

Fondation pour la

Solidarité

Immigrant population and the labour market

– Recommendations –



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Immigrant population and the labour market

**Recommendations on the subject of best practices
of partnerships between private companies, trade unions,
and NGOs in the fight against discriminations and
for the integration of immigrated populations**

December 2004

For all information

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Partners of the project



Business&Society

www.business&society



Consortium Gino Mattarelli

www.rectecgm.org/start.htm



Institute of Social Innovation

www.isi.org.gr



The World of NGOs

www.ngo.at



Co-Labor

www.co-labor.coop

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I. THE CONTEXT

In march 2000, the United Nations published an important report relating to the ageing of the European population. According to this report, Europe is predicted to have an influx of between **70 and 700 million immigrants** before 2050 in order to guarantee the existence of a sufficient number of its active population. Even if this is only one scenario, in which the numbers were exaggerated according to a number of demographers, the publication of this report and the subsequent debate it inspired, has brought to light the ambiguity of **the European attitude**. This attitude recommends increasingly 'zero immigration' and the strict closure of its external frontiers, while recognising at the same time the necessity to answer the demographic challenge essentially through...immigration. It is this ambiguity that we find today in the many diverse models and means for integration of which the politics are conducted on a national or regional level.

From this observation on, la Fondation pour la Solidarité – the Foundation for Solidarity, association at the service of the social cohesion and of a common social economic European model – has wished to contribute to a **concerted and coherent European policy**, capable of intervening at the extraordinary occasion of a successful meeting between

the various populations, who live or have been brought to live in Europe. One of the major motivations that drove the citizens of the non-European countries to settle themselves in Europe, lies in their hope to find a job that can ensure better living conditions. The Fondation pour la Solidarité has therefore decided to focus its attention on what happened in (or with the collaboration of) the enterprises, within the framework of their **social responsibility** and this, in **partnership** with the NGO's and/or the trade-unions. It are forms of collaboration that are still not very known and yet strong of original and efficient solutions regarding the integration of the immigrant populations. On the basis of the results of research conducted during one and a half year by the Fondation pour la Solidarité (with the support of the general direction of the Employment and Social Affairs of the **European Commission** and in collaboration with the **partners** from thirteen European Countries) a series of **recommendations has been** addressed to the public authorities as well as to the enterprises, the NGO's, the trade-unions, the European immigrant citizens or citizens who are from immigrant descent.

II. THE RESEARCH

At first, this research identified a series of **good practices of innovating partnership**, concluded in a context of corporate social responsibility concerning the struggle for the integration of the immigrant population and against discrimination. Then, it brought to light the elements of the context that converge towards the success of these partnerships in order to assume their reproduction on a much larger scale on the basis of **a typology of the contexts** and of the different favourable and unfavourable factors that led to the emergence of these type of partnerships. The presentation of the results of this research has been the object of an important European colloquium that took place in the European economic and social Committee on 13 December 2004 in Brussels.

In 2005, every partner in the research will organise a seminar in his/her country to represent these results and to distribute its recommendations. From now on, with the help of these different tools, every actor on the socio-economic field, depending on the environment he/she is in or where he/she wants to work in, will be in a position to measure the possibility to call on these mechanisms of partnerships, with the intention to fight discrimination and to struggle for the integration of immigrant populations.

III. THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

The results of the research, analysed in detail in the final report¹, have enabled a series of findings where the present recommendations are based upon.

Here are the most important.

1. The actors

From the first lecture of the partnership cards on, it is **the multiplicity** of the contributors that impresses the most. From the university researcher till the classic enterprise through the NGO's, the trade-unions, the authorities, the enterprises of the social economy, the social workers, the volunteers and the immigrant populations themselves.

This multiplicity shows that from the North to the South of Europe, actors of all size and of all horizons mobilise themselves to struggle against discriminations and bring their support to the integration of immigrant populations. Amongst these different actors, one notices an important presence of the enterprises of the sector of the **social economy**, that are active on the field of the integration of immigrant populations.

