



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions



**European Union**  
European  
Social Fund

## **2014 to 2020 European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme**

### **Call for Proposals European Social Fund**

### **Priority Axis 1: Inclusive Labour Markets**

<b>Managing Authority</b>	<b>Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)</b>
<b>ESI Fund</b>	<b>European Social Fund</b>
<b>Priority Axis:</b>	<b>Priority Axis 1 : Inclusive Labour Markets</b>
<b>Call Reference:</b>	<b>OC16S15P 0030</b>
<b>LEP Area:</b>	<b>Heart of the South West</b>
<b>Call Opens:</b>	<b>24 March 2015</b>
<b>Call Closes:</b>	<b>22 May 2015</b>

# Contents

## 1. Call Context

### 1.1 National Context

### 1.2 Local Development Need

### 1.3 Scope of Activity

## 2. Call Requirements

## 3. Required Deliverables

## 4. General Information

### 4.1 Compliance and Eligibility

### 4.2 Intervention Rate & Match Funding

### 4.3 Applicants

### 4.4 Cross Cutting Themes

### 4.5 State Aid

### 4.6 Funding Agreement

### 4.7 Procurement

### 4.8 Retrospection

## 5. Application Process & Prioritisation Methodology

## 6. Support

## 7. Key Documents

## 8. Document Checklist

## 9. Document Submission

## 10. Timescales

## 11. Funding Agreement of the ESF Operational Programme

# 1. Call Context

The 2014 to 2020 European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) bring the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF) and part of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) together into a single European Union (EU) Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) Growth Programme for England supporting the key growth priorities of innovation, research and development, support for Small and Medium Enterprises (SME), low carbon, skills, employment, and social inclusion.

European Structural and Investment Funds are managed by the Department for Communities and Local Government (ERDF), Department for Work and Pensions (ESF) and the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (EAFRD). In London, the Greater London Authority acts as an Intermediate Body for the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund programmes. Unless stated otherwise, the term “Managing Authority” will apply to all these organisations. These Departments are the Managing Authorities for each Fund. The Managing Authorities work closely with local partners who provide:

- Practical advice and information to the Managing Authorities to assist in the preparation of local plans that contribute towards Operational Programme priorities and targets;
- Local intelligence to the Managing Authorities in the development of project calls (decided by the Managing Authorities) that reflect Operational Programme and local development needs as well as match funding opportunities;
- Advice on local economic growth conditions and opportunities within the context of Operational Programmes and the local ESIF Strategy to aid the Managing Authority’s assessments at outline and full application stage.

This call is issued by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to commission ESF Funded projects that will support the **Priority Axis 1 of the Operational Programme: Inclusive Labour Markets** and **Investment Priority: 1.2 Sustainable integration into the labour market of young people** as set out in the Operational Programme.

All applications will need to be eligible under the Operational Programme. The latest draft is available for applicants to read. Although we do not expect much change, it is not yet finally agreed. Before funding agreements are signed, the Managing Authority will need to check eligibility against the agreed Operational Programme

This call for proposal sets out the requirements for any applicants to consider before applying. Applications against this call will be assessed as part of two stage appraisal process and successful applicants will enter into a funding agreement with the DWP. Further information is given in sections 4 to 10.

All ESF applicants will need to be aware of the requirement to collect and report data on all participants as per Annex 1 (see Appendix A). This will be as well as the requirement of reporting on output and result indicators referred to in section 3 of the call for proposal.

## 1.1 National Context

The operational programme identifies the need to address high levels of youth unemployment in specific areas of England through:

**Investment priority 1.2** Sustainable integration into the labour market of young people, in particular those not in employment, education or training, including young people at risk of social exclusion and young people from marginalised communities, including through the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

**Specific objectives:** (1) To support the rise in the participation age by providing additional traineeship and apprenticeship opportunities; (2) To engage marginalised 15-18 year olds and support them to re-engage with education or training; (3) To address the basic skills needs of young NEETS so that they can compete effectively in the labour market; (4) To provide additional work experience and pre-employment training opportunities to unemployed 18-24 year olds and (5) To support young lone parents to overcome the barriers they face in participating in the labour market (including childcare).

Tackling youth unemployment is a priority for the Government.

