



PRIORITY SECTOR
Social Inclusion, Youth
Employment and
Poverty Reduction

Programme area n°10

Local Development and Poverty Reduction

OBJECTIVE

Strengthened social and economic cohesion

AREAS OF SUPPORT

- > Social and economic development in specific geographic areas
- > Anti-discriminatory activities focusing on groups vulnerable to social and economic exclusion
- > Interventions to increase job prospects
- > Interventions to increase job capacity, especially among the most vulnerable
- > Quality of and access to social/welfare services
- > Networking and policy exchanges between municipalities

SUGGESTED MEASURES

- > Developing active inclusion policies and bottom-up approaches to local and regional development
- > Sharing of knowledge and best practices at a local/regional/national level and developing joint strategies aimed at reducing poverty
- > Activities aimed at modernising the public sector
- > Promoting social investment in community development in poorer areas
- > Spurring on innovative economic and social entrepreneurship in local business
- > Cooperation between local authorities and private and civil society actors
- > Providing information on systems for micro-credit
- > Developing knowledge exchange on systems for apprenticeships, business start-ups, and incubators
- > Supporting cross-sectoral, socially innovative approaches, for example through re-training and/or participative capacity-development methods to address unemployment in particular groups, especially young people and cultural and ethnic minorities
- > Promoting better access to welfare services
- > Developing activities aimed at promoting equal opportunities for vulnerable groups
- > Awareness-raising and integration in relation to asylum seekers and migrants

RELEVANCE OF SUPPORT

According to the EU, people are at risk of living in poverty if their income falls below 60% of median income in the country where they live. In 2011, more than 119 million people – 24% of the EU population – were at risk of poverty. The Europe 2020 strategy aims to reduce this number by 20 million by 2020. Special attention is paid to measures aimed at those running the highest risk of poverty and social exclusion: the unemployed and low-skilled, non-EU migrants and single parent families. There is an urgent need to address youth unemployment (23% in EU countries in 2013) and the unemployment of cultural and ethnic minorities and non-EU migrants.

The EEA and Norway Grants target the challenges that the most vulnerable regions in the beneficiary countries are currently facing. The Grants do this by providing support to help address poverty at the root causes: lack of job prospects, lack of job capacity and problems leading to social exclusion. The support aims to empower communities to develop innovative, inclusive and bottom-up approaches to involve people in the development of their community and create better prospects for the disadvantaged. It also aims to stimulate knowledge exchange between municipalities through networking and policy exchanges.

The Europe 2020 strategy and the EU's cohesion policy take account of the crucial role Europe's cities and regions play for future smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Addressing poverty is a key priority in this strategy.

BILATERAL INTEREST

The donor and beneficiary countries share challenges in the area in local development and empowerment of local communities. Programme and project cooperation is encouraged to share knowledge and best practices.