



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Responses to questions raised by Member States

Consultation on the on “Guidance Note on the use of European Structural and Investment Funds in tackling educational and spatial segregation” at the 17th EGESIF meeting(14/07/2015)

Greece

1. it would be useful to implement through the ERDF actions to improve the personal hygiene conditions, such as public baths, Laundry rooms / dryers, etc.

The Guidance Note highlights measures which reflect to this proposal. As it has been pointed out the desegregation principle should be considered as a first option, in some cases the non-segregation principle can be also applied. In this context we consider that the proposed actions are eligible under the desegregation measures, some examples are included in the Guidance Note, such as:

4.1. Principles

*The principle of **non-segregation** aims to prevent ESI Funds investments from establishing new isolated facilities or strengthening existing ones. For example, improving or building basic services (water supply, sewage, etc.) may improve the living conditions. At the same time, investments in housing or education should not lead to increased concentration or further physical isolation of marginalised groups.*

4.4 Specific guidance for housing, point 3.

ESI Funds investments should aim at contributing to close the physical and social gap between segregated and non-segregated areas and it should improve access to quality services and infrastructure (such as educational, social and health care facilities, public transportation, and public utilities such as water, electricity and gas, etc.).

2. Can the ESF support the cost for food and bussing for Roma children that are in an action on access for Roma kids to schools?

The reply depends on the intervention logic of the operation. Concretely, these costs may be eligible for support provided that the aim of the operation (under which these costs are incurred) is to promote the participation of children (in this case Roma children, but this type

of support could also be relevant for children in or at risk of poverty) in education (which is one of the thematic objectives supported by the ESF in order to increase employment opportunities in the Union). Indeed, since a bad nutrition can seriously hinder the achievement of children in school, this type of support in schools can be considered as a way to ensure that all children have access to education. Likewise, other types of support such as school transport or school material (eg. textbooks) for vulnerable children could also be supported by the ESF as it helps to level the opportunities among children and increase their chances of success in school. In this sense, these actions could be eligible under the relevant investment priorities..

It should be underlined, however, that this type of support would have to be part of an integrated set of measures to ensure/increase the participation/achievement of children in education. Therefore, if the aim of the operation is rather to address cases of food or material deprivation (for instance, the distribution of food in households instead of schools, and, thus, not linked to the participation of children in education) then this support is not eligible under the ESF. For such cases, other instruments of support, such as the Fund for European Aid to the Most deprived (which has the specific objective to alleviate the worst forms of poverty through the provision of non-financial assistance to the most deprived persons, including in the form of food and material assistance), could be used.

3. Also, through the ESF, it could be given rent benefit to young families for a specified period for moving (spreading) to the broader urban fabric, as an incentive to tackle the phenomenon of crowding which is observed especially in Roma families and immigrants.

When assessing the eligibility of an action for support under the ESF, first and foremost, it should be assessed whether the intervention logic of the action fits within the scope of assistance of the ESF as set out in Article 3 of Regulation (EU) No 1304/2013 (ESF Regulation), i.e. whether the action contributes to any of the investment priorities set out in that provision. These investment priorities have to be interpreted in line with the mission of the ESF set out in the Treaty, i.e. improve the employment opportunities in the Union. Therefore, the actions have to be linked, to contribute to (even if indirectly) to the activation of the people that will benefit of the measure, i.e. have to contribute to the integration of the people into the labour market.

Second, it should also be assessed whether the action clearly contributes to the achievement of the national/regional specific objectives set out by the Member State/region in the operational programmes for the relevant investment priorities.

The assessment of actions should, therefore, be made on a case-by-case basis. It very much depends on the way the action is designed and on its specific objective. For instance, if this measure (rent support) was integrated in a set of measures and it was considered as essential (i.e. a necessary condition) to assure the integration of marginalised communities, including Roma into the labour market, then the rent support could be considered as eligible as part of an integrated set of actions. If, however, there is no link between the intervention logic of the

action (support to rents of apartments) and the integration of marginalised communities, including Roma into the labour market, then this action is not eligible. This is notably the case, where this support is provided as a self-standing measure with no link with other measures for the integration of the person into the labour market or for instance where this support is provided to marginalised communities, including Roma that have not yet access to the labour market.

4. Daily move by coach and being shared to different schools, may create more problems in the integration of Roma children.....The solution in such cases could be to provide quality education programmes in existing schools and create high standards schools in such areas which could attract non-Roma children from the neighbourhood.

The Guidance Note provides detailed and differentiated recommendations to respond to the educational challenges in different circumstances (small, large segregated neighbourhoods, locations with one or several educational facilities, etc.). Non-segregation measures in education may cover investments to improve the quality of education. As it was said above the desegregation principle should be considered as a first option in all educational and housing actions, but in some specific cases (i.e. segregated villages/settlements in deprived micro-regions) the non-segregation measures can be applied taking into account the proximity parameters. The proposed measure is covered in the Guidance Note with specific references to the identified challenges.