

Work Programme

1. *Stakeholders in the network

Who across the EU are key actors, stakeholders and networks, what are their agendas, actions and events, which are centres of expertise and experience, relevant for the main objective and issue of the network?

The key actors, stakeholders and partners in the core group of the platform will stem from the following ESF regions and Member States : *Berlin, Flandern, England, Scotland, Aragon, Estonia, Germany and Spain*. All partners will be involved in the peer review process along three thematic priorities:

1. **Assessment and Validation: Valuing Migrant Competences**
2. **Fostering Anti-discrimination Skills as a Professional Approach and Skills**
3. **Integrated Territorial Approaches**

Aragon will concentrate on the third thematic area “Integrated territorial approaches” and act as a mentor partner in this field. Good practice has been developed throughout the past four years. Territorial Insertion Commissions (TIC) being created, in agreement with the territorial organisation, which combined two or more regional demarcations. Each commission included social and union bodies, business organisations and public administrations that worked for social and labour inclusion in each territory. These partners will act as stakeholders and network partners in the Region of Aragon. The main functions of the TICs are to :

- Design a technical collaboration protocol between key agents who decide to work in agreement with this methodology in the area.
- Describe a work programme, setting out the needs detected, the resources available, the action execution plan and the action chronogram.
- Define the actions aimed at: employable people, companies of the area, creation of insertion or social economy enterprises, accompaniment measures and transfer to the Public Administrations and social entities of the area.

Berlin will concentrate on the second thematic area “Fostering Anti-discrimination Skills as a Professional Approach”. The aim is to build on a number of initiatives for training of staff in public and labour market institutions that have been carried out in the past years in Berlin. Staff Members of the foreigners office and of the Berlin job centres have been trained in anti-discrimination skills. Berlin will act as a mentor project in this thematic field. Trained public administrations and policy makers that have designed anti-discrimination strategies will act as stakeholders and partners.

Berlin will also concentrate on the first thematic priority Assessment and Validation: Valuing Migrant Competences.

Main example of good practice being the Regional ESF funded development partnership BQJM (Berlin Qualification Programme for Young Migrants) which brings together research expertise and implementation expertise of different partners in the field of transition management from school to vocational training. BQJM is currently developed as leading “think tank” in this field of action, main task being to develop and test strategies and systems of impact assessment for the Berlin Senate. It is the first integrated territorial approach of that kind for the target group. Berlin will present this approach as mentor partner.

The Berlin Representative for Integration and Migration chairs the Working Group Integration of the Regional ESF Programme. Task of this working group is to develop a monitoring system in order to measure the impact and volume of programmes targeted at migrant population. Experience in this function will closely be linked to the development of a benchmarking tool, aiming at an impact assessment of regional ESF OPs.

Estonia will engage mainly in theme 1. Assessment and Validation: Valuing Migrant Competences and Skills and theme 3. Integrated territorial approaches.

The theme of validation and assessment generally in Estonia is the topic of the ESF programme "Developing the system of qualifications 2007-2013", valuing immigrants' competences and qualifications is certainly one of the future subjects in Estonia.

Strategic partners will be in theme 1: Estonian Qualification Authority and Estonian Labour Market Board. In theme 3. the strategic partner will be the Integration Foundation of Estonia.

Scotland will mainly concentrate on theme 2. Fostering anti-discrimination skills as a professional competence as a mentor partner. In this field Scotland is leading in the UK having developed a suite of qualifications for people working with asylum seekers and refugees to build capacity in agencies and promote equality and diversity. The qualifications exist as a direct result of a Transnational activity carried out by the Theme I SAP Transnational partnership in Round 2 of EQUAL.. There is widespread interest in these qualifications from private, statutory and third sector agencies in Scotland who will form our partners in this field.

The Federal Ministry of Labour in Germany will focus on theme 1. (Skills assessment and recognition of qualifications) and theme 3 (integrated territorial approaches). Good practice has been found in the National Thematic Networks under EQUAL I and II and their numerous products in the field of recognition of qualifications and integrated territorial approaches. The products are listed under www.equal-produkte.de.

