adopted on 19 November 2004 by the Justice and Home Affairs Council and aim to guide Member States in developing integration policies, to serve as a basis for interaction between EU, national, regional and local authorities and to assist the Council to agree on EU policies and mechanisms in order to support national and local integration policy efforts.
2004 2007	1 st Handbook on Integration 2 nd Handbook	Aims to structure exchange of information that flows through the National Contact Points and to obtain some concrete results on which Member States could draw when developing integration policies.
2005	INTI Programme	Funds preparatory actions promoting the integration of TCN in Member States. It also aims to promote dialogue with civil society, develop integration models, evaluate best practices and set up EU- wide networks. It amounted to € 5 000 000 for the 25 MS in 2005.
2007- 2013	Integration Fund	Within the framework programme on Solidarity and management of Migrant Flows the Integration Fund is intended to support the development of national integration strategies which take into account the Common Basic Principles. Proposed allocation is €1771 mill.
2005	A Common Agenda for Integration – Framework for the Integration of TCNs the in EU	The primary aim of the Communication is to provide a coherent European framework for integration and to put the CBP into practice together with supportive mechanisms. Actions are suggested at both, the national and EU level with a view to develop comprehensive national integration strategies and ensure consistency.
2005	Policy Plan on Legal Migration	The document does not contain any legislative or operational proposal. The Plan defines a road-map for the remaining period of The Hague Programme (2006-2009) and lists the actions and legislative initiatives that the Commission intends to take, so as to pursue the consistent development of the EU legal migration policy.
2007	2 nd ministerial conference on integration	Is to be held in Potsdam on 10 to 11 May to share best practices with regard to integration issues and intercultural dialogue. A priority for the following Presidency, Portugal is likely to be the nexus between migration and integration.
2008	European Year on Intercultural Dialogue	With a budget of €10 million the European Year 2008 will be focussing on culture, education, youth, sport and citizenship with the aim of respecting and promoting cultural diversity, social justice and cohesion.



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