



THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND IN THE NORTH WEST (EXCLUDING MERSEYSIDE): KEY FACTS

2007 to 2013 Programme

Funding

£222 million ESF

£222 million national match funding

£444 million in total

Targets

Total number of people who will be helped to improve their skills and job prospects = 200,000

Number of people not in work who will be helped in to jobs by the end of their ESF course = 22,000

Number of the most disadvantaged people who will make positive progress towards jobs = 16,000

Number of disadvantaged young people who will be re-engaged in learning or a job = 9,000

Number of people who will gain (full) qualifications (including basic skills qualifications) = 38,000

Regional priorities

Priority 1 – Extending employment opportunities

There are a range of groups that are under-represented in the labour market and within which a higher proportion of people are economically inactive. These include: lone parents, black and minority ethnic (BME) communities, people with disabilities and health conditions, and low skilled people. These groups are often concentrated in deprived areas. There will, therefore, be a strong focus on these key groups in the North West ESF Plan.

The following groups will also be targeted: offenders, ex-offenders, and substance abusers, refugees and the homeless. There will also be a specific targeting of young people in order to increase participation in learning and training.

Priority 1 also includes scope for spatial targeting of resource to support City Employment Plans and other area-based strategies and initiatives designed to tackle worklessness in urban areas, and activities that seek to tackle barriers

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to work faced by people in rural areas. This will also link to neighbourhood renewal strategies and Local Area Agreements

Priority 2 – Developing a skilled and adaptable workforce

Priority 2 has a less explicit targeting of resources than Priority 1 (in terms of disadvantaged groups that are a key focus of Priority 1), although these groups are likely to be disproportionately represented in the cohort of North West residents who lack the qualifications/skills on which Priority 2 will focus. There is a specific focus on gender and BME communities in sectors in which there are skills shortages at Level 3. The regional priority sectors at Level 3 for 2007-10 as published by the Regional Skills Partnership are:

- advanced engineering and materials (e.g. aerospace engineering, automotive, chemicals);
- biomedical;
- care / healthcare;
- construction;
- digital and creative industries;
- education and training;
- energy and environmental technologies including nuclear decommissioning;
- food and drink;
- retail; and
- visitor economy (specifically tourism).

Co-financing Organisations

Department for Work and Pensions

Learning and Skills Council.

2000 to 2006 Programme

Achievements

Number of people helped into jobs since 2000 = 27,000

Number of people gaining qualifications since 2000 = 77,000

Case study: Wheels in Motion

The Wheels in Motion project delivered by City College Manchester in conjunction with Thomas Hardie Commercials Ltd is aimed at women aged 21 and over who are looking for a career in the road haulage and logistics industry. It provides opportunities for women to enter this traditionally male-dominated business.

Wheels in Motion is jointly funded by the ESF and the Learning and Skills Council, and gives employed and unemployed women the skills to move into higher-level and more skilled positions in driving, transport office and management jobs. It provided a range of Level 2 qualifications in areas such as large goods vehicles (LGV), warehousing, and forklift-truck-driving. The learners have also received help with reading, writing and information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

A marketing campaign called 'Girls in Gear' - featuring a pink large goods vehicle with the campaign slogan written on it - is used to attract women to the training, together with direct marketing, radio adverts, roadshows and awareness seminars. The project has made successful links with Sure Start, single-parent groups and local employers in Manchester, Salford, Trafford and Stockport.

Kathy Barlow, who runs the project, says: "It is estimated that the logistics industry currently requires around 50,000 new LGV drivers to meet existing demand. Over 90% of existing LGV drivers are male (according to the Skills for Logistics Survey 2005). The project has helped to attract women into the sector making them aware of employment opportunities and plugging the skills gap."

There is a separate sheet on Merseyside which benefits from transitional 'phasing-in' funding as a former Objective 1 area.