As strategic partners the Federal Ministry will involve the Unions, the Social Welfare Institutions, the large Chambers and Employers Associations. Moreover it will involve the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) and the Federal institute for Vocational Training (BiBB).

England will look to participate in all three themes. The approach will include building on lessons learnt from Equal regarding the development of workplace support and skills development, supporting the implementation of the ESF equal opportunities and gender mainstreaming plan and linking in to national strategies to address the disparities in employment between ethnic minorities and white communities.

Strategic partners will include the Trades Union Congress and the Commission for Equalities and Human Rights. Both organisations are represented in National ESF Monitoring Committees and sub-committees and play an active role in supporting and reviewing the development of the ESF Operational Programme. Over the lifetime of the platform, the aim is to bring on board local authorities responsible for managing employment related funding programmes to provide a focus for benchmarking and performance testing .

In the 2nd round of EQUAL the French ESF Managing Authority launched a European Platform on Anti-Discrimination in the labour market in cooperation with the German and Swedish managing authorities. The policy forum held in Paris in November 2007 agreed 10 policy recommendations that needed to address strategic issues involving all stakeholders, NGOs, trade unions, employer networks and public agencies. The platform will build on the outcomes from the policy forum and the work of the 350 Equal Development Partnerships

particularly on actions to facilitate re-integration into the labour market for migrants and ethnic minorities.

2. *Participants in the network

Participants will include the ESF managing authorities, their intermediary bodies, policy stakeholders and delivery organisations. The platform will be coordinated by the Representative for Integration and Migration of the Berlin Senate in Germany in cooperation with the State of Berlin ESF Managing authority.

There will be a core group of partners who will participate in the study visits and the peer review process. These partners have committed to achieving an improvement in the employment outcomes of ethnic minorities and migrants through their ESF Operational Programmes. The motivation being to focus on the highlighting the reform potential of the platform's work at a Member State and regional level.

The platform will also establish a wider network group comprising experts, stakeholders, representatives from other policy and transnational networks. This wider network will play an important role in bringing their experience and critical eye to the work programme as well as disseminating the work and outcomes of the platform to a wider audience. The platform will involve three types of expert who will take part in the study visits and the peer review process:

Strategic Experts involved at a senior policy level in the design and development of programmes and projects in a least one of the three thematic fields. They include members of ESF Advisory Boards, policy makers in public administrations, policy advisors working for public administrations, NGOs, welfare Institutions, Chambers, Job Centres and migrant organisations. These experts are to be nominated by the core partners because of their knowledge, professional expertise and longstanding experience in the field.

Managing experts with experience in commissioning and managing large programmes and projects, particularly in the field of ethnic minority and migrant employment targeted at adults and young people. They will also be experienced in equal opportunities, skills assessment, anti-discrimination and diversity training, recognition of qualifications and in developing regional and local partnership and delivery frameworks in support of integrated territorial approaches.

Delivery experts: practitioners that have expertise in delivering services in the field of skills assessment, anti-discrimination and diversity training, recognition of qualifications and transition management from school to work for ethnic minority and migrant adults and young people.

Strategic partners will be involved in the preparation phase in providing information and useful contacts. Strategic partners will be among others: Members of the DG Employment and DG Justice and Home Affairs, Members of the Eurocities Network, Members of the Cities Network on Local Integration Policies, Members of European Employers Associations and European Networks of Trade Unions and Members of the European Integration Forum. Moreover regional and local stakeholders will be involved in developing the briefing reports on the regions and mainstreaming and disseminating the policy recommendations in the last phase of implementation.

3. *Domain of learning

What kind of practices, experience, tools and plans will be shared?

