

European Social Fund
Promoting employment
opportunities for all



European Union
European Social Fund
Investing in jobs and skills

ESF past, present and future



ESF priorities

The European Social Fund forms a major strand of the EC's Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective for 2007–13.

Within it are two main priorities:

- Priority 1 is 'Extending employment opportunities'. It supports projects to tackle the barriers to work faced by unemployed and disadvantaged people. About £1.2 billion of ESF money is available nationally for this priority in 2007–2013.
- Target group: People who are unemployed or have become inactive in the labour market. In particular, it focuses on people who are most likely to face disadvantage or discrimination.
- Priority 2 is 'Developing a skilled and adaptable workforce'. It supports projects to train people who do not have basic skills and qualifications needed in the workplace. About £670 million of ESF money is available nationally for this priority in 2007–2013.

Target group: People in the workforce who lack basic skills or good qualifications. In particular, it focuses on those who are least likely to receive training. It also supports training for managers and employees in small firms. Priority 2 aims to help people gain relevant skills and qualifications needed for their career progression and for business growth and innovation in the knowledge economy.

So, what does this mean for the South East?

Across the South East region, £98,731,716 of European Social Funds have helped more than 103,221 learners within the period of 2007–2010 so far.

The South East has four Co-financing organisations (CFOs), distributing European funding; The Learning and Skills Council (LSC), Jobcentre Plus (DWP), SEEDA (South East England Development Agency) and NOMS (National Offenders Management Service), which is a national CFO delivering within the region.

Our region also receives funding for:

- Technical Assistance (TA); to support the implementation and delivery of the programme
- Community Grants; small grants of up to £12,000 to voluntary sector organisations to engage with the unemployed in the most disadvantaged communities.

- Innovation Transnationality and Mainstreaming Projects (ITMs); working internationally on strategic, regional projects developing and delivering new ways of extending employment opportunity and raising workforce skills.

ESF Delivery 2011–2013

- The ESF Regional Framework, which steers the focus for ESF funding, will be refreshed by December 2009 to cover the new issues facing us for 2011–2013, for example, the recession.
- The regional allocation of funding is expected to be agreed by 1 April 2010.
- CFO plans for future activities will be agreed by the Regional Committee in April 2010.
- New Procurement process by CFOs starts Summer 2010.

For more information, please see www.esf2008-2011-se.org.uk

How has the money been spent?

ESF Priority	ESF Funding	Learners
Priority 1		
LSC (Including Community grants to date of)	£27,127,399 (£746,000)	31,739 (3,696)
DWP	£31,804,417	24,956
SEEDA	£3,726,344	2,930
ITM	£234,178	110
Priority 2		
LSC	£29,238,361	36,404
SEEDA	£5,848,692	6,722
ITM	£354,075	360
Priority 3 TA		
LSC	£177,000	n/a
Third Sector	£221,250	n/a
Total ESF funding allocated to our Region for 2007–2010	£98,731,716	103,221

ESF training providers in the South East are providing much needed support to the unemployed, those at risk of redundancy and those in employment who need to improve from a low skills base. Whilst the South East is generally viewed as prosperous it has been hard hit by the recession with rising unemployment and a decrease in job opportunities. ESF has been used to help address these issues and enabled us to reach out to support old and young people, communities and employers in these difficult times.

Future ESF delivery will build on this and aim to enable the South East to return to the levels of employment and economic prosperity previously enjoyed and then build for the future.

ESF funding allocated since 2008 amounts to £97 million and a further £76 million is expected to be approved by 2013. This will provide similar changes to participants' quality of life as to those shown in the following case studies.

Ken Lambert

Operations Manager, European Social Fund Division,
Department for Work and Pensions



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Winds of change for Laura

Response to Redundancy

Laura Griffiths has turned redundancy into an opportunity to train for a new career which will see her travelling the world on luxury yachts... thanks to a recession-busting initiative from the Learning and Skills Council and the European Social Fund.

Aiming to combat some of the effects of the economic downturn, the Government announced £100m funding in October 2008 to finance training for workers affected by redundancy, £50m each from ESF and Train to Gain. This Response to Redundancy programme offers support, advice and training courses to individuals to help them get new jobs or prepare for new careers.

Laura, a former worker at the Vestas wind turbine blades factory on the Isle of Wight, ended up without a job when the Danish firm closed its plant on the island. But she had a dream.

She wanted to work in hospitality on board a seagoing yacht, similar to those she saw every summer sailing into the harbour at Cowes. Laura was one of the first to get involved with the outplacement sessions run by VT Careers Enterprise Ltd and started to work towards the paperwork she needed to realise her ambitions.

