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COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 21/VIII/2007
C(2007) 3926 final

COMMISSION DECISION

of 21/VIII/2007

**Implementing Council Decision 2007/435/EC as regards the adoption of strategic
guidelines for 2007 to 2013**

**(only the Bulgarian, Czech, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek,
Hungarian, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian,
Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish and Swedish texts are authentic)**

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THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Council Decision No 2007/435/EC of 25 June 2007, establishing a European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals for the period 2007 to 2013 as part of the General programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows'¹, and in particular Article 16 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) The Commission should lay down strategic guidelines setting out a framework for the intervention of the Fund relating to the multi-annual programming period 2007 to 2013.
- (2) The guidelines should define the priorities and, in accordance with Article 13(4) of Decision No 2007/435/EC, the specific priorities that allow Member States not covered by the Cohesion Fund to have the Community contribution increased to 75% for projects co-financed by the Fund.
- (3) In accordance with Article 2 of the Protocol on the position of Denmark, annexed to the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, Denmark is not bound by this Decision or subject to its application.
- (4) In accordance with Article 3 of the Protocol on the position of the United Kingdom and Ireland, annexed to the Treaty on European Union and to the Treaty establishing the European Community, Ireland has notified, by letter of 6 September 2005, its wish to take part in the adoption and application of Decision No 2007/435/EC.
- (5) In accordance with Article 3 of the Protocol on the position of the United Kingdom and Ireland, annexed to the Treaty on European Union and to the Treaty establishing the European Community, the United Kingdom has notified, by letter of 27 October

¹OJ L 168, [28.6.2007](#), p.18 .

2005, its wish to take part in the adoption and application of Decision No 2007/435/EC.

- (6) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the common Committee 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows' established by Article 56 of Decision No 574/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council²,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The guidelines setting out the priorities and specific priorities for the multi-annual programming for the period 2007 to 2013 shall be as defined in the Annex.

Article 2

This Decision is addressed to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Republic of Estonia, the Hellenic Republic, the Kingdom of Spain, the French Republic, Ireland, the Italian Republic, the Republic of Cyprus, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Malta, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Republic of Austria, the Republic of Poland, the Portuguese Republic, Romania, the Republic of Slovenia, the Slovak Republic, the Republic of Finland, the Kingdom of Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Done at Brussels, 21/VIII/2007

*For the Commission
Franco FRATTINI
Vice-President of the Commission*

CERTIFIED COPY
For the Secretary - General

Jordi AYET PUIGARNAU
Director of the Registry

² OJ L144, 6.6.2007, p.22

ANNEX

The strategic guidelines for the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals are to be seen in the context of the development of a common approach to the integration of third-country nationals. The common approach was initiated by the Tampere European Council in 1999, which called for a more vigorous integration policy designed to grant third-country nationals rights and obligations comparable to those of EU citizens. In line with the Hague Programme of November 2004, these strategic guidelines set out to facilitate greater co-ordination of national integration policies within a common framework and to promote teamwork between Member States, while complying with the principle of subsidiarity. The basis for this framework was laid down by the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States who, in November 2004, adopted the 'Common Basic Principles for immigrant integration policy in the European Union' (hereinafter the 'Common Basic Principles') to help Member States formulate integration policies by way of a well-thought-out guide against which they can assess their own efforts and measure progress in this field. The Common Basic Principles add to and provide synergy with Community legislative instruments on the admission and stay of third-country nationals as regards family reunification and long-term residents. The Commission's Communication on 'A Common Agenda for Integration: Framework for the Integration of third-country nationals in the European Union'³ put forward, in full compliance with the principle of subsidiarity, a series of concrete measures designed to put the Common Basic Principles into practice, together with a number of EU support mechanisms. The main thrust of this Communication was endorsed by the Council Conclusions of 1 December 2005.

Article 16(2) of Decision No 2007/435/EC provides that for each of the objectives of the Fund, those guidelines shall in particular give effect to the priorities of the Community with a view to promoting the 'Common Basic Principles'.

To ensure the consistency of the Community's response to the integration of third-country nationals, actions financed under this Fund should be specific and complementary to actions financed under the European Refugee Fund and the structural funds, in particular the European Social Fund. To that end, Member States should establish co-operation and co-ordination mechanisms, including joint programming arrangements, between the authorities responsible for the Fund, the European Refugee Fund and the European Social Fund.