Good practice in each of the three thematic fields will be identified along with an identified need for learning from others. The matching of hosting and visiting partners will take place during the planning seminars.. Partners will use the lessons learned to develop and implement innovative practice in support of individual ESF Operational Programmes following the mid-term evaluation of the 2007-2013 period. Partners will also look at introducing or improving equal opportunity plans in support of their ESF OPs as well as looking to introduce or improve ethnic minority and migrant participation and employment outcomes through ESF projects. .

A specific focus will be on the impact measurement of ESF OPs and the way monitoring instruments can be implemented. To do this an interactive benchmarking tool and an equality impact assessment framework will be developed and tested during the implementation phase of the platform. These interactive net-based tools should inform partners about the achievements of ESF funded projects with regard to minority ethnic and migrant participation in employment and about the difficulties faced in achieving this. The partners will be able to measure improvements and shortfalls in comparison to other partner regions. By the end of the Platform's lifetime the tools will have been tested further and refined for final dissemination and mainstreaming.

4. *Learning strategy

What is the proposed method of promoting and nurturing learning amongst network participants?
How will the different roles in organizing and operating a learning network be organised (promoter, coach, leader, technology steward etc)?
How will practices and tools etc be shared, validated and disseminated?

The learning strategy is underpinned by a commitment to understand and support each other in improving the quality of ESF projects and other employment programmes that result in improve employment outcomes. The platform will therefore encourage a free-flow of ideas and engagement of stakeholders operating in the field and at the policy level. Hence regional representatives (either from regional government or nominated organisations), national policy makers and experts and organisations demonstrating good practice through project delivery will be invited to participate in the platform. The composition of the platform will provide the bridge between the relevant policy makers with the capacity to see strategic importance and implement change and at the delivery level with the technical experience of testing and determining good practice and successful approaches.

The platform will make use of the EQUAL experiences and the good practices developed in the EQUAL partnerships. Also the platform will try to mainstream the lessons learned in EQUAL under the Learning for Change Programme to tackle what is named the *implementation gap* in European programmes.

It will involve groups of key actors and stakeholders in each Member State and region, to be selected by the participants in the core group to focus on individual **staff and institutional development** and organisations central to implementing economic and social development strategies for integrating ethnic minorities and migrants into the labour market. The platform partners (core group) will establish a "profile" to steer identification of the most suitable representatives and a protocol of tasks to ensure maximum commitment to the project so that maximum benefits are achieved.

Through **transnational study visits, peer mentoring and review** key actors and stakeholders working in the employment field will be brought together to examine a particular aspect of policy and delivery that impacts on the participation of migrants and ethnic minorities in employment. In briefing and peer review seminars participants will be briefed in preparation for the study visits and will jointly evaluate and analyse the results of

the visits. From this they will jointly develop recommendations to EU, national and regional stakeholders.

The workshops and peer review seminars will be moderated and coached by trained external experts. These experts will also facilitate and moderate the matching process between mentor and mentee and convert the results of the peer reviewing analysis into concrete policy papers, setting out comparable approaches, the outcomes achieved and emerging lessons.

The **benchmarking tool-kits and impact assessments** to be developed through the platform will provide stakeholders with the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of their activities and the use of ESF allocations to meet the needs of these priority groups. The development and use of the interactive net-based benchmarking toolkit will be moderated by external experts. They will introduce the method during the development phase and will provide the necessary information in testing the toolkit during the implementation phase. The experts will also provide an interactive web-based information platform where reports, results of peer review; recommendations contact information etc. will be provided.

It is expected that this peer review approach in combination with the benchmarking tool kit and equality impact assessment frameworks will strengthen and further develop the process of change by improving staff competencies, awareness raising through institutional development and the creation of a transnational network of regional teams developing strategies that meet the objectives of the European Employment Strategy. It should also produce practical results in each participating Member State and region, forming the basis for sustained cooperation and development. It will also look to reinforce and deepen a process which will continue after the end of the platform's funding period and be sufficiently robust to be transferred to other Member States and regions.