Qualifications in Health and Safety and Food Hygiene, her Personal Licence Holders Certificate and improved IT skills were achieved even before she left Vestas, then she completed the United Kingdom Sailing Academy (UKSA) Essential

Marine Hospitality ten day course, a further seven day course on practical skills for a steward at 5 star luxury level and a six day course on Marine Cookery. Laura found help from Response to Redundancy in meeting the costs of these courses was invaluable.

Now, the world is her oyster. Job opportunities exist for enthusiastic marine stewards with her skills and qualifications in Italy, Greece, New Zealand, Australia, America and the Caribbean. But, where to choose?



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Laura found help from Response to Redundancy in meeting the costs of these courses was invaluable.

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■ UKSA members ready one of their training yachts



Wheatsheaf Trust

Redundancy prompts a career change

Success Stories

Redundancy can spark new opportunities. The downturn in manufacturing was bad news for Lynn Harris in Havant who lost her job as a supervisor at a local factory after five years. With few vacancies to apply for in production, she needed to think about changing career.

Expert advice was on offer at the Wheatsheaf Trust's Employment Access Centre in the town. Besides working on her cv, Lynn was encouraged to look at her skills, work out what she could offer potential employers and decide what she wanted to do next. It wasn't easy. Although she applied for 'every job going', she had no success and her self-confidence and self-esteem started to ebb away.

After careful consideration, improving her skills through an IT course at Highbury College and office volunteer work with Wheatsheaf Trust, Lynn decided she wanted to work in the security industry. The Reach Out programme,

financed by the European Social Fund through the Department of Work and Pensions, put her in touch with VT Southern Careers which paid for her training at Havant College and her essential Security Industry Authority (SIA) licence.

Wheatsheaf Trust's Employment and Training Adviser, Mary Cameron, said, "Lynn has worked extremely hard, she gained the SIA qualification required for working in the industry, with a 99 per cent pass! Lynn's days of unemployment are now over as she has been offered a position in her new-chosen career."

Success Stories

First steps to getting a job

One-to-one support and advice is vital to help disabled and disadvantaged people, ex-offenders and the long term unemployed to seize new opportunities and work towards getting a job.

Portsmouth Craft & Manufacturing Industries, part of the City Council, has been working for 25 years to make a difference for people in south east Hampshire.

Together with the European Social Fund, PCMI can provide employment in screen printing, textiles, sign making and brush making for individuals who would like work

experience or placements at its premises in Cosham. It also links with partners including the Shaw Trust, Vosper Thornycroft Enterprise and Southampton City Council on a range of other projects

Richard Foster is one of many unemployed people now looking forward to the future. Richard had a complicated past and had reached a point where he required new direction. Needing support to overcome anxiety and depression, he found PCMI a lifeline. A Jobcentre Plus Disability Employment Adviser arranged six weeks of work preparation, then 40 weeks of mentored support with a key worker, Dee Shaw.

Although he found it difficult even to enter the building on his first day, Richard made good progress and, supported by his tutor and

Placement Adviser Steve Hogan, eventually ended up helping other people on the course to increase their confidence.

Racheal Efford from JCP's European Social Fund Team was delighted to see him do so well. "I saw him present a session to more than 20 people. The difference in Richard's confidence levels is remarkable. You wouldn't have known it was the same person."

Following a work placement with Portsmouth City Council, and with continued support from Nicky Sharp (Work Step Employment Adviser), he now has a job with the local authority.

"The European Social Fund has been a large factor in enabling me to turn my life around," said Richard.

Richard Foster



“

The European Social Fund has been a large factor in enabling me to turn my life around.

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Overcoming disability to help others

Karen Harris from West Sussex feared she may never work again after two years of unemployment caused by her worsening disability.

Success Stories



A serious digestive disorder and painful neck problems combined to make it very difficult for her to hold down a conventional job. Although she possessed a Masters degree in Environmental Management Systems, and applied frequently for jobs, the interviews all ended in failure and she began to despair.

Disability Employment Adviser Debbie Trend at her local Jobcentre Plus Office referred her to the Shaw Trust. Karen started on the Employment Opportunities Course, part of the European Social Fund's Harder to Help Programme. Practical advice helped boost her confidence

to set out once more into the jobs market. Karen also found financial support to pay her travel costs was invaluable as transport can be a problem for her.

Karen now has a job with HydeMartlet Housing Association, as a Rural Development Worker and enjoys working with communities around Chichester District: "I still need to be careful with my health, of course, but I'm really enjoying getting out and about working with people everyday and trying to help where I can. The Shaw Trust made all the difference."

