



The
Federal Government



ESF PROGRAMME BROCHURE

The European Social Fund – Funding Period 2014-2020



Designing. The Future. Together.



PREFACE & CONTENT



14–19

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MY STORY

It's about people. And a social Europe.

Having a job means having social protection. But having a job also means being able to actively participate in society with confidence. The European Social Fund (ESF) promotes employment in Europe. It supports people of different ethnic origins and educational backgrounds by enhancing their skills, enabling greater mobility or driving equal opportunities. It is the European Union's most important instrument of labour market policy, and has been for over sixty years.

For Europe's citizens this means having prospects rather than accepting fate, and employment rather than unemployment. For seven years, the EU makes a fixed amount of money available – roughly €80 billion in the 2014–2020 funding period. Germany will receive around €7.5 billion of this amount, to be shared between the Federal Government and the federal states. The EU defines the framework for the most important goals. The Federal Government will implement 25 programmes.

This brochure is geared to anyone wishing to actively shape employment in Germany – in the political arena, the business community and in society. It is also aimed at anyone who wants to learn more about how the ESF helps people take command of their own future. After all, the ESF stands for people, and for a social Europe.

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FACTS & FIGURES

3.2 % The rate of unemployment amounted to 3.2 % in Germany in December 2019 – the EU-28 figure was at 6.2 % and therefore almost twice as high.

Fewer than **2.3 MILLION** people, on average, were registered as unemployed in Germany in 2019.

Roughly **41%** of the unemployed in Germany were long-term unemployed in 2018. The EU average long-term unemployment rate was 43%. The long-term unemployed are at the highest risk of poverty.

14.1 % of EU youth did not have a job in December 2019. Their share was highest in Greece (more than 32%) and Spain (30%).

5.8% of German youth

were unemployed in December 2019. This is the second-lowest rate in the EU, only the Czech Republic has a lower rate (4.3%).

6.6%

of an age cohort left school in Germany in 2018 without a school-leaving certificate and therefore have poor prospects on the labour market.

25.5% of the German population had a migrant background in 2018. Foreign nationals are three times as often hit by unemployment than people of German nationality.

AT ABOUT **80%** the employment rate was on a high level in Germany in 2018. The female employment rate was 75.8% in 2018. The employment rate of older people (55 to 64 years) has risen to 71.4% and is the second best after Sweden (approx. 78%).

More than **47%** of women in gainful employment worked part-time in the 3rd quarter of 2019. Compared to the EU, Germany thus has a high part-time rate (approx. 31%) – and the trend is increasing. Non-standard employment relationships such as temporary agency work, fixed-term or marginal employment are however slightly on the decline.

OVER **65** In Germany, most older people live in the EU after Italy.

The share of people in gainful employment will decrease dramatically in the next years.

THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND IN GERMANY

Stimulus for a future-oriented labour market

In spite of the beginning cyclical downturn the German labour market development was robust in 2019. With an average of 45.3 million people in gainful employment in 2019, the steady increase in gainful employment has continued for 14 years now. As in previous years, employment subject to compulsory social security contributions has increased more strongly than gainful employment in general. In June 2019, 33.41 million employees worked in jobs subject to compulsory social security contributions. Also in 2019, the average unemployment rate stood at five percent and was thus as low as never before since Germany's reunification. The positive labour market trend is continuing in 2020.

Despite this positive development, there are still too many people who do not benefit from the good situation on the labour market and have difficulties finding employment that secures a livelihood. Accelerating digital transformation, new forms of work, skills shortages in specific sectors and/or regions and demographic change present additional challenges for our labour market.

For over 60 years, the European Social Fund (ESF) has proven to be an effective instrument to strengthen and usefully complement national labour market policy, our good social security network and our employment policy.

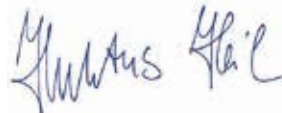
€2.7 billion is available to the Federal Government in the 2014 - 2020 period. In the funding period 2014 to 2020 the federal-level operational programme developed under the leadership of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs will provide support to a total of around 730,000 participants and 260,000 small and medium-sized enterprises through 25 programmes.

38 percent of the total funding volume will be used to promote social inclusion and to eliminate poverty. About 33 percent of the funds are to be invested in education, skills and lifelong learning. And 25 percent is available for the promotion of sustainable and quality employment. We want to help people integrate into the labour market, support them with training and skills development measures and stave off the risk of poverty. And we are also helping small and medium-sized enterprises to continue to find suitable skilled staff and to master demographic change.

The ESF is therefore the most important ambassador for Europe's social dimension. It makes Europe a living reality with thousands of local projects that provide help to the people. Every ESF project is also a European commitment to integration, social participation and the fight against poverty. This requires commitment and sometimes also the courage to develop unconventional ideas and to take new paths, also on the part of the ESF Programme Managers. That is what the ESF stands for in Germany. And we will continue *Designing. The Future. Together.*

Designing. The Future. Together. Under this banner, ESF funding of roughly

Yours,



Hubertus Heil
Bundesminister für Arbeit und Soziales



DESIGNING. THE FUTURE.
TOGETHER.

EUROPE'S MOST IMPORTANT FUNDING INSTRUMENT

For our social Europe

It is my pleasure to write the foreword to this programme brochure, which highlights the importance of the European Social Fund (ESF) in Germany.