5. *Assumptions, success factors and risks of the work programme

It is assumed that all partners forming the core group are engaged and willing to spend time and human resources with regard to the successful implementation of the project. It is assumed that the participants nominated have sufficient expertise to participate in the peer review process to be of benefit to the platform and its stakeholders and that they are motivated and willing to acknowledge weaknesses in their own programmes or structures. It is assumed that strategic partners are willing and engaged in disseminating and mainstreaming the results of the peer review process.

Success factors for the work programme are based on:-

- Effective engagement and buy-in from all Core Group members and participants
- High quality input from experts into the baseline stage
- Development of high quality, accessible and transferable tools
- Take up of tools and production of validated results
- High levels of participation and involvement in study visits and peer reviews

Risks for the programme and how they will be overcome are set out in the table below.

Risks	Measures to overcome risks
Low level of participation by core group representatives	Discussions with Core Group partners to work with nominated contact and/or identify alternative

Low participation among participants due to wrong choice of stakeholders and experts	A pool of experts will be identified through the Core Group and work will be shared accordingly to overcome difficulties
lack of financial and human resources in partner regions to organise a peer review visit	Review engagement of partner to fit their needs and identify alternative visits with other partners
partners are not transparent and open about real challenges and problems in their region	1-2-1 support from experts to identify issues and work with participants to identify most appropriate means of communication and presentation
the political orientation of a partner may change due to local or regional elections which in effect may hinder further collaboration	Issues to be reviewed periodically through the Core Group and raised with Platform co-ordinator who will advise of way forward. Through the engagement of a wider group and promotion, other regions and Member States will be encouraged to increase participation.

6. *Which communication and collaborative tools will be used for exchange, learning and dissemination?

How practices, experience, tools and plans will be identified, documented, and made accessible to network participants?
 What method will be used for disseminating experience, practice and results to peers from other Member States and regions?

A **steering group of core partners** will plan, coordinate and moderate the peer review process and the process of developing and testing a benchmarking tool. The steering group will decide upon the recommendations drawn from the peer review and will develop a mainstreaming and dissemination strategy.

Through **transnational study visits, peer mentoring and review** key actors and stakeholders representing institutions and organisations working in a similar field of employment will be brought together. In briefing and peer review seminars participants in the peer reviewing will be prepared for the study visits and will jointly evaluate and analyse the results of the visits. From this they will jointly develop recommendations to EU, national and regional stakeholders.

The **benchmarking tool-kits and impact assessments** to be developed through the platform will provide stakeholders with the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of their activities and the use of ESF allocations to meet the needs of these priority groups. It will also trigger a collective learning and evaluation process concerning the impacts of regional ESF programmes. The development and use of an interactive net-based benchmarking toolkit will be one of the main collaborative products of the platform.

The **peer review seminar** will be open to other ESF regions and Member States to disseminate the lessons learned. Moreover the policy forum where the benchmarking tool and the policy recommendations will be presented will be targeted at a European audience and help mainstream the results.

Any results and tools will be placed on the web-based communication platform www.transnationality.de .

7. *Key activities of the work programme

Description of each activity, method; schedule; milestones and deliverables; involvement of relevant experts and stakeholders; responsibility and contribution of the partners etc

The project aims to demonstrate the extent to which the transnational characteristic of the approach is in itself a tool for policy formulation. The project will be transnational at all stages of implementation (see below):

Stage 1 Preparation:

Establish a collaboration agreement with the selected Member State and regional authorities and the identification of the group of key actors and stakeholders in each region. Profiles will be suggested by the steering group (consisting of the core group members), along with roles and tasks to ensure clear commitment to the project and to obtaining outcomes. If necessary an information seminar will be organised with the regional representatives of the participating regions. The Representative for Integration and Migration of the Berlin Senate as coordinating body of the platform will organise these activities and together with the ESF Management Authority of the Berlin Senate will be responsible for their implementation.

