

THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND IN MERSEYSIDE: KEY FACTS

2007 to 2013 Programme

As a former Objective One area, Merseyside will receive transitional 'phasing in' funding until 2010.

Funding

£158 million ESF

£158 million national match funding

£316 million in total

Targets

Total number of people who will be helped to improve their skills and job prospects = 116,000

Number of unemployed people who will be helped in to work by the end of their ESF course = 13,000

Number of the most disadvantaged people making progress towards jobs = 10,000

Number of disadvantaged young people re-engaged in learning or a job = 3,000

Number of people who will gain (full) qualifications (including basic skills qualifications) = 23,000

Regional priorities

Priority 1 – Extending employment opportunities

There are some severe concentrations of worklessness in Merseyside. The approach therefore is targeted:

- spatially on key areas of worklessness. Some 62 wards in Merseyside are eligible for the new DWP Deprived Areas Fund (i.e. have a rate of economic inactivity at or above 25% of working age population);
- on groups that are under-represented in the labour market, and within which a higher proportion of people are economically inactive (and which tend to be concentrated in areas of worklessness); and
- on groups whose needs are currently not met adequately such as non-claimant parents in child poverty households (i.e. households in which incomes are below 60% of median England household income level).

Priority 2 – Developing a skilled and adaptable workforce

Productivity performance remains poor in Merseyside, and average skill levels are lower than the North West and UK averages. There are large concentrations of workers with low/no qualifications and insufficient numbers of workers with higher level skills.

Given the nature of skills deficits in Merseyside, the approach is designed to maximise the amount of Priority 2 ESF allocated to support basic skills acquisition. The increased amount of ESF per head of population in Merseyside may also provide partners with an opportunity to support a wider range of eligible sectors than in the rest of the region, in line with those sub-regional key sectors identified by Merseyside partners.

Co-financing Organisations

Department for Work and Pensions

Learning and Skills Council

Some funding is also available outside of Co-financing through the Merseyside Partnership

2000 to 2006 Programme

Achievements

Number of people helped into jobs since 2000 = 33,000

Number of people gaining qualifications since 2000 = 75,000

Case study: The Badged Apprenticeship Programme

Young apprentices in Merseyside are receiving training linked to Liverpool's status as European Capital of Culture 2008 under an ESF-funded programme. The Badged Apprenticeship Programme offers 16–24 year-olds opportunities for personal development and skills acquisition whilst they engage in activity related to the European Capital of Culture year.

Participants will gain experience of working in sectors including retail, hospitality, leisure and tourism, and will receive branded Capital of Culture Certificates. Funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and ESF, the programme is run by General Physics working with the Greater Merseyside Learning Providers Federation.

Andy Fawcett, Economic Development Director of LSC North West, said: "We are using European Capital of Culture status to broaden the experience of those who are on apprenticeships and to provide possible opportunities for them in catering, hospitality and the arts."