Most young people continue in education or training when they leave school, and make a successful transition to either further or higher education or employment. But there is still a group who either 'drop out' or struggle to make the transition to the labour market at age 18-19. As a result, the proportion of young people NEET in England rises sharply at age 18. 4.0% are NEET at age 16, 6.1% at age 17, and 12.5% at age 18<sup>1</sup>

Unemployment can have a long-term scarring effect on young people, so this group remain a high priority as the recovery strengthens. A range of help is already available, but ESF will be used to support additional and complementary measures to increase the number of young people who are in education, employment and training, and to reduce the number who are NEET or at risk of being NEET. This investment priority will not support activities that duplicate or replace existing provision.

Examples of actions for all young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET include:

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<sup>1</sup> DfE, *Statistical First Release 18/2014*, Participation in education, training and employment, age 16 to 18

- literacy, numeracy, ICT and employability provision to ensure that individuals have the basic skills needed in all jobs and to help them prepare for apprenticeships and progress through other routes to gaining higher skills;
- support which complements other skills provision, such as crosscutting and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, including team working, effective communication, problem solving, critical thinking and self-direction;
- training and vocational qualifications to equip young people for specific jobs;
- support for young women to enter non-traditional sectors which addresses barriers to entry (e.g. construction) e.g. to apply for apprenticeships;
- community and informal learning to engage young people who have struggled at school and encourage them to access more formal learning;
- intermediate labour market activity to provide a structured and supportive environment where young people can gain work experience;
- using self-employment as a route out of worklessness, including providing advice and support for self-employment.

## 1.2 Local Development Need

The Heart of the South West LEP area occupies the Heart of the South West Peninsula, covering the administrative areas of Plymouth, Torbay, Somerset and Devon. Plymouth Torbay and Devon are a designated transition region according to cohesion policy, and Somerset is a more developed region, each designation with its own indicative allocation of European Structural Funds.

### Heart of the SW Strategic Economic Plan

The Heart of the South West LEP's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) highlighted the issue of high levels of youth unemployment, identifying that the LEP is currently ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> (out of 39 LEPs) for youth unemployment. The SEP identified Youth Unemployment as a key outcome indicator that will be used to measure the success of the SEP, setting out the following measures of success.

- Baseline – Ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> for youth unemployment
- By 2020 – Top 15 for youth unemployment
- By 2030 – Top 10 for youth unemployment

### The Plymouth and SW Peninsula City Deal

Youth Unemployment was also key issue addressed through the Plymouth and [SW Peninsula City Deal](#). The Plymouth and South West Peninsula City Deal is a ground-breaking deal with government to deliver economic growth in the South West

in exchange for the government devolving powers and funding. The deal area covers Plymouth, Cornwall, Devon, Torbay and Somerset.

The Deal will tackle low rates of productivity by:

- Growing the marine and advanced manufacturing sectors by developing a [marine industries production campus](#) led by South Yard in Plymouth. This will provide additional research and commercialisation facilities and the relocation and development of supply chain companies, enabling the growth of the marine sector across the peninsula.
- Providing [tailored business support programmes](#) to all small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and marine sector companies.
- Implementing a [Deal for Young People](#) that will tackle youth unemployment in Plymouth and the peninsula.

The Deal for Young People includes the establishment of a Youth and Employer Scheme to:

- Improve information, advice and guidance;
- Provide personalised case workers for young people at risk of long term unemployment;
- Deliver a business engagement programme; and
- Establish an employability charter for local businesses.

### Heart of the SW ESIF Strategy

The Heart of the SW ESIF strategy highlighted the fact that youth unemployment rates had doubled since 2005, with over 16% of 16-24 year olds in the transition area unemployed compared to 14% in the more developed area. Across the area, over 19,000 of 16-24 year olds were unemployed<sup>2</sup> under the broader measure, which is over half of the unemployed population. Across the Plymouth, Devon, Somerset and Torbay area nearly 2,500 16-18 year olds are not in employment education or training. Similarly, 3,100 people aged under 24 are claiming Jobseekers Allowance.

It was therefore clear from both the evidence base and the local strategic context, that there was a clear need for the ESIF strategy to address youth unemployment.