Schedule: 1.11.2008-30.04.2009

Stage 2 Preparation:

Collecting information and organising information exchange, which includes the identification of further regions having a focus on the platform themes in their ESF operational programme. The Steering Group will agree a reporting framework and establish a pool of experts who will work with each participating region/Managing Authority to prepare a baseline report that sets out the policy context in each region/ member state, the ESF OP priorities, supporting actions on employment and issues to be addressed. These baseline reports will form the basic information for the platform's launch seminars. The draft reports will be presented to the core members at the first steering group meeting in February 2009. Information will be collected along the three thematic priorities for the platform:

The steering group will commission the development of a benchmarking tool and impact assessment frameworks that will have due regard for National and regional ESF Operating Programmes and strategies for increasing the participation of black and minority ethnic groups and migrants in employment.

A web-based information platform to enhance communication among partners in the platform is already set up at www.transnationality.deA structure for the tool kit will be agreed at the first steering group meeting in February 2009.

The Representative for Integration and Migration of the Berlin Senate as coordinating body for the platform will coordinate these activities and initiate dialogue in advance of the first steering group meeting in February 2009 together with the ESF Management Authority of the Berlin Senate. Core partners sign responsible for the appropriate identification of experts for the briefing reports and the benchmarking tool.

Schedule: November 2008 – April 2009
Steering group Meeting: February 2009
Launch seminar : April 2009

Stage 3 Preparation:

Each participant will compile an **action plan** that sets out the key milestones and outcomes to be achieved as their contribution to the platform. This will include development of a composite report for their institution/ region / Member State containing the actions to be taken, stakeholders to be engaged and the role of partners. Each participant will also specify how they will apply the benchmarking tool-kit drawing on the following:

- Statistical analysis of the participant's Operational Programme.
- Mapping of ESF investment in projects working with migrants and ethnic minorities (ESF allocation, agreed outputs and unit costs).
- Identification of delivery problems and issues

Equalities Impact Assessment Framework : Each participant will specify the support their ESF OP equal opportunities action plan or integration that will be taken and the impact measures that change will be measured against.

Assessment and validation of target group competencies : Each participant will specify the pilot approaches they aim to test to support the development of competencies and skills of migrants and ethnic minorities who hold overseas qualifications.

The action plans will then be shared across the platform and enable each participant to set out the focus of their transnational activities and their partners,

The Representative for Integration and Migration of the Berlin Senate as coordinating body for the platform will co-ordinate these activities and make sure that deadlines for the delivery of the reports are met with core partners responsible for the development and delivery of the reports in time and according to the agreed length and structure.

Schedule: May 2009- September 2009 (deadline of the report)

Stage 4 Implementation:

Peer review development: A workshop will be held to establish the peer mentoring process, progress in the development of tool-kits and impact assessments. It will bring together the key actors and stakeholders to prepare for the series of transnational study visits to each partner region. Guidance notes specifying the format for 1-2-1 the matching of mentor and mentee partners will be organised and a timeframe for the study visits will be agreed.

The statistical analysis of ESF OPs will be discussed to address any new problems and challenges that have subsequently been identified and whether they have a comparator in other Operational Programmes. In the seminar training in the use of a web-based interactive benchmarking tool including a scorecard system will also be offered by external experts.

As two rounds of study visits will be held, a second seminar will be held at the beginning of the second round in 2010. In the second briefing seminar progress concerning the benchmarking process will be discussed and the net-based tool will be evaluated.

The platform Core Group will develop a schedule and agenda for events. The platform coordinator together with the Federal Ministry for Labour in Germany will be responsible for organisation of the events. Each partner will pay the travel and accommodation costs for the briefing seminars by himself. The platform will be able to cover the costs for eight individuals from partner regions which do not have enough funding. The platform will also pay for the seminar's catering costs, the costs for external experts to moderate the seminar

and to facilitate the development of the benchmarking tool and equality impact assessments.