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■ Karen Harris



Back in the job market after 30 years

A support programme in Milton Keynes designed to help women get back to work proved to be just the job for former printer Colin Hunt.

Redundancy after 30 years in the print industry left him needing to learn job seeking skills for the first time. He discovered the world of work had changed a great deal over the decades.

The answer to Colin's problems turned out to be right at home. His wife was already going along to sessions run by the independent charity Women and Work, supported by the European Social Fund through the Learning and Skills Council and was doing well. But, to start with, he wasn't sure whether to approach the advisers at all; surely this project was only for women? His fears were groundless. Colin was quickly invited to join Women and Work's Job Search Skills Course and the weekly Job Search Support Club.

"From the first week, this was not a problem," explained Colin. "I was the only man on the course, but they made me feel very welcome and I felt my opinions were valued. Women and Work have been very supportive to me on a one-to-one basis, and I would recommend anyone, man or woman, to use this organisation."

The programme gave Colin an understanding of how the job market had changed since he last looked for work, how modern CVs are drawn up and what employers look for when recruiting. "Since completing the course, I feel more confident in my ability to write letters for job vacancies, take part in interviews, and sell my skills to potential employers."

Success Stories



Colin Hunt



“

I was the only man on the course, but they made me feel very welcome and I felt my opinions were valued.

”

Success Stories

■ Lisa Gosport

“

It's really helped me and my family and, if it can help us, it could help anyone.

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New opportunities for a teenager facing exclusion

Teenager, Lisa from Gosport had problems with school. She felt angry and isolated, frequently played truant and was facing permanent exclusion.

Although she was interested in a career in childcare, her chances of success looked slight.

The YNOT programme, run by Learning Links (Southern) Ltd and financed by the European Social Fund through the Learning and Skills Council helped set her on a more positive track. It started with one-to-one mentoring sessions with her key worker, where Lisa could voice her feelings and talk about her experiences and ambitions.

Her school allowed her to work from home with private tutoring to improve her literacy and numeracy skills. Lisa also took full advantage of the YNOT activity week which involved new challenges, team building and discussions about the

future. Lisa soon proved herself to be a natural leader and made plenty of new friends.

She is now working towards her first qualifications and aims to study childcare at college after completing a work experience placement at a local nursery. The Deputy Head at her school remarked: "Lisa has done more work in two weeks than she had done in two years in the classroom."

Looking back, Lisa can now recognise her achievements: "Learning Links helps those kids who can't cope with school to still get an education and a chance to achieve their dreams. It's really helped me and my family and, if it can help us, it could help anyone."



Success Stories

Looking ahead to an exciting future

Josh from Eastbourne is looking forward to starting college to embark on a performing arts course. Yet, only months before he had been wasting his days in heavy drinking with friends and causing trouble.

The 18 year old had taken part in courses before after leaving school but they didn't work out for him. The Opt-IN programme at Sussex Downs College financed by the European Social Fund through the Learning and Skills Council was the answer.

Staff admitted Josh was a challenge to begin with. He was living independently in the town and life revolved around drinking. "He was a young man, fighting with himself to grow up, with no clear goals for the future or ambition to get there," said Jacqui Mercer, Business Development Officer for Opt-IN.

The Opt-IN programme encouraged him to look at his life in different ways, boost his self-confidence and work out what he really wanted to do. He notched up an impressive 97 per cent attendance rate on the course and even managed to win a place on a trip to Africa by putting together an effective presentation.

Daily 12 mile walks in preparation for the visit and cutting down on drinking helped get him fit for the adventure. Now, Josh has won a place on the Lewes College GCSE Plus programme with a major in Performing Arts and the opportunity to gain qualifications in Maths, English and Sociology.

"If it wasn't for Opt-IN, I would never have thought of applying for the two year performing arts course at Lewes College. Opt-IN has also helped me with my social life as I feel I have matured and don't drink as much," said Josh.

"He is a more confident, sensitive, and motivated young man able to express clear goals for his future with improved emotional literacy reflecting upon his achievements," said David McCarthy, Opt-IN Project Lead Co-ordinator.



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Self-employment the way forward for Caroline

Caroline Whittle from the Isle of Wight is now a confident young businesswoman after overcoming illness and unemployment – thanks to support from Learning Links and an innovative programme led by Prevista and funded by the European Social Fund through the regional development agency SEEDA.