¹ Fondation pour la Solidarité, Relevé, analyse, évaluation et recommandations en matière d'expériences innovantes de partenariats entre entreprises privées, syndicats et/ou ONG dans la lutte contre les discriminations et en matière d'intégration des populations immigrées, December 2004.

The motivation which is at the basis of the partnerships, is always a problematic situation: under-employment, racial discriminations coupled or not with gender discriminations, the difficulty for social and/or cultural integration. The **impulses** “to change things” come either from the authorities (European, national, regional, local), either from the human rights defence associations (ethnic or not), either from the enterprises, either from the trade-unions, either from merchant or non-merchant enterprises who are engaged in a process (formal or informal) of corporate social responsibility.

The **trade-unions** are absent from numerous partnerships. Yet, it is with their collaboration that mentalities inside the enterprises could change. The **authorities** are present in nearly all off the partnerships, most often as sponsors.

2. The target public

In function of the national, regional or local context, as well as in function of the basic missions of the partner who initiated the action, the partnerships target very different kinds of populations. The partnerships who address themselves to the immigrants are different following their action level.

The integration in the labour market is the most ploughed up field by the partnerships. All stages are provided (reception of the immigrants, social negotiation, the creation of enterprises, ...). Most of the partnerships intended for integration, present a 'formation' facet. For that, they rely on the particular expertise of their network (alphabetisation, professional formation, ...).

The great majority of the populations addressed by the actions of the partners, presents a low schooling profile or a profile that is little adapted to the needs of the countries where they immigrated to. The best results are obviously achieved, when a preliminary **formation** makes the competences of the candidates appropriate to the offer of the labour market, and also when the partnership consists out of enterprises, be it from the merchant or non-merchant economy.

One of the most important **barriers** to the integration concerns the responsibility of the recruiters and the enterprises. The constitution of partnerships created to this purpose constitutes exceptional levers that increase the chances of the immigrant populations to join the labour market and improve their working conditions. The movement is slow, long and complex. Nevertheless, the partners have decided to confront the problem of the discriminations at work. A domain rarely explored.

3. Observation and search for quality

The building of partnerships and the work with the immigrant populations are not improvised steps. A meticulous analysis of the **objectives** that are pursued and the **needs** of the world of the immigration is needed. The means that are engaged are multiple: studies, researches, dialogues, visits on the field, meetings of partners and target populations. This necessity is brought to the fore by several partnerships at different levels.

4. Corporate Social Responsibility and immigration

The corporate social responsibility within a framework, such as the formal CSR-Europe network, is rarely mentioned. The majority of the commercial private companies integrates more often than not their action into the framework of an ethical code or a particular chart that is proper to the enterprise. As for numerous cooperatives and associations, the majority is convinced that social responsibility is a part of the essence of their organisation and is placed in the heart of their action. Some have elaborated ethical codes or have undertaken a social diagnostic of their structures (gender, diversity, etc.) It doesn't matter the name and the formal context, all the enterprises (public or private, merchant or

non-merchant) that are concerned by the partnerships, voluntary integrate the social preoccupations in their management (actions in favour of the social, the employment, the community of implantation and its environment).

5. The cross-border dimension

Cross-border partnerships are rare. In case they are imposed by **Equal**, the partners do not refer themselves to the cross-border dimension.

6. The gender approach

A lot of partnerships include **the gender dimension** on two levels: one level concerning the female workers and the workers active in the partner organisations themselves and an other level concerning the public targeted by the partnerships.

7. The context

The majority of the partnerships is taking place in an environment where the immigrant population is dense and where **the barriers to become a job** are numerous.

8. The financing

Without a financial sponsoring, private or public, the majority of the partnerships would not exist. The financial support is often the condition to carry out new experiences, experimental projects. The partnerships are financed on very different ways.