The Heart of the SW ESIF Strategy has brought together priorities relating to unemployment and social inclusion under 'Integrated Activity E: Social and Economic Exclusion'. ESF activities under this theme include (amongst others):

*Supported approaches for young people – This will include activities aimed at 18-24 year olds and seeks to complement the Youth Contract existing provision.*

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<sup>2</sup> Annual Population Survey, October 2012-2013

This call is focused on a personalised case worker programme offering intensive support of up to 12 weeks to 18-24 year olds referred by the Jobcentre, with a focus on areas with a higher than average percentage youth unemployed, as a percentage of overall claimant count.

***The ESIF Strategy has also identified a broad range of other activities to address youth unemployment and these will be the subject of later calls or delivered through Opt-In providers. This call, therefore relates to the Personalised Case Worker programme only.***

The Heart of the South West's ESIF can be seen in full here:

<http://www.heartofswlep.co.uk/news/european-structural-and-investment-funds-strategy>

It is therefore anticipated that applications under this call will:

Provide a personalised case worker mentoring programme, as described above. The mentor approach was devised in partnership with Job Centre Plus building on established successful practice. The programme was designed following consultation with both JCP advisors and young people from within the client group. JCP advisors were most keen to be able to offer tailored support to young people within their own community - avoiding the need to travel and using local knowledge to help the young person in a wide range of practical ways. Young people made it clear they did not need a friend but rather a trusted adult who would be there when and where the help was required. The time to work with the young person to overcome difficulties and support them through the job application process on a 1:1 basis was top of their list.

The personalised case worker programme should:

- Provide intensive support for 18-24 year olds referred by the Job Centre (who have been unemployed in receipt of JSA for 12 weeks or more)
- Target those areas across the Heart of the SW where youth unemployment rates are highest.
- Achieve the aim of enabling young people to gain employment and remain in work for 26 weeks or more.
- Provide linkages to other agencies which address wider social and other issues where appropriate.

Funding for this call has been allocated as follows:

- £40,000 more developed area
- £160,000 transition area

The funding allocated for this call is consistent with the total available funding available across the more developed area and less developed areas. The total

funding for the more developed area is less and focus has therefore been placed on key priorities. This has been tested and consulted with a range of stakeholders and agreed by the LEP board. The call is not seeking specific geographic focus such as North Devon, it is seeking respondents to justify based on evidence the additional activity proposed.

Applicants should demonstrate how their proposed activity will be used to support individuals from both the transition and more developed area, in line with the funding distribution proposed.

Applicants will be expected to provide information on:

- The package of support to be provided to young people, including customer journey
- How the proposed package meets the needs of young people and will achieve the stated aims above
- How young people will be supported to engage with and benefit from wider provision for young people available in the market place.
- How activity will be targeted geographically within the transition and more developed area
- How the organisation will manage the contract including the process for co-ordinating referrals from Job Centre Plus

### 1.3 Scope of activity

This call aims to address the shortfalls above.

Under this investment priority European Social Fund will support the Operational Programme objective of:

- Sustainable integration into the labour market of young people (**Investment Priority 1.2**)

## 2. Call Requirements

All applications are competitive.

- The total allocation for this call is up to £200,000 ESF grant.
- Proposals can only contain activities which are eligible for ESF.
- Applications should be for a minimum of £50,000 ESF grant.
- Applicants will need to have eligible match funding for the balance of costs which must be from a source other than the European Union. For all outline applications proof of match funding will need to be supplied as part of the assessment.
- The preference is to award a single funding agreement.
- Operations must be completed no later than **31<sup>st</sup> December 2017**.

- Operations should be capable of providing coverage of the Heart of the South West LEP area targeting those areas with the highest levels of youth unemployment.
- All procurement must be undertaken in line with EU regulations
- Applicants must demonstrate compliance with State Aid law; and
- All expenditure and activities will be subject to rigorous audit and non-compliance may lead to financial penalty.

ESF cannot be used to duplicate existing activities or activities that do not address market failure. ESF can only be used to achieve additional activity or bring forward activity more quickly. Applicants must be able to demonstrate that proposals are additional to activity that would have occurred anyway or enables activity to be brought forward and delivered more quickly than otherwise would be the case in response to opportunity or demand.

### 3. Deliverables required under this Call:

Operations will be expected to achieve the following Programme Deliverables. The definitions of which can be accessed at the [ESF Operational Programme](#).

