



THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

A Progressive Approach Towards European Solidarity

ONLINE DISCUSSION, 22 APRIL 2021, 15:00–16:30 (CET)

INVITATION

The Integration and Development Fund as proposed by the Municipal Integration and Development Initiative (MIDI) aims to support cities and municipalities in offering reception and shelter for refugees while contributing to a more solidarity-based narrative and approach towards them. It aims to reimburse the cost of reception and integration while providing an equal amount of funding for urban and community development. This in turn is envisioned to create a win-win situation for cities, residents, and refugees alike. Furthermore, this fund will give cities an incentive and more leverage to advocate for humanitarian, sustainable and inclusive solutions. Especially in times of rising anti-migration sentiments and member state's reluctance to participate in intra-European refugee relocation schemes, this municipality-based approach offers a new perspective towards a progressive European solidarity.

However, the joint funding of urban development and integration in a single fund as well as the direct transfer of funds to municipalities and cities raises legal and practical questions. Do the treaties of the EU allow for such a fund? And how does the fund need to be designed to be a useful and accessible tool for large as well as small towns and municipalities? To discuss these legal and practical challenges and possibilities, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung is happy to invite you to our online discussion with European stakeholders and legal experts on April 22.

PROGRAMME

- 15:00 OPENING AND INTRODUCTION**
- › **Jens Geier**, Member of the European Parliament (MEP), S&D
 - › **Tobias Schmitt**, Policy Officer Migration, Integration and EU Fundamental Rights, FES EU-Office
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- 15:10 EXPERT LEGAL OPINION**
- › **Dr Sina Fontana**, Deputy Professor of European and German Constitutional Law, Administrative Law, Social Law and Public Economic Law, University of Potsdam
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- 15:20 EXPERT DISCUSSION**
- › **Dr Gesine Schwan**, Co-founder and president of the Humboldt-Viadrina Governance Platform
 - › **Dr Thomas Spies** (SPD), Lord Mayor of Marburg, Germany
 - › **Agnese Papadia**, Policy Officer, Legal Pathways and Integration Unit, DG HOME, European Commission
 - › **Birgit Sippel**, MEP and S&D spokesperson on the civil liberties, justice and home affairs committee (LIBE)
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- 16:00 Q&A SESSION**
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- 16:20 WRAP-UP AND CONCLUDING REMARKS**



PLEASE REGISTER HERE

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING TECHNICAL AND PROCEDURAL ASPECTS

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