When the partnerships are financed by **European Funds** (Equal in particular), a particular attention to the quality of the services and to the stage of the evaluation is observed. When the partnerships are financed by the national or regional authorities, they rely on the particular national or regional legislation related to the problems of immigration. When the partnerships are financed by local authorities, they are often in a difficult context. The role of the authorities does not limit itself to financing even if this form of support is nearly always indispensable (seven partnerships on ten receive public financing).

9. The evaluation

The evaluation, weak point of numerous partnerships, is nevertheless fundamental: it allows to take off again, to redirect, to ensure durability. It is through the evaluation that **the exchange of expertise** can be realised. Finally, it

is the condition *sine qua non* for professionalism of the services that are offered and the insurance of an outstanding action.

IV. THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The analysis of the partnerships, that have been communicated to us from the four corners of Europe have permitted us to establish sixty **recommendations**. These are for the attention of the engaged partners or for those who want to engage themselves in the conclusion of partnerships, intended to favour the integration of the immigrants and to struggle against the discrimination, of which they are the victims. We were able to complete this list thanks to the remarks and the interventions from a series of speakers and participants, present at the colloquium organised by the Fondation de la Solidarité on 13 December 2004 in Brussels.

The postulate of our project is based on the conviction that **the corporate social responsibility** constitutes an instrument that is particularly relevant for the integration of the immigrant populations and the struggle against discrimination. The results of our research show that there is an important field of investigation and that there are perspectives from the point of view of the enterprises as well

as from the point of view of the field associations. The partnerships concluded within the framework of the corporate social responsibility are bringing original answers and are asking new questions because the angle of the corporate social responsibility is a very particular look upon the problem. The following recommendations have the ambition to contribute to **the multiplication** of these partnerships.

1. The Partners

To realise this project, the Fondation pour la Solidarité has constituted a network of partners from Belgium, Austria, Luxembourg, Italy and Greece stemming from the world of the classical economy – **Business & Society** (Belgium) –, from the world of the social economy – **Consortium Gino Mattarelli** (Italy), **Co-Labor** (Luxembourg) –, from the world of the advice and consultancy – **Institute of Social Innovation** (Greece) – and from the world of the non-governmental organisations – **The World of NGOs** (Austria).

At first, their contribution consisted in making a summary of the innovating experiences in their own countries or of the experiences they were implicated in. Secondly, a summary of the same type of experiences has been realised with new partners for the neighbouring countries – **Mirec asbl**

(Belgium), **Confederacion empresarial espanola de la Economia social CEPES** (Spain), **Innovacion, Transferecia, Y Desarrollo ITD** (Spain), Alternatives économiques (France), **ICCR Budapest** (Hungary) – to enlarge the field of the European countries that are observed (Germany, Spain, Finland, France, Hungary, The Netherlands, Poland, Sweden). Concerning the identification of the experiences, a particular attention has been paid to the national specificities that are linked to the different histories of the immigration (CEEC², Southern countries, Northern countries). The partners were chosen in function of their implication in the field of the corporate social responsibility , of the integration of disadvantaged workers on the labour market, of the gender dimension and in function of the partnerships or the networks they created.

2. General Recommendations

These global recommendations are addressed to all the partners: authorities (European, national, regional, local), enterprises (federations, trade chambers, persons in charge of the associations CSR, ...), NGO's, trade-unions, immigrant persons or from immigrant descent.

² Central and Eastern European Countries.

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1. Encourage the **multi-partnership**: authorities, enterprises, trade-unions, NGO's, target public. This will ensure the success both for the struggle against racial discriminations as for integration alike. But it will also ensure the durability of the action and avoid the "one shot". When the interests, the competences and the resources from different sides are crossing each other, they will reinforce themselves mutually.
2. Encourage this multi-partnership, by **creating meeting spaces** for the actors: NGO's, trade-unions, enterprises, target public and authorities. These organisations don't know each other very well. To meet each other permits a better perceiving the functioning of the ones and the others, while favouring the dialogue on a non-competitive ground.
3. **Avoid the "getthoisation"** of the immigrant populations by opening up the doors for them at all levels and be watchful so that they can work to serve the whole of the society and will not be locked up as a "service for the immigrants".
4. Support the initiatives that identify precisely **the needs** of the target groups of the partnership. Elaborate a model for the audit of these needs.
5. To define the needs of the target groups, it is important to **distinguish the target public**. Are we dealing with 'newcomers' who don't know the country

