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ESIP NEWS

ESIP Applies for Annual Operating Grant

The EU [Europe for Citizens programme](#) has recently published a new call for proposals to provide "structural support for European public policy research organisations and for civil society organisations at European level" 2009. The aim of the Europe for Citizens programme is to bring Europe closer to its citizens and to enable them to participate fully in the European construction. Through this programme, citizens have the opportunity to be involved in transnational exchanges and cooperation activities, contributing to developing a sense of belonging to common European ideals and encouraging the process of European integration.

Qec-ERAN, as one of the founding members of ESIP, has prepared a project application in order to support the network activities of ESIP for 2009. A decision on the application will be made available in April next year. We will keep you informed.

For more information please contact [Janneke Draaisma](#)

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ESIP MEMBER PROFILE



The Intercultural Institute of Timisoara

(I.I.T.) is an autonomous, non-governmental institution, which pursues the development of the intercultural dimension in the fields of education, culture and youth. It is located in the Banat region, an area characterised by longstanding good relations between its many different ethnic and religious communities. The Institute promotes the region's climate of interethnic tolerance and communication at a national and international level.

The Institute was established with the support of the local authorities of Timisoara and the Council of Europe in 1992, and has since then participated in numerous projects related to national minorities and intercultural education, at local, regional, national and international level. These have been financially supported by the European Council, the Commission, and various international funds and foundations.

In 1998 the Intercultural Institute was the first Eastern-European institution to coordinate a transnational [SOCRATES - COMENIUS](#) action 2 project. The EURROM project was designed to

integrate Roma culture into the educational process by developing methodological guidelines and resources for teachers working with Roma children

The I.I.T. is represented on the European Social Inclusion Platform by Eugen Gherga, project coordinator and Senior trainer in the field of youth activities. Mr. Gherga is a member of the ESIP Steering Board. ESIP coordinator Janneke Draaisma asked him how he sees ESIP and how he would like it to develop in the future:

EG: *ESIP for me provides a way of getting in touch with organisations that have goals similar to ours. It is a simple network, without internal hierarchy, which allows members to better tackle social exclusion through contact and cooperation.*

And I think it should remain just that: a simple network. This way it can easily become very large and facilitate widespread cooperation in the field of social inclusion throughout Europe.



Mr. Eugen Gherga, project coordinator and senior trainer

Present I.I.T. projects include:

- **Europe of Stereotypes – East meets**

West through arts

- **EURRENET - The European Roma Education Network**



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SOCIAL INCLUSION NEWS

EU Council Adopts EU-wide Framework to Combat Racism and Xenophobia

The EU Council of Justice and Interior Ministers on 28 November adopted the so-called 'Framework Decision' on combating racism and xenophobia, seven years after it had first been presented by the European Commission.

The Framework Decision is considered an important tool for sanctioning on the EU level racist and xenophobic crimes.

EU Member States will have two years to introduce severe and effective sanctions of at least between 1 and 3 years of imprisonment against those who intentionally publicly incite violence or hatred by dissemination or distribution of tracts, pictures or other material, directed against persons defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin.

Similar sanctions will apply to those who publicly condone, deny or grossly trivialise crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes as defined in the statute of the International Criminal Court and crimes defined by the Tribunal of Nüremberg.

[Read framework decision](#)

Commission Acts against Six Countries on Gender Equality Legislation

The European Commission has started infringement procedures against six countries because the European Commission considers they have not fully implemented EU law, prohibiting discrimination in employment on the grounds of sex. Austria, Lithuania, Slovenia, Hungary, Italy and Malta have two months to respond. If they fail to reply or if the response is unsatisfactory, the

Commission can decide to take them to the European Court of Justice (ECJ).

According to the Commission, the main problems include definitions of direct and indirect discrimination; rights of women on maternity leave; and the functioning of equality bodies.

[Read more on EU gender equality legislation](#)

European Parliament Ensures Temporary Workers Gain Equal Rights

On 22 October, at its plenary session, the European Parliament adopted a Directive on Temporary Agency Work which enables temporary workers to be treated equally, from day one, with permanent staff in the same company.