Success Stories



Caroline Whittle

The graphic designer had spent three years battling the neurological condition myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME), also known as chronic fatigue syndrome. She learned how to manage it, but the illness left her with low levels of confidence and worried about the future.

"Practically unemployable due to my condition and the fact that I lived in the middle of nowhere without my own transport and a seldom-passing bus service, I was becoming increasingly frustrated and deeply depressed," explained Caroline. "The best thing for me was to become self-employed, but I didn't know where or how to start."

Caroline heard about Learning Links and got in touch with adviser Hammie Tappenden who was about to run a six week workshop on self-

employment for creative people: "I signed up and it was the best thing I ever did. We met every week and were taken through everything we needed to know about starting and running a successful business.

"Hammie and her colleague Fiona were amazing. They were kind, encouraging and friendly and they believed in us, which was incredibly inspiring. This enabled me to see what I really wanted to do, where my strengths lie and, most importantly, how to both work and manage my condition.

"I love being in control of my own business and working on my own projects," said Caroline. "Learning Links was the missing link for me and I am so grateful for the help and encouragement I received from a wonderful team."

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Success Stories

A stylish way to succeed in business

Businessman John Barker is now in the fast lane, selling his unique range of bespoke gentlemen's jackets at the Goodwood Festival of Speed. Yet, before he found Learning Links on the Isle of Wight, he was struggling in first gear.

Problems finding good suppliers had thwarted his previous attempts to run his own successful business, knocking his confidence

and motivation, and leaving him uncertain of his future.

Adviser Hammie Tappenden at Learning Links enrolled John on the SOS project led by Prevista, funded by the European Social Fund and the regional development agency SEEDA. She supported him to turn his enterprising ideas into reality. A series of one-to-one meetings and counselling over several weeks resulted in new contacts, suppliers and manufacturers to help him start production and achieve his ambitions. This positive advice helped restore his confidence in his business skills and encourage him to take action.

Edward Thomas at Prevista said: "I'm delighted John is doing so well, thanks to the support he's received from Hammie. It goes to show how essential these programmes are to make a difference for people."

Market research revealed the car festivals at Goodwood may be good places to find customers – and the theory has worked with healthy sales figures and commissions for future work.

John is looking forward to the future: "Without the SOS Project, Learning Links and Hammie's help, I would not have been able to get the business off the ground," he said.

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Success Stories

Embarking on a new career in electronic engineering

Changing career can often be a challenge. When Dave Fox from Buckinghamshire decided to move on from manual labour to a challenging job in electronic engineering, he knew he needed to get qualified.

He quickly learned the basics of his new role at Varisys at High Wycombe on the job, but had no paperwork to prove it.

A specialist tutor from ATG Training, funded by the European Social

Fund and the regional development agency SEEDA, stepped in to help.

Dave began his formal learning by taking an Electronic Measurements and Testing course; he now has a level three EAL Certificate in Electronic Measuring and Testing and aims to build on his skills and progress further through the company.

Dave says the training has made work more rewarding: "I now undertake board inspections, power/ground short checks and power supply voltage checks as part of my job, I understand the reasons why we do them and what to look for whilst doing them. The ESF course definitely gave me a better understanding of electronics before starting my full qualifications and helped me start to

choose which routes of the industry I want to work in."

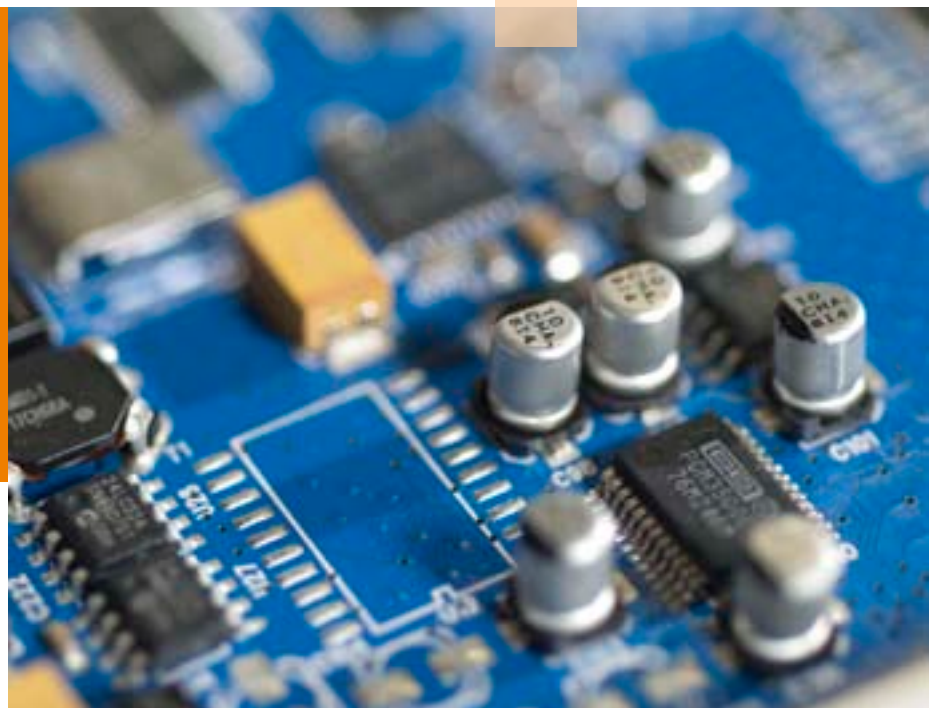
The Skills for Technology project co-financed by SEEDA and ESF aims to boost the skills base. It provides training opportunities to the workforce of smaller companies along with 900 specialist qualifications in Advanced Instrumentation, ICT and Electronics.