at all or know very little of it? With populations of foreign descent, who know the country but who are confronted with the difficulties for integration? Are we dealing with people in a regulated situation or with people in a clandestine situation? The persons who arrive in a country need help and are concerned with the policy of integration. Persons from foreign descent who live here since a certain time are rather concerned with the problems of discrimination and/or with the difficulties of professional integration. The mechanisms for integration are, in certain regions, much more developed than the mechanisms on the subject of the struggle against discrimination.

6. **Include systematically the target public** into the partnerships so that they become actors for their proper integration and so that the programs are taking their interests into account.
7. Favour **cross-border operations** that have a sense, to take advantage of their savoir-faire, or to take into account the interests of the country of origin and the receiving country.
8. Do not neglect the possibilities of **self-employment**. Each actor can supply a particular competence to this end (transfer of competences, coaching, financing, relay, information, ...).
9. Be watchful to the implementation of the **gender**

dimension and its impact, evaluated by indicators, quantitative and qualitative, in each partnership. To realise this, there is a need to be in touch with specialised organisms.

10. Favour the creation of **cooperatives** of immigrant women, by ensuring them the necessary formation for joint worker-management control, to facilitate their integration on the labour market. This formula often makes it possible to take into account the needs for flexibility, claimed by these women.
11. Work in **imaginative partnerships**. The partnerships of competence are not the only ones that are producing a result. Partnerships at multiple stages or by rebound allow to overcome the negative effects of a network where partners are too numerous.
12. Favour the permanent **evaluation** of the partnerships as well as the **quality control** of the functioning of the partnership and the services offered by the partners.
13. Promote the **social audit** of the projects notably concerning the satisfaction of each party: authorities, enterprises, NGO's, trade-unions, target public. Support the construction of **indicators**. The audits of the gender are source of inspiration.
14. Encourage the systematic recourse to the practice of **benchmarking** to make it possible that the good

practices that are created within the framework of the partnerships are reproduced. Obviously, this reproduction must operate by taking into account the national, regional or local specificities, in function of the needs of the target public and the available competences: an important work of re-appropriation of the methods and the objectives must be undertaken.

15. Take care that the exchanges of good practices are **not going one-way** (e.g. Western Europe “educates” Eastern Europe) and that real partnerships are established.
16. Incite to a **positive contagion**. Each actor has a role to play in the distribution of good practices and of the information collected during the actions of the partnership. A network of multiple stages favours this passage of witness.

3. Specific Recommendations

3.1 For the attention of public authorities

These are twenty-three recommendations specially intended for the authorities.

17. **Give the example** as employer. The authorities themselves can create partnerships that can facilitate

the integration of immigrant workers into their services, that struggle against the ethnical discriminations in the recruitment of the workers, at the workplaces and towards the external parties of the public institutions.

18. Favour the creation of partnerships particularly by **European financing programs** that are adopted and supported on the national level. Working together is a guarantee to precise target and durability of the projects as well as the collection and the distribution of the results.
19. Inform and meet the structures that are able to conclude partnerships and that are supported on a European, national and/or regional level. The 2004 Report of the ILO, A fair approach of the immigrant workers, notices: "The management of the migrations is in essence a multilateral question" "...the scale of the flow and the extension on a world level of the migration networks, makes it the more imperative for the countries to look for partnerships abroad, within the framework of multilateral and bilateral agreements and treaties. Now, the biggest part of the cross-border movements is still happening on a regional level. That is the reason why regional agreements and processes for the management of the migrations and the