Since the annual allocation of resources to the Member States is subject to rules set out in Decision No 2007/435/EC, it will not be affected by what Member States choose in terms of co-financing percentages for projects addressing specific priorities in accordance with these guidelines.

Member States should determine the most effective distribution of the financial resources allocated to them in accordance with their needs and in line with a coherent approach to the integration of third-country nationals in the European Union. When preparing their draft multi-annual programmes, Member States should target throughout the available Community resources under this Fund to at least three of the priorities listed below, among which priorities 1 and 2 are mandatory.

³ COM (2005) 389 final

PRIORITY 1: Implementation of actions designed to put the 'Common Basic Principles for immigrant integration policy in the European Union' into practice

The Commission Communication on 'A Common Agenda for Integration: Framework for the Integration of third-country nationals in the European Union' puts forward a series of concrete measures designed to put the Common Basic Principles into practice, and is a reference document in this respect. The 'Handbook on integration for policy-makers and practitioners' (first and forthcoming editions) is a useful complement. The implementation of measures and good practice described in these two documents should be greatly encouraged.

Member States are particularly encouraged to integrate the Common Basic Principles into their national policies and legislation.

All Common Basic Principles are equally important for the common European framework on integration. For the Community strategy to be developed under this Fund Member States should make every effort to put them into practice in their national context, in accordance with the objectives and eligible actions set out in Decision No 2007/435/EC.

Actions under this priority should primarily be targeted at newly-arrived third-country nationals and may include programmes and activities designed to introduce newly-arrived third-country nationals to the host society and to help them acquire basic knowledge about the host society's language, history, institutions, socio-economic features, cultural life and fundamental norms and values.

PRIORITY 2: Development of indicators and evaluation methodologies to assess progress, adjust policies and measures and to facilitate co-ordination of comparative learning

Integration of third-country nationals is a dynamic area of expertise and practice. Its evolving nature is a crucial aspect which can enhance success in this area. One of the main success factors is constant measuring and monitoring of policies and activities so that they produce the results that are intended. Development of clearly-defined objectives and assessment instruments is of the utmost importance in terms of being more effective. Such instruments should be encouraged at all levels of integration governance, i.e. national, regional, local and European. They are also important for the development of common models and standards at EU level.

PRIORITY 3: Policy capacity building, co-ordination and intercultural competence building in the Member States across the different levels and departments of government

The strengthening of capacity at national, regional and local level is essential for the design and implementation of comprehensive integration policies, based on the Common Basic Principles and an inclusive approach. This priority should also foster mainstreaming of integration policies and measures in all the relevant policy portfolios and at all levels of government and public services. To ensure that integration policies are coherent, effective and efficient, mechanisms need to be developed to co-ordinate and exchange information and experiences among the different stakeholders who implement integration policies.

PRIORITY 4: Exchange of experience, good practice and information on integration between the Member States

Facilitation of the exchange of experience, good practice and information between the Member States should focus on, inter alia, ensuring that integration is an important component of policy on economic migration, and on promoting the acquisition of basic knowledge on the host society, its language, history, institutions and respect for the basic values of the European Union.

In addition, this priority should foster co-operation between regional and local authorities from different Member States in the development and implementation of integration policies and measures. The involvement of non-governmental stakeholders should be greatly encouraged.

Within the framework of these four priorities, the Community contribution may be increased to 75% for actions in the Member States addressing the specific horizontal priorities listed below.

Specific priority 1: Participation as a means of promoting the integration of third-country nationals in society

Actions involving the participation of third-country nationals in the formulation and implementation of integration policies and measures

Specific priority 2: Specific target groups

Actions, including introduction programmes and activities, whose main objective is to address the specific needs of particular groups, such as women, youth and children, the elderly, illiterate persons and persons with disabilities

Specific priority 3: Innovative introduction programmes and activities

Actions developing innovative introduction programmes and activities, such as enabling third-country nationals to work and study at the same time, e.g. part-time courses, fast-track modules, distance or e-learning systems

Specific priority 4: Intercultural dialogue

Actions aimed at encouraging mutual interaction and exchange, such as developing intercultural dialogue, in an effort in particular, to resolve any potential conflict caused by differences in cultural or religious practices, and thus to ensure the better integration of third-country nationals in the societies, values and ways of life of Member States

Specific priority 5: Involvement of the host society in the integration process

Actions addressing effective ways of raising awareness and actively involving the host society in the integration process