Dave Hughes from ATG Training commented: "Dave has worked very hard to succeed and we're pleased he wants to keep on learning. We're very proud of him."

“

Dave has worked very hard to succeed and we're pleased he wants to keep on learning. We're very proud of him.

”



■ Dave Fox at work



Spotlight on

ESF Community Grants

More than £750,000 has been awarded to 77 groups across the south east over the last year, through the new ESF Community Grants programme.

Surrey Community Action is leading the project together with the region's other four Rural Community Councils.

The first round of grant decisions took place in December 2008, just two months after the project contract was awarded, and attracted an impressive total of 136 applications. The money available for this round was doubled to £400,000; in the event 37 grants were approved for a total of £350,000. The second round in May 2009 was just as successful, with 119 applications. This time 40 groups were awarded money. The third round took place in autumn 2009. 62 groups were awarded funds totalling to nearly £650,000.

One person who has already benefited from the grants is Chris Wilsdon. He was part of a group that received just under £12,000 through an ESF Community Grant and undertook training to learn all about broadcasting with East Surrey radio station Redstone FM with the aim of finding a job. Chris was a complete beginner in radio, but that was not his only barrier; he is also blind.

Des Shepherd, Director of Redstone FM said: "As a result of the training, Chris produced and presented his own radio programme, which boosted his confidence and self-esteem, and he then went on to secure a part-time job. This was a great result, and shows what a big difference these grants can make in people's lives."





National Offender Management Service (NOMS)

The NOMS co-financing organisation programme launched in April 2009 is nationally led, and will operate across the 9 English regions.

It will deliver against ESF priorities 1 and 4, extending employment opportunities and tackling barriers to employment. The activities proposed in the plan reflect the key principles of the regional frameworks in order to extend employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups.

The underpinning principle is to provide added value by filling gaps in existing services, and supporting offenders in prison and under probation supervision to access mainstream employment and skills services. A national competition was launched for applications to provide the services.

For further information, including the list of successful contracts, please contact Carmel George at: carmel.george@hmps.gsi.gov.uk
Tel: 01483 716680

Eco-Advantage

To develop and test a social incubation model for disadvantaged workers and through short courses and other training enable them to access new job opportunities linked to regeneration and climate change.

This is expected to have a particular focus around the construction sector and the use of more environmentally friendly materials and engaging with local employers. Delivery led by Medway Unitary Authority

irene.heller@medway.gov.uk
Tel: 01634 338104

Flexible Lives for Older Workers (FLOW)

To identify and develop new ways of improving the recruitment and retention of older workers in the social care and retail/hospitality sectors.

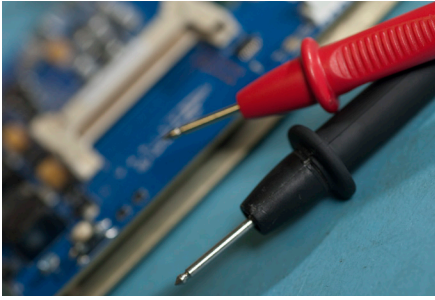
To engage with micro-employers by working with Sector Skills Council, Skills for Care to develop and test how best they can procure the services they require. Delivery led by Age Concern Milton Keynes

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Innovation, Transnational and Mainstreaming

The development and trialling of new innovative activities in conjunction with European partners and which, if successful, will be more generally adopted.





For information about the programme, see:
www.esf2008-2011-se.org.uk

or contact the co-financing organisations:



Leading learning and skills

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