protection of the workers are so valuable.”³

20. Encourage the creation of **national plans** against discrimination and for integration that make the link between countries, regions and Europe.
21. Promote and give information about the **CSR**, still widely underestimated in a lot of regions of the European Union, on its capacity to propose supplementary tools for integration and against discriminations.
22. Define a real **European policy** for integration by highlighting the opportunities offered by the CSR on this matter. Now only a small number of pioneer enterprises invest in politics for the promotion of diversity. Enterprises are looking for solid economical arguments to invest in the CSR and for studies on detailed cases about other enterprises that invested in the active politics of diversity. Initiatives can be launched by the authorities to elaborate **collections of case studies** and to give them access to these kinds of information.
23. Establish European partnerships that distribute **the best practices concerning CSR**, that encourage the CSR to the enterprises of a number of countries, that are behind schedule on this subject.

³ CONFREP, Conférence Internationale du Travail 92^{ème} session 2004, Rapport VI, 2004 – 03 – 0362 – 01.

24. The **actions for formation** that want to improve or adapt the competences of the immigrant populations to become better integration in the labour market, insofar as they are based on an analysis of the needs of the target population and of the labour market, must be supported.
25. Launch **appeals to make propositions** on the regional, national and/or European level to promote and support the creation and the development of innovating initiatives on the subject of the integration of immigrant populations, to encourage the transfer of successful pioneer-projects.
26. Finance the studies that are elaborating **models** of evaluation, of audit or of indicators to support the quality of the partnerships and their services.
27. Realise **a better information and become a greater awareness** concerning the opportunities offered by existing programs, notably by EQUAL. Support the projects that want to realise this communication.
28. Support **a network of organisations** that promote the diversity in the European Union to share good practices and ensure an optimal diffusion of the results of the researches financed by the authorities.
29. Be aware of the fact that now that **the structural European Funds** are in full revision, the dimension of

diversity must be brought into account in their new forms.

30. Support and encourage the NGOs and the structures for integration that have a prominent role in the approach of the diversity in Europe.
31. Encourage every organisation, public or private, to include a “**diversity audit**” in their social balance, so that they can measure the efforts realised in the fulfilling of the objectives of equality.
32. Stimulate the enterprises to conclude a **collective labour agreement** on diversity.
33. Encourage **the cross-border partnerships**, particularly those who take care about the needs of the countries of origin and the countries who receive. The Nurses partnership between Italy and Poland is a very good example of what has been undertaken.
34. Encourage the partnerships that struggle against the discriminations of **the ROM, the Gypsies and the people of travel**. Following a report published on 22 November 2004 by the European Commission, “*the treatment of the ROM, the gypsies and the people of travel has become one of the most acute problems Europe is confronted with on the political, social and human rights level*”⁴. The ROM must be included in the

⁴ Commission européenne, *La situation des ROM dans une Union européenne élargie*, Luxembourg, 2004.

conception, the implementation and the evaluation of these partnerships.

35. Make sure that the partnerships that are financed, understand **the gender dimension** and have a control on its impact.
36. Support the creation of a **specific Internet site** that has been worked out by the European authorities, showing all the different cases of existing partnerships, the ways of financing that are available, the national and international relays, the partners who are engaged in the CSR, the NGOs that are concerned and the trade-union organisations that are involved. It will establish links with legal or financial programs from the European, national, regional and local authorities. This will make it possible for an actor who wants to engage himself to have an easy access to the competence he wants to obtain (e.g. find an ONG relay that can ensure the same service for an implanted subsidiary company in another country of the European Union). It permits him to find the financing programs he can appeal on if necessary.
37. promote and support in particular the constitution and the development of **migrant associations (male or female)** that are capable to establish or re-establish the links between the communities.
38. The politics related to the migrations of the workforce

can benefit from a large support if they are elaborated with the full and entire **participation** of the ones for whom these politics are intended for, as well as of the ones who represent their interests in the most direct way: the employers and the workers.