However, in the UK, agency workers will only get the same pay and conditions as permanent staff after having been employed for a period of 12 weeks (this was the condition to adopt the Directive which has been blocked in the European Council since 2002).

The adoption of the Directive goes in the direction suggested by Harlem Désir MEP, reporter on the issue and the Employment and

Social Affairs Committee that recommended, earlier this month, the approval of the Council's Common Position on Temporary Work, without any amendments.

[Read the text adopted by the European Parliament](#)

European Consumer Debt Network Calls for European Action Day on Financial Inclusion and for the Right to a Bank Account

While banks have been very inventive in introducing complex financial products that contributed to the current economic crises, the majority of them are still failing to provide the most basic banking services to some millions of citizens across Europe.

The [European Consumer Debt Network](#) (ECDN), an alliance of about 40 debt advice organisations, consumer agencies and researchers from across Europe, therefore launched a European action day on financial inclusion on 31st of October.

According to the ECDN, having access to basic banking services is a precondition for being able to fully participate in the economic and social life. Exclusion from banking services usually has severe consequences, such as

difficulties in finding a job, problems in finding proper housing or high extra costs for paying bills.

See [ECDN press release](#)

Markets Alone Cannot Ensure Housing for All, UN Expert Says

On 23 October, Raquel Rolnik, the new United Nations Special Rapporteur on adequate housing issued a statement in New York, declaring that markets alone cannot ensure housing for all.

"The belief that markets will provide adequate housing for all has failed. The current crisis is a stark reminder of this reality. A home is not a commodity – four walls and a roof. It is a place to live in security, peace and dignity, and a right for every human being."

In her statement, she goes on to say that "excessive focus on homeownership as the one and single solution to ensure access to housing is part of the problem" and warns that homelessness threatens not only the most marginalised or the most poor, but increasingly "those who work but cannot afford market prices and are forced to live in inadequate housing. Homelessness, or living in inadequate housing conditions, can cause

not only material deprivation but also the loss of enjoyment of a wide range of other human rights, whether civil and political or economic, social and cultural."

[Read the full statement](#)

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PUBLICATIONS

Employment in Europe 2008: What's New?



On 18 November the European Commission published its 20th report on Employment in Europe. The report mainly focuses on the effects of the free movement of workers after the enlargement of the EU and on the first phase of temporary measures in the new Member States.

The Commission highlights the positive impact immigrants have had on growth and employment. It stresses that the flow of labour has been limited and that labour migration is mainly temporary and plays a role of adjustment. Flows should reduce with the economic crisis. In conclusion the Commission encourages Member States to lift restrictions to the free movement of workers from the new Member States.

[Download the report](#)

Income Inequality and Poverty Rising in Most OECD Countries

According to a new OECD report, the gap between rich and poor has grown in more than three-quarters of the countries members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), over the past two decades. OECD's "Growing Unequal?" finds that the economic growth of recent decades has benefited the rich more than the poor. In some countries, such as Canada, Finland, Germany, Italy, Norway and the United States, the gap also increased between the rich and the middle-class.

Countries with a wide distribution of income tend to have more widespread income poverty. Also, social mobility is lower in countries with high inequality, such as Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States, and higher in the Nordic countries where income is distributed more evenly.

[Download the report](#)

Little progress on poverty says EAPN assessment of the National Strategic Reports on Social Inclusion (2008-10)

In general terms, there is no significant progress on poverty. This is in a nutshell the main message that comes out of [the assessment of the National Strategic Reports on Social Protection and Social Inclusion the European Anti-Poverty Network \(EAPN\) just released.](#)

According to the EAPN assessment, whilst in some Member States there are some modest improvements in at-risk-of-poverty levels, this is often matched by deterioration in the poverty levels for specific groups, particularly the unemployed, people with disabilities, families with children, single parents, older family members and migrants and ethnic minorities. In other member states poverty and inequality are actually increasing.



[Download the report](#)

Poverty across Europe: The Latest Evidence Using the EU-SILC Dataset

The rate of poverty in the countries of the European Union varies between 10% and

23%. Low levels of poverty characterize the Scandinavian countries, the so-called Corporatist countries (Austria, Germany), and the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia among the former Socialist countries. In contrast, the risk of poverty tends to be relatively high in the Mediterranean and the Baltic states.