ID	Result Indicator
	Participants gaining basic skills
	Participants (below 25 years of age) in employment, including self-employment or education/training upon leaving

ID	Output Indicator
	Male Participants (below 25 years of age) who are unemployed OR inactive (not in education or training)
	Female Participants (below 25 years of age) who are unemployed OR inactive (not in education or training)
	Unemployed, including long-term unemployed participants
	Inactive participants
	Participants from ethnic minorities
	Participants with disabilities.

Participants who live a single adult household with dependent children
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Applicants will be required to demonstrate how they will achieve the deliverables within their proposal along with any methodology that will be used to record achievement. Applicants will also need to ensure robust systems are in place, and be able to describe them, to capture and record the targets and to report quantitative and qualitative performance. All operations will be required to collect data and report progress against the deliverables with each claim. Where an operation underperforms against their deliverables they may be subject to a performance penalty.

There must be a fully evidenced audit trail for all contracted deliverables.

## 4. General Information

Essential information to support the drafting of an application and delivery of a successful ESF funded project is available at the [European Growth Funding](#) website pages.

### 4.1 Compliance and Eligibility

When developing an application, Applicants should refer to [guidance](#) on eligible Applicants, activities and costs. These are for guidance only and Applicants should take their own specialist advice if in doubt. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that the rules and guidance are adhered to both at application stage and following approval.

ESIFs are governed by European regulations and national rules. Applicants are advised to familiarise themselves with the relevant documentation listed in the 'key documents' section prior to submitting an Outline application. If successful, Applicants will enter into the standard Funding Agreement and must abide by the standard terms and conditions contained therein. Applicants are therefore strongly advised to read these terms and conditions to ensure that they would be able to enter into such an agreement prior to responding to the call. Once a Funding Agreement has been issued it should be signed and returned within a short timescale.

### 4.2 Intervention Rate & Match Funding

ESF is the funding is used where no other funding can be obtained (the funder of last resort). This means ESF can contribute up to 60% of the total eligible project costs in the transition areas (Plymouth, Torbay and Devon) and up to 50% of the total eligible costs in the more developed area (Somerset) subject to State Aid regulations. The remaining funding must come from other eligible sources. For all outline applications proof of match funding will need to be supplied as part of the assessment.

ESF is not paid in advance and expenditure must be defrayed prior to the submission of any claims. Applicants may be asked to demonstrate how they are able to cash flow the operation.

### **4.3 Applicants**

Applicants must be legally constituted at the point of signing a Funding Agreement, and be able to enter into a legally binding Funding Agreement. The Applicant will be the organisation that, if the application is successful, enters into a contract for ESF and therefore carries the liability for ensuring that the terms of the ESF Funding Agreement are met by them and to all delivery partners. If there is more than one organisation applying for the funds, a lead organisation must be selected to become the Applicant. It is this organisation that carries the responsibility and liability for carrying out a compliant project.

The Managing Authority will consider the Applicant's track record, both positive and negative. If the Applicant has been involved in the delivery of previous European grants and any irregularities with this (these) grant(s) have been identified, the Managing Authority will look into these and expect to see how and what steps have been taken to ensure that these have been addressed to mitigate the risk of further irregularities in the future. It is acknowledged that some organisations will be new to ESIF funding and will not have a track record.

### **4.4 Cross Cutting Themes**

All applications received under this Call should demonstrate how the Cross Cutting Themes have been addressed in the project design and development. Cross cutting themes for ESF are 'gender equality and equal opportunities' and 'sustainable development'.

For ESF, the project applicants will be required to deliver their services in-line with the Public Sector Equality Duty (as defined in the Equality Act 2010). All projects must have a gender and equal opportunities policy and implementation plan which will be submitted at full application stage and in-line with Managing Authority guidance. Project applicants will also be required to answer a number of ESF-specific equality questions which will be set out in both the full application form and the related guidance.

For ESF, all projects will also be required to submit a sustainable development policy and implementation plan (in-line with guidance produced by the Managing Authority).