39. Support the enterprises, the NGO's and the migrants in the implementation of the general and particular recommendations that are proposed.

3.2 For the attention of enterprises

Here are seven recommendations particularly intended for the enterprises and their federations.

40. Include **a diversity audit** in the social balance to seize the efforts that are realised to fulfil the objectives of equality and to detect the practices of inequality at all levels of the enterprise. An ONG that is specialised in this matter and the representatives of the workers can be a good help.
41. Create **formal (CSR) and informal networks** to exchange good practices, information's and methods concerning partnership and diversity between the enterprises.
42. Implement **a network of positive contagion** inspired by the Swedish partnership *Förenings-*

Spaarbanken. After the bank itself had experienced the recruitment of people of immigrant descent, it sent six amongst them on an information and mediation mission to other enterprises and immigrant environment, to testify about the interest of recruiting workers from immigrant descent for all the concerned parties.

43. Arrange to meet potential partners – enterprises, NGOs, trade-unions, target public, authorities – to make them part of the **CSR engagement** of the enterprise and, particularly, inform them about the will of the enterprise to engage itself in the diversity or about its experience on the subject.
44. Appeal on the essential competences to make the CSR engagement efficient: **be surrounded** by NGOs, public administrations, workers organisations who know well the target public and/or the problems (detection of discriminating practices at the entrance of or at the workplace) and capable to ensure certain relays (audit, information, formation, ...).
45. **Inform the personnel** of the enterprise about the engagement of the partnership on the subject of diversity.
46. **Collect information** directly from the authorities, or via the professional networks or the CSR, the NGOs or the trade-unions about the existing financing

programs on the European, national, regional and local level.

3.3 For the attention of NGOs

Here are five recommendations particularly intended for the NGOs.

47. The struggle against discriminations passes through the European, national, regional or local **laws and the regulations**. The role of the NGOs, thanks to their presence on the field, their privileged contacts with the immigrant populations or their role in the defence of the human rights, is to be **a permanent watch** over the respect of those laws and regulations and, if the case arises, to denounce their non-respect.
48. The NGOs for the insertion and the defence of the rights of immigrant populations are often at the forefront in the elaboration of the action plans. It is therefore important that they make contacts and partnerships with the enterprises (merchant or non-merchant) on a systematic way **to make them sensitive** for the problems of immigrant populations as well as for the solutions that are possible and of which they could be the actors.
49. Make sure to **give the example** and to integrate

women and persons from immigrant descent into the authorities who are taking the decisions and who are doing the consultations, as well as in their own teams of workers.

50. **Inform and promote** the advantages of the work in partnership with the enterprises, the workers organisations and the target public towards the NGOs.
51. Promote the creation and the development of **associations of migrants**, support them by allowing them to benefit from an associative experience and invite them to join or to create partnerships.

3.4 For the attention of trade-unions

Here are six recommendations particularly intended for the trade-unions.

52. Create an **observatory against discriminations** within the union organisation to stay alert, to make the whole of the trade-union actors sensitive to these questions and to take measures so they are taken into account by the basis.
53. Create **cross-border relays** on the question of immigration. Since the enterprises are multinationals, the cross-border approach not only permits to be informed on what is happening elsewhere but also to

use this canal for transmitting experiences and to make other trade-union organisations sensitive to the question of immigration and discrimination.

54. The trade-unions are a bridgehead to the enterprises. They can play a primary role in the **consciousness-raising of the workers and the employers** towards the immigrant populations, so that they engage themselves in partnership in the actions of the CSR.
55. The projects for professional integration in an enterprise are sometimes facing serious obstacles when the workers are confronted with the arrival of a different population in the workplace, who takes the place of "their brothers" or "their cousins". The trade-union stewards should implement and continue **specific programs** for the basis to favour a successful understanding between the workers of different origin.
56. Try to conclude **collective conventions on the subject of diversity**. In September 2004, the French trade-unions signed an agreement with the management of PSA Peugeot Citroën on the diversity and the social cohesion. Its purpose is to struggle against all forms of discrimination, to facilitate the management of the differences in the social cohesion and to ensure an equal treatment in the professional

career of the salaried. The agreement provides:

- The implementation of tools and procedures that guarantee the equality of chances and of treatment, notably in their access to employment and in the process of formation and professional career;
 - The development of steps for integration, particularly by the recruitment of young qualified people coming from the sensitive urban areas;
 - The creation of a joint observatory of diversity that can propose, if necessary, a plan for complementary actions;
 - A campaign of information to all the collaborators on the themes of respect of the differences and the struggle against every form of discrimination, by relying on the European or national public programs.
57. Ensure the durability of the actions from the enterprises in favour of the integration of the immigrant populations and the struggle against ethnical discriminations.

3.5 For the attention of target public

Here are three recommendations intended to the target public.

58. **Participate** in pressure groups and NGO's to create relays towards the authorities, the enterprises and the workers organisations so that their real needs should be taken into account. Integration in the preliminary discussions of the initiatives within the partnerships and the process of evaluation.
59. **Contact** the organisations who have to distribute the CSR, to make sure that the diversity is integrated.
60. Join or create **migrant associations** that are capable to accompany the integration of the newcomers in the receiving country in an efficient way.

V. SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATIONS

Within the framework of the project, an internet site has been implemented. The reader can find there:

- A presentation of the project;
- All the reports on the project (intermediate, final, of activities) that can be downloaded (pdf format);
- Information's on the partners in the project;
- The whole of the records of good practices analysed in the final report (pdf format);
- A data base with the synthesis of the good practices (with a search engine for every activity, country and type of partnerships);
- Useful links on the themes that are dealt with in the project.

Do not hesitate to consult it!

www.partenariat-integration.be

VI. THE FONDATION POUR LA SOLIDARITÉ

La Fondation pour la Solidarité - 'the Foundation for Solidarity' - is an association at the service of the social cohesion and of a European common economical model. It works for the promotion of the solidarity, the ethical and democratic values in all their forms. It wants to create durable alliances between the European representatives of the five families of socio-economic actors. Through concrete projects, the foundation wants to create relations between university researchers and the associative movement, the enterprises and the social actors, to take up the numerous challenges and to contribute to the construction of a solidary Europe, carrier of social cohesion.

Amongst the current activities, the Fondation pour la Solidarité initiates and ensures the follow-up of a number of Belgian and European projects; it develops networks of competence, encourages and ensures the realisation and the distribution of socio-economic studies; the creation of observatories; the organisation of colloquia, of seminars and thematic meetings; the elaboration of recommendations for the economic, social and political decision takers. The Fondation pour la Solidarité organises its activities around different poles of research, studies and actions:

Citizenship: Associative and non-merchant sector; associative pacts; participative democracy; civil society, promotion of the European social model in the new member countries; the struggle against the digital fracture; e-learning; life long education; culture.

Regulated globalisation: fair trade; financing in solidarity; strategy of the millennium to eradicate the poverty in the world; regulation of the multinationals and the international organisations; alterglobalisation; socioeconomic development of Mediterenean circumference.

Lasting and territorial development: Cities and the solidarity; new professions of the city; the politics of the city; the territorial development; energy; a lasting politic for housing.

Social and economic cohesion: Indicator of social and economic wealth; social and collective entrepreneurship; promotion of the social economy; integration of the immigrant populations or from immigrant descent; the inclusion, insertion and struggle against the social exclusion; the new bearings of labour; the right for health; the patronage of the enterprises.

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Besides this thematic organisation and within the respect of the multidisciplinary and transversal dimension of its steps, the Fondation pour la Solidarité reserves a particular place for other thematic, who can not be caught in arbitrary classifications. It concerns the **North-South relations** or the **equality of the gender**. The Fondation pour la Solidarité has innovating propositions and very concrete results of research on different domains concerning social cohesion and the different poles at his disposal.

www.fondation-solidarite.be