Schedule:

3-5 days seminar in September 2009

3-5 days seminar in June 2010

Stage 5 Implementation:

The aim of the visits is to identify good practices and promote regular dialogue through individual peer mentoring to maximise the impact of projects and initiatives underway in the different regions and Member States. The organising principle will be transnational visits of teams of experts from partner regions and Member States. These teams will observe practice and discuss strategies as well as reflecting on issues which may be common to all of them or specific to one region. The visits, organised by the host partner in cooperation with the platform coordinator will take place over a three to five day period and will focus on one of the three thematic fields. Each core partner will host a least two visits as mentor partner (showing good practice).

This process will be reciprocated with each partner visiting at least three partners as mentee partner (learning from good practice of others). The outcome here is to strengthen transnational working and individual relationships.

The study visit groups will be made up of about 10 key actors and stakeholders from the various Member States and regions. The matching of mentor and mentee partners will take place in the launch event and briefing seminar.

Schedule:

First round: 6 x 3-4 days visits (each partner hosting two visits) from October 2009 until May 2010

Second round: 6 x 3-4 days visits (each partner hosting two visits) from August 2010 until March 2011

Stage 6 Implementation:

Review process, testing and piloting: Peer reviews will take place at the end of each round of study visits. Findings from the study visits will be collected and jointly analysed. Models of good practice will be tested for dissemination in partner regions. Recommendation for policy innovations in the three thematic fields will be developed.

The results of individual benchmarking and equality impact assessments will be evaluated, especially the use of the web-based information system and the performance score card to test progress since the development of the initial reports. The peer review seminar will be the analytical core of the project as all the knowledge gathered in the study visits will systematically be used and transferred into ideas, action plans and recommendations for further mainstreaming. The seminars will be moderated by external experts.

The results of the first peer review seminar will be used to inform each ESF Operational programme mid-term evaluation. Recommendations for innovation in the ESF OPs will be set out and provide scope for informing the next phase of regional innovation, mainstreaming and transnational round of ESF projects.

Strategic partners will be invited to participate in the peer review seminar bringing their expertise and networks for dissemination of products and recommendations. This process

will also help to develop suggestions for dissemination, mainstreaming and replication elsewhere.

The platform's Core Group will develop a schedule and agenda for the events. The platform coordinator together with the Federal Ministry for Labour in Germany will be responsible for organising the events. Each participating organisation will pay the travel and accommodation costs for the seminars. The platform will be able to cover the costs for eight individuals from partner regions which do not have enough funding. The platform will also pay the catering costs for the seminars, the external experts moderating the seminar and the development of the benchmarking tool.

Schedule:

First peer review seminar: May 2010
Second peer review seminar: March 2011

Stages 4, 5 and 6 will be implemented in close proximity and form the core element of the platform's work. In the second round of study visits the entry of new stakeholders and new partner regions and Member States is possible. This reflects the desire of platform members to ensure there is ongoing openness towards new participants and transparency of its work.

Stage 7 Implementation, Outcomes: recommendations, web-based benchmarking tool, web based information tool for partners: After the second peer review seminar has been held recommendations to the Commission, and national and regional stakeholders will be written up by the workshop moderators (external experts). The texts will be discussed within the steering group and then delivered to the stakeholders in regional, national and European contexts.

The results of the benchmarking of regional ESF OPs will also be written up and delivered to stakeholders. Furthermore, the web-based benchmarking toolkit will be disseminated to interested partners and stakeholders in the regions. The web-based information tool for partners will be offered as organising principle for transnational information exchange. The platform's steering group will set up a schedule with deadlines for reports and tools ready for dissemination. The platform's coordination will be responsible for the proper delivery of products.

Schedule:

Benchmarking tool ready for dissemination and wider take up in June 2011
Equality Impact Framework ready for dissemination and wider take up in June 2011

Stage 8

The Policy Forum will be held to present recommendations to the wider public and to support the dissemination and mainstreaming process. Also the benchmarking tool will be presented. The policy forum will be linked to a national policy event in Germany to create wider public visibility for the platform's results. Strategic partners will be invited, same as regional, national and European stakeholders linked to employment policies, migrant integration and ESF programme implementation. The German Federal Ministry of labour will pay for the venue, organisation and catering of the event.