The ESF programme particularly welcomes projects that have an environmental focus that can meet the strategic fit at local and programme level whilst also adding value by:

- supporting environmental sustainability; and/ or
- complementing the environmental thematic objectives of other programmes such as ERDF; and/or
- using the environment as a resource to help motivate disadvantaged people

Further information is available in the [ESF Operational Programme](#)

#### **4.5 State Aid & Revenue Generation**

Applicants are required, in the Outline Application, to provide a view on how their proposal complies with State Aid law. Applicants must ensure that projects comply with the law on State Aid.<sup>3</sup> Grant funding to any economic undertaking which is state aid can only be awarded if it is compatible aid, in that it complies with the terms of a notified scheme or is covered by the De Minimis Regulation. Guidance for grant recipients, explaining more about State Aid, is available; it is important that Applicants take responsibility for understanding the importance of the State Aid rules and securing their full compliance with them throughout the project, if it is selected into the Programme.

The Managing Authority is not able to give legal advice on State Aid. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that the operation is State Aid compliant.

Where the Applicant does not perceive that there is any State Aid, it should state whether or not it considers Articles 61 and 65(8) of regulation 1303/2013 to apply. This revenue should be taken into account in calculating eligible expenditure. Article 61 refers to monitoring revenues generated after completion of the project, and Article 65(8) how to deal with differences in the forecast and actual revenues at the end of the operation. The details of this will be tested at the full application stage.

#### **4.6 Funding Agreement**

The Funding Agreement is a standard, non-negotiable and legally binding document. Any successful Applicant will be subject to the terms and conditions contained within this agreement. Applicants are strongly advised to seek their own advice to ensure that they would be able to enter into and abide by the terms of the Funding Agreement.

Failure to meet any of the conditions of the agreement or the commitments within the application will result in claw back of funding.

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<sup>3</sup> Article 107(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union provides that: "Save as otherwise provided in the Treaties, any aid granted by a Member State or through state resources in any form whatsoever which distorts or threatens to distort competition by favouring certain undertakings or the production of certain goods shall, in so far as it affects trade between Member States, be incompatible with the internal market."

Applicants should be aware that additional provisions and securities may be included within the Funding Agreement to protect the investment. These will be further discussed if relevant following the Full Application stage.

#### **4.7 Procurement**

All costs delivered by the Grant Recipient (the applicant) and/or delivery partners must be delivered on an actual cost basis. Other costs must be procured in line with EU regulations. The most common error identified during audit has been failure to comply with relevant procurement regulations and crucially to maintain a full audit trail to prove that they have complied with the relevant regulation. Robust and transparent procurement is required to ensure that Grant Recipients:

- consider value for money;
- maximise efficient use of public money; and
- maintain competitiveness and fairness across the European Union.

It is recommended that applicants seek their own legal advice pertaining to their procurement and requirements to publicise any tendering opportunities.

The Managing Authority is not able to give legal advice on procurement. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure the project is compliant in this respect.

#### **4.8 Retrospection**

There will be no retrospection for applications made against this call, other than in line with the general policy on retrospection which allows costs to be potentially eligible between outline and full application stage, but only where the full application is approved.

## **5. Application Process & Prioritisation Methodology**

There are two stages to the ESF application process; Outline Application and if successful, Full Application. Applicants must fully complete the Outline Application via LOGASnet (section 9 refers). Guidance is available on the [European Growth Funding](#) website pages. Applications will be subject to a Gateway Assessment undertaken by the Managing Authority under the following criteria:

- Applicant eligibility;
- Activity and expenditure eligibility; and
- The fit with the ESF OP and the call.

Proposals that pass the Gateway Assessment will move into the Core Assessment which consists of the following:

- Strategic fit;
- Value for money;

- Management & control;
- Deliverability;
- Procurement / tendering; and
- State Aid compliance.

The Managing Authority will seek advice from partners when considering applications to ensure its assessment is informed by local economic growth conditions and opportunities within the context of Operational Programmes and the local ESIF Strategy. This will include the relevant LEP Area ESIF Committee and other partners deemed relevant to the application.

The assessment and any prioritisation will be undertaken using only the information supplied as part of the application process. The Managing Authority cannot accept further detail outside this process.

Non-public sector Applicants who are successful at the Outline Application stage may be subject to due financial diligence checks by the Managing Authority, prior to submission of a Full Application. Applicants will be required to submit accounts, and to clarify financial or other organisational information. New Applicant organisations may be required to provide details of a guarantor.