The October Policy Brief of the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research discusses the sensitivity of these estimates to the measures used and explores the underlying patterns across the vulnerable groups and the likely causes of poverty in these countries.

[Download the policy brief](#)

Equality in Action: Spotlight on the Various Elements of the EU New "Social Package"

This edition of the European Commission's DG Employment and Social Affairs newsletter is designed to help readers access the various elements of the new social package, which was published by the European Commission on 2 July 2008.

This far-reaching legislative package comprises several documents, including a

proposed Directive and a Commission Communication on anti-discrimination. 'Equality in Action' guides readers through these various elements, providing clear explanations, reactions to the package and links to relevant information and contact points.

[Download 'Equality in Action'](#)

Manual for Gender Mainstreaming: Employment, Social Inclusion and Social Protection Policies

This European Commission manual on gender mainstreaming provides an easy-to-grasp explanation of what gender mainstreaming is, and practical, hands-on advice to policy-makers on how to implement it in employment, and social inclusion and social protection policies.

It is intended to contribute to the visibility of gender equality issues, and is aimed at all stakeholders in gender equality, especially those working on employment, social inclusion and social protection policies in the Member States.

[Download the manual](#)

Migrant Women in the European Labour Force: Current Situation and Future Prospects

This European Commission publication presents an overview of the situation of female migrants in the EU labour market. It indicates key features of women migrants' participation in the EU labour force revealed by this analysis and investigates lessons from some existing programmes and policies with the potential to address the integration of women migrants into labour markets.

Through the present analysis, and assessment of selected policies and programmes, this study also highlights a need to better integrate the gender dimension into relevant immigration policies, and the migration dimension into gender policies

[Download the study](#)

MIPEX Briefing: What Future for Immigrant Families in Europe?

The Migration Policy Group (MPG) launches the first of its MIPEX Policy Impact Assessments: "What future for immigrant families in Europe - the high road back to Tampere or the low road on from Vichy?"

It uses the MIPEX to re-tell the history of the family reunion directive. It forecasts how proposed modifications would bring the EU closer to, or further from, its vision of promoting integration and how each initiative would concretely raise or lower integration standards in national legislation in 25 Member States.

[Download briefing](#)

New FEANTSA Magazine on the Right to Housing is out!



The autumn 2008 edition of "Homeless in Europe", FEANTSA's tri-annual magazine, is now available online. The theme of this issue is "The Right to Housing: The Way Forward".

Access to adequate housing can be considered as being a precondition for the exercise of most other fundamental human rights. Having a secure, adequate and affordable place to live is essential to the achievement of a decent standard of living and to the fulfilment of human life beyond simple survival.

This bumper edition looks at the issue of the right to housing from a number of perspectives and gives practical information

on the legal frameworks which promote the right to housing, explains the Council of Europe Collective Complaint mechanism, provides details on Housing Rights Watch and presents national case studies from Scotland, Finland, France and Spain.

[Download this issue](#)

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CONFERENCES

European Social Services Conference: "Quality and Performance in Social Services in Europe" 22-24 June 2009, Prague

The annual **European Social Services Conference** is intended for all those concerned with planning and delivering European social care and health. Through top-quality plenary presentations and a highly topical workshop programme, the conference offers strategic and practical learning and networking opportunities to all those responsible for planning and implementing services in different European regions: planners, politicians, managers and professionals.

[Read more](#)

**Info day on Europe for Citizens
Programme 20 January 2009, Brussels**

The European Commission and the Executive Agency for Education, Audiovisual and Culture will organise an INFO DAY on the Europe for Citizens Programme the 20 January 2009 at the Conference Centre Albert Borschette in Brussels. This info day will focus on the new priorities for 2009, the major events planned in 2009, the dissemination and exploitation of results and best practices.

It will also provide updated information concerning the procedures, the Programme guide and the calendar for submitting applications within the town twinning action. It is targeted mainly to multipliers interested in the Europe for citizens Programme such as national, regional and local associations, and representation offices based in Brussels.

[Programme overview](#)



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