Schedule:

The event will take place in September 2011

Stage 9 A synthesis report will be drafted by the partners, to be addressed to the Commission. It will summarise results and outcomes, at the end of the three years of activity of the partnership and constitute a dissemination tool for future follow-on activity. The platform coordination will be responsible for writing the synthesis report. The report will be agreed by the steering group.

Schedule:

Synthesis Report delivered to the EU Commission in October 2011

Stage 10 (on-going) Accompanying formative monitoring and evaluation of the project will be carried out to assess developments and action taken on recommendations/conclusions in each of the regions.

Timetable:

Timing		Thematic Priority 1	Thematic Priority 2	Thematic Priority 3
01.11.2008-30.04.2009 Preparation Phase	Stage 1 and 2	Collecting information, establishing collaboration agreements, steering group meeting		
01.05.2009 – 01.05.2010 Implementation Phase 1: Exchange of good practice; Development of Tools for Benchmarking and equality impact assessment	Stage 3	Briefing reports about participating regions / Assessment of regional ESF OPs		
	Stage 4:	briefing seminar (peer review) with participating regional key actor and stakeholders		
	Stage 5:	transnational study visits (aim: producing recommendations)	transnational study visits (aim: producing recommendations)	transnational study visits (aim: producing recommendations)
	Stage 6:	follow-up seminar (peer review): discussing recommendations and tools for benchmarking		
01.05.2010 – 01.07.2011 Implementation Phase 2: Exchanging good practice; mainstreaming recommendations; Applying tools for Benchmarking and equality impact assessment	Stage 3 and 4:	Briefing reports about participating regions; briefing seminar (peer review) with participating regional key actor and stakeholders		
	Phase 5:	Transnational study visits (aim: producing recommendations)	Transnational study visits (aim: producing recommendations)	Transnational study visits (aim: producing recommendations)
	Phase 6:	Follow-up seminar (peer review): discussing recommendations and the application of tools for benchmarking		
	Stage 7	Outcomes: recommendations, benchmarking toolkit, web-based information platform		
01.07.2011-30.10.2011	Stage 8 and 9:	Policy forum and final report		

8. *Resources and capacities of the partners

How will monitoring, assessing and documenting good practice be organised; what links and synergies are envisaged with national/regional (networking) activities?

Good practice will be reviewed and documented in the two peer review seminars following the study visits. The seminars will be moderated by external experts, who will also be responsible for writing up the results and putting them into policy recommendations. This will be overseen by the platform coordinator and validated by the Core Group.

Each partner hosting a study visit will be responsible for its organisation. Partners will be supported by the platform coordinator concerning the organisation of travel and accommodation.

The results of the study visits and the benchmarking results will be fed into the mid-term evaluation of regional and national ESF OPs. Some Member States, e.g. in England have established equal opportunities sub-committees while in Germany outcomes will be fed into the evaluation of the National Integration Plan and regional integration concepts. In addition, stakeholder, policy makers and politicians working in the field of migrant employment, equal opportunities and integration policies will be presented with the recommendations and asked for mainstreaming of the results in the relevant fora.

On the city level Eurocities will from the beginning be thoroughly involved in the process of delivering recommendations relevant to European cities. Results will also be fed into the Social Affairs and Economic Development Forum of Eurocities and be implemented into Eurocities policy papers.

9. *Management and co-ordination arrangements

What are the rules for decision making, composition of the steering group etc?

The Platform's Core Group, will consist of one delegate from each core partners region. The steering group will take all relevant decisions concerning the schedule of the work programme and the structure of the platform through a consensual decision making process. The platform coordinator will implement the decisions taken by the Core Group. The coordinator will be given delegated responsibilities by the Core Group to accelerate the decision making process as and when required. However, any action or outcome will be transparent and open to all partners and communicated back to all stakeholders.

