



THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND IN WEST MIDLANDS: KEY FACTS

2007 to 2013 Programme

Funding

£282 million ESF

£282 million national match funding

£564 million in total

Targets

Total number of people who will be helped to improve their skills and job prospects = 220,000

Number of people not in work who will be helped in to jobs by the end of their ESF course = 25,000

Number of the most disadvantaged people who will make positive progress towards jobs = 18,000

Number of disadvantaged young people who will be re-engaged in learning or a job = 10,000

Number of people who will gain (full) qualifications (including basic skills qualifications) = 41,000

Regional priorities

Priority 1 – Extending employment opportunities

Target groups in Priority 1 include:

- incapacity benefit claimants;
- JSA claimants;
- lone parents;
- ethnic minorities;
- unemployed graduates;
- older potential workers;
- people with learning and physical disabilities;
- economically inactive people including people not on benefits;
- carers;
- single wage families on a low income;
- disengaged young people (14-19), who are in, or at risk of going into, the NEET group; and
- ex-offenders.

Key themes in Priority 1 are:

- increasing employment and reducing unemployment and inactivity;
- tackling barriers to work faced by disadvantaged groups;
- reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training; and
- helping unemployed and inactive parents to enter sustainable jobs and make progress at work.

Priority 2 – Developing a skilled and adaptable workforce

Target groups in Priority 2 include:

- people in employment with no formal training (in particular young people and older workers);
- graduates (and individuals with high level skills in low skill employment);
- workers with low skills;
- those at risk of redundancy;
- self employed individuals;
- business start ups and entrepreneurs;
- Individuals in SMEs in priority sectors, with a focus on current growth sectors;
- people under using their skills; and
- company managers and leaders.

Key themes in priority 2 are:

- reducing the number of people without basic skills;
- increasing the number of people qualified to level 2 and retraining people to hold relevant level 2 qualifications where necessary and, where justified, to level 3;
- reducing gender segregation in the workforce; and
- developing managers and workers in small enterprises.

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 = 38,000

Number of people gaining qualifications since 2000 = 161,000

Updated 06/11/2008

Case study: Fair Cities

Fair Cities is an employment initiative which is run in partnership between Jobcentre Plus and the Learning and Skills Council, with the support of the European Social Fund. It aims to increase the number of disadvantaged ethnic minority residents who gain employment by:

- meeting employers' demands for candidates who are ready to do the job;
- encouraging employers to have fair and effective processes for recruiting and promoting employees;
- helping the employment and skills system to respond more effectively to the needs of businesses and ethnic minorities;
- testing the effectiveness and value for money of the approach to tackling disadvantage and discrimination in the workforce; and
- making sure the most important and successful parts of the Fair Cities trial and the lessons learned from it are built into standard employment schemes.

In Birmingham, ESF funds Fair Cities pre-employment courses to help people from ethnic minorities to apply for jobs and prepare for interviews. One of the people who benefited was Manjit. Manjit had taken time out from work to have children and contacted Fair Cities after seeing an advert in the local free newspaper.

After an initial discussion with the Fair Cities employer engagement manager, Manjit took part in a pre-employment course. Fair Cities then arranged an interview for her with a local building society. Manjit was successful at the interview and joined the building society permanently. Manjit said "I don't think I would have been working today if it hadn't been for Fair Cities, it gave me a doorway, a gateway into work."