



THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND IN SOUTH EAST: KEY FACTS

2007 to 2013 Programme

Funding

£173 million ESF

£173 million national match funding

£346 million in total

Targets

Total number of people who will be helped to improve their skills and job prospects = 135,000

Number of people not in work who will be helped in to jobs by the end of their ESF course = 15,000

Number of the most disadvantaged people who will make positive progress towards jobs = 11,000

Number of disadvantaged young people who will be re-engaged in learning or a job = 6,000

Number of people who will gain (full) qualifications (including basic skills qualifications) = 25,000

Regional priorities

Priority 1 – Extending employment opportunities

Despite high levels of prosperity, employment and productivity in the South East, there are concentrations of worklessness among some disadvantaged groups and in some deprived areas. Priority 1 in the South East will focus where existing activities are insufficient or failing to meet the needs of these groups and locations.

In particular this priority will focus on economically inactive people in the South East who are not fully supported by existing employment programmes. It will enhance engagement and work readiness activity, as well as help to ensure sustained employment outcomes for disadvantaged people facing multiple barriers to work.

Priority 2 – Developing a skilled and adaptable workforce

ESF will offer support for basic skills not currently provided for in mainstream programmes such as Train to Gain, and will include support to those with very

low levels of literacy and numeracy skills, those not taking up the NVQ Level 2 offer, self-employed people not targeted by Train to Gain and paid volunteers.

ESF will support additional activities to enhance the Train to Gain offer. Many people in the South East have Level 2 qualifications that are no longer relevant due to changes in the workplace and wider economy. ESF will extend Train to Gain eligibility to support re-skilling and up-skilling for people without a current or relevant Level 2 qualification.

Priority 2 will also support re-skilling and up-skilling of the SME workforce at Levels 3 and 4 and above. Activity at level 4 will be targeted at small enterprises under 50 employees in line with the Operational Programme.

Level 3 and 4 activity will be focused on the following priority sectors and technologies identified as strategically important to the region in the Regional Employment Strategy and the South East LSC Regional Commissioning Plan:

- bioscience;
- environment technologies ;
- aerospace/space ;
- engineering & manufacturing;
- construction & built environment;
- retail;
- health & social care;
- children's workforce;
- hospitality, tourism, leisure & sport;and
- logistics

Provision to address relevant skills needs associated with the 2012 Games may also be supported

Co-financing Organisations

Department for Work and Pensions

Learning and Skills Council

South East England Development Agency

2000 to 2006 Programme

Achievements

Number of people helped into jobs since 2000 = 20,000

Number of people gaining qualifications since 2000 = 62,000

Case study: Matching Ability With Jobs (MAWJ) - Portsmouth City Council

The project ran from March 2004 to February 2007 and received ESF funding of £629,000. Project Partners included Portsmouth City Council, Department for Work and Pensions, Disability Matters and Loughborough University. It covered Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Broad target groups included: long-term unemployed people especially returners to benefits; people who lack appropriate skills to return to work, or who have no or outdated qualifications; and economically inactive people of working age including lone parents and people on incapacity benefits.

The project aimed to help participants improve their employability through a range of assessments and activities. It provided a professionally designed and tested series of occupational psychologist interventions to help them prepare for employment.

Particularly successful were the intensive Work Psychologist interventions and the flexible structure of the six-week programme, which was tailor made to individual needs. By year 3 the basic structure was well established with an initial 4-day induction followed by 5 weeks of at least one group day plus 1-2-1 intervention. Other activities included work experience placements and tasters, and mock interview sessions.

A total of 323 people accessed the programme. 96 entered sustainable employment and a further 43 accessed Jobcentre Plus work-based training. The remainder had opportunities to improve vocational and key skills.