10. *Synergies with other EU programmes (e.g. PROGRESS, Regions for Economic Change etc)

With regard to the thematic priorities of this platform strong synergies to PROGRESS can be identified.

Thematic priority 1: Skills Assessment and recognition of qualification relates to the PROGRESS policy area *Employment* and the aims of the Lisbon Strategy.

Thematic priority 2: Fostering anti-discrimination skills as professional competence relates to the PROGRESS priority area *Anti-discrimination*. The platform shares with PROGRESS the objective of mutual learning and the identification and promotion of good practice and to enhance the awareness of stakeholders.

Thematic priority 3 shares with PROGRESS the objective to support the development of statistical tools, methods and common indicators and the monitoring of the implementation of policy objectives. The platform will look at existing tools for benchmarking impact of programmes that have been developed under PROGRESS.

The platform will also be informed by activities and the events that will be developed through URBACT. Discussions will take place to identify the potential for cross-fertilisation and

exchange of ideas. To support this, participants involved in URBACT and PROGRESS will also be considered for involvement in peer review seminars and the policy for a as well as the wider dissemination strategy.

11. *Outputs of the network

E.g.: a shared tool or practice; action plans showing how the results of learning will be implemented at OP level; and the setting up of corresponding networks of stakeholders and practitioners at OP level.

The network will develop and test a benchmarking tool for the impact assessment of ESF regional programmes with a special focus on the participation of migrants and ethnic minorities in employment. Each participating partner will measure improvements on the initial baseline position lined out in the briefing report, comparing performance improvements against other regions across different Member States. Each participant will compile an action plan that sets out the key milestones and outcomes to be achieved as their contribution to the platform. This will include development of a composite report for their institution/ region / Member State containing the actions to be taken and the role of partners.

Benchmarking tool-kit: Each participant will also specify how they will apply the tool-kit by drawing on the following:

- Statistical analysis of the participant's Operational Programme.
- Mapping of ESF investment in projects working with migrants and ethnic minorities (ESF allocation, agreed outputs and unit costs).
- Identification of delivery problems and issues

Equalities Impact Assessment Framework : Each participant will specify the support their ESF OP equal opportunities action plan or integration that will be taken and the impact measures that change will be measured against.

Assessment and validation of target group competencies: Each participant will specify the pilot approaches they aim to test to support the development of competencies and skills of migrants and ethnic minorities who hold overseas qualifications.

The action plans will then be shared across the platform and enable each participant to set out the focus of their transnational activities and their partners.

Results from the testing phase will be implemented in the mid-term evaluation of the ESF OPs 2007-2013. The network will also develop policy recommendations focussing on skills assessment and the recognition of qualification of migrants, on anti-discrimination skills as professional competence and on integrated territorial approaches to the EU Commission, the National Member States and the ESF regions. These recommendations will be drawn from the results of a peer review process between the seven partner institutions.

12. *Added value and benefits of the network

What are the expected results for the individual partners and members, for the partners' Operational Programmes (in particular: the production action of plans showing how the results of learning will be implemented at OP level; and the setting up of corresponding networks of stakeholders and practitioners at OP level), and for the ESF as a whole?

The action plans and recommendations drawn from the peer review process in the three thematic priorities will be targeted at each partner's Operational Programmes and other local and regional employment programmes. It is expected that the transnational from of cooperation will trigger a learning process and a process of change and reform in the

participating regions with regard to the three thematic priorities. Moreover the benchmarking tool will trigger a sense of competition between the partner regions, with those partners falling short with regard to specific indicators aiming at improving the impact of their programmes and initiatives under the ESF funding.

Results of the platform will moreover be fed into the discussion process in the Eurocities Economic Development Forum and Social Affairs Forum, enhancing a joint knowledge based position of regions and European cities on increasing the participation of migrants in the labour market. Concrete recommendations will be presented at the annual international Integrating Cities Conference 2010 and 2011.