## 6. Support

Please note that this is a competitive call and to preserve impartiality we are unable to enter into correspondence with applicants over their Outline application. Details of where guidance can be found are contained throughout this calls document. In exceptional circumstances, if there are issues with accessing this guidance, please contact:

✉: [ESF.2014-2020@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ESF.2014-2020@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

## 7. Key Documents

- Outline Application Form;
- Outline Application Form Guidance;
- Local Enterprise Partnership area's ESIF strategy; and
- Eligibility Guidance.

## 8. Document Checklist

Failure to provide the following documentation will result in the application being rejected

Outline Stage:

- fully completed Outline Application;
- financial tables;
- Outputs, Results and Indicators tables; and
- three years financial accounts (if private or voluntary and community sector).

## 9. Document Submission

Completed Outline Applications must be submitted via the [LOGASnet system](#).

**Please note that Applicants will require a user ID and password in order to access the LOGASnet system. Details on how to register on the system can be found on the GOV.UK website [European Growth Funding](#) website pages. Please allow up to 10 days to receive your login details.**

## 10. Timescales

Launch of Call advertised on gov.uk.	24 March 2015
Deadline for submission of Outline Application	22 May 2015

Outline Application forms not received by the deadline will not be assessed. Outline Applications which are not fully completed will be excluded.

For this call applications will normally be required to **commence delivery/activity within three months** of the award of contract.

Any changes related to the deadline for the submission of the Outline Application form will be notified on the [European Growth Funding](#) website pages.

## 11. Formal Agreement of the ESF Operational Programme

The information and references in the call are based on the latest version of the [ESF Operational Programme](#) and are correct at the time of publishing. The Operational Programme may be subject to further amendment during its final negotiations with the European Commission, and subsequent calls will reflect any changes, to the extent that they may affect the terms of calls, that are made. In relation to the present call, the Managing Authority will take the possibility of relevant changes to the Programme into account when assessing outline and full applications, and where such changes occur will notify Applicants of any issues that arise, and propose a method of dealing with them.

## Appendix A – extract from Annex 1 of the ESF regulation

### Common output and result indicators for ESF investments

#### (1) Common output indicators for participants

"Participants" refers to persons benefiting directly from an ESF intervention who can be identified and asked for their characteristics, and for whom specific expenditure is earmarked. Other persons shall not be classified as participants. **All data shall be broken down by gender.**

The common output indicators for participants are:

unemployed, including long-term unemployed
long-term unemployed
Inactive
Inactive, not in education or training
employed, including self-employed
below 25 years of age
above 54 years of age
above 54 years of age who are unemployed, including long-term unemployed, or inactive not in education or training
with primary (ISCED 1) or lower secondary education (ISCED 2)
with upper secondary (ISCED 3) or post-secondary education (ISCED 4)
with tertiary education (ISCED 5 to 8)
participants who live in jobless households
participants who live in jobless households with dependent children
participants who live in a single adult household with dependent children
ethnic minorities
Participants with disabilities
other disadvantaged
homeless or affected by housing exclusion
from rural areas

#### (2) Common output indicators for entities are:

number of projects fully or partially implemented by social partners or non-governmental organisations
number of projects dedicated at sustainable participation and progress of women in employment
number of projects targeting public administrations or public services at national, regional or local level
number of supported micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (including cooperative enterprises, enterprises of the social economy)

(3) Common immediate result indicators for participants are:

inactive participants engaged in job searching upon leaving
participants in education/training upon leaving
participants gaining a qualification upon leaving
participants in employment, including self-employment, upon leaving
disadvantaged participants engaged in job searching, education/ training, gaining a qualification, in employment, including self-employment, upon leaving

(4) Common longer-term result indicators for participants are:

participants in employment, including self-employment, six months after leaving
participants with an improved labour market situation six months after leaving
participants above 54 years of age in employment, including self-employment, six months after leaving
disadvantaged participants in employment, including self-employment, six months after leaving

#### Notes

There may be a number of additional indicators to report on which have yet to be agreed with the European Commission.

The data for longer-term result indicators shall be collected via a cohort/leavers survey commissioned by the ESF Managing Authority based on a representative sample of participants within each investment priority. Internal validity of the sample shall be ensured in such a way that the data can be generalised at the level of investment priority.