

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND ENGLAND 2014-2020



NW Network for Europe
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ESF 2014-2020: Key points

- ❖ Familiar overall objectives: employment, skills and social inclusion
- ❖ Familiar principles: added value, complementing existing national and local support; requirement for match funding.
- ❖ But greater focus on:
 - ❖ Growth (smart, sustainable and inclusive)
 - ❖ Thematic concentration
 - ❖ Alignment between funds
 - ❖ Outcomes
- ❖ A bottom-up process within a national framework

Employment: Key challenges

- ❖ Raising employment rate and narrowing gaps between different groups.
- ❖ Workless households
- ❖ Youth unemployment
- ❖ Economic inactivity
- ❖ Underemployment
- ❖ Progression in work

Skills: Key challenges

- ❖ Creating a more educated and flexible workforce;
- ❖ Poor literacy and numeracy skills;
- ❖ Shortage of high quality vocational and technical skills;
- ❖ High early school leaving rates;
- ❖ Greater take-up of apprenticeships, by young people, by SMEs, with a greater focus on advanced and higher level skills.

Social inclusion: Key challenges

- ❖ Individuals and families facing multiple disadvantages;
- ❖ Root causes of poverty and social exclusion;
- ❖ Child poverty (workless households but also in-work poor);
- ❖ Access to affordable childcare

Delivery Arrangements

- ❖ Will depend on nature of LEP strategy - i.e. the “what” should determine the “how”; and on the availability of match funding.
- ❖ Likely to be more of a mixed economy than in the current programme:
 - ❖ Delivery on an “opt-in” basis through “co-financing organisations” who provide match and deliver to the LEP specification;
 - ❖ Local commissioning and direct bidding where there is local match available;
 - ❖ Possibility of projects funded jointly from ERDF and ESF where the “what” means that’s necessary.
- ❖ Some LEPs may choose to implement Community Led Local Development structures for part of their programme.

Voluntary Sector role

- ❖ Strategic involvement in shaping LEP strategy.
- ❖ Role in delivery: more local delivery, and Big Lottery Fund as a new “co-financing organisation” should make it easier for voluntary sector organisations to “compete”.
- ❖ Ongoing partnership role at national and local level in oversight of the programme.

Next Steps

- ❖ Initial guidance to LEPs published in April.
- ❖ Final guidance in the Summer.
- ❖ First draft LEP strategies submitted in the Autumn; final draft January.
- ❖ Partnership Agreement and Operational Programmes agreed first half of 2014.
- ❖ Programme begins late 2014.

Employment: possible areas of support

- ❖ Additional, more intensive support for particular target groups - long term unemployed people; people with particular barriers to work
- ❖ Basic skills and ESOL support to help people compete in the labour market
- ❖ Action to reduce the number of NEETs
- ❖ Support for self-employment
- ❖ Flexible responses to employer demand

Skills: possible areas of support

- ❖ Skill development to support other thematic objectives
- ❖ Innovative approaches to training for the most disadvantaged
- ❖ Activities to start and grow a business
- ❖ Supporting low skilled people to progress from low paid work
- ❖ Projects related to apprenticeships
- ❖ Upskilling and retraining within priority industries and following structural change
- ❖ Promoting interaction between business and HE and FE colleges
- ❖ Response to redundancies
- ❖ Addressing skills gaps in rural areas
- ❖ Informal learning and community based learning
- ❖ Specific activities to promote equality and diversity, retention, progression and employability in higher education.

Social Inclusion: possible areas of support

- ❖ Intensive and flexible support for those furthest from the labour market and for most deprived areas
- ❖ Troubled Families
- ❖ Support for ex-offenders
- ❖ Early intervention
- ❖ Outreach
- ❖ Combating discrimination
- ❖ Social investment
- ❖ Social entrepreneurship.