Thanks to its innovativeness, Germany is one of the best-performing economies in the world. Innovation comes from employees and the self-employed. Further investment in human capital is essential in order to meet the challenges of the future. The ESF is the EU's main instrument for investing in our fellow citizens. The Fund can thus play a crucial role in ensuring that Germany continues to reach its full potential.

With a budget of almost EUR 7.5 billion for the period 2014-2020, the ESF is building on what Germany has achieved in recent years. The list of successes is long: in the current funding period, various types of support have already been provided to around 700 000 workers, 450 000 unemployed and 260 000 long-term unemployed in Germany. Support has also been given to 220 000 people with disabilities or other disadvantages, 590 000 people from a migrant background, 36 000 homeless people and 130 000 small and medium-sized enterprises. I would like to thank all those who have helped to achieve these positive results. Your daily work plays a crucial part in improving the situation of many people in Germany.

I am confident that we will continue to work together in the coming years to shape the future of Europe. The new European Commission under President Ursula von der Leyen has set the course for the future development of the EU. With the European Green Deal, Europe has shown that it is determined to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. This is our new growth strategy for the next decade, creating new businesses,

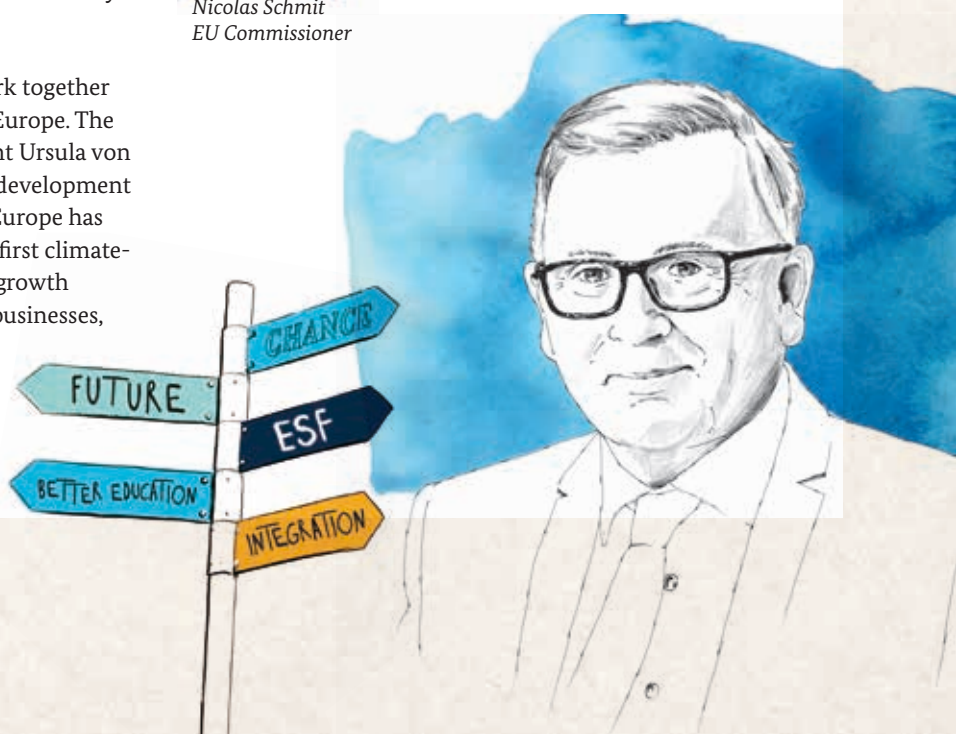
new jobs and triggering more investment. However, it must also ensure that Europe remains the home of the world's most advanced welfare systems and a vibrant hub of innovation and competitive entrepreneurship. This is the fundamental promise of our social market economy. In 2017, we also adopted the European Pillar of Social Rights, and we are now preparing an action plan to implement it. This will be essential in ensuring that the social market economy remains at the heart of the European way of life.

In the future, the ESF will continue to be our main instrument at European level for implementing this policy, but in the simplified and more flexible form of the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+). By merging a number of existing funds and programmes, the ESF+ will thus strengthen our social Europe in a more targeted manner. With this in mind, I am counting on our shared commitment to the ESF+ in addressing the social challenges of the coming years.

Yours,



Nicolas Schmit
EU Commissioner



FROM A EUROPEAN VISION TO A PRESENT-DAY REALITY

The eventful history of the ESF

Creating better employment opportunities for people in Europe has always been the goal of the European Social Fund. Set up in 1957, the fund supports measures to prevent and tackle unemployment, increase educational opportunities and improve the functioning of the labour market. The role and functioning of the ESF were revised several times between 1971 and 2006 to align them with the changing circumstances on the labour market and the requirements of Community structural policy.

The rules for the ESF were first set down in the 1957 Treaties of Rome. Back then, the role of the ESF was to promote employment opportunities and occupational mobility within the Community. The main priority was to reduce the level of unemployment in the most seriously affected regions, such as southern Italy. In the early years, the Federal Republic of Germany used the fund, in particular, to support the retraining of workers who had suffered an accident at work.

Youth unemployment in Europe rose sharply in the 1970s. With roughly two million people under 25 out of work in 1977, the number of unemployed youth had more than doubled within four years. This is what prompted the Member States to primarily direct the ESF at tackling youth unemployment. During these years, the European Social Fund helped more than two million people each year to earn a professional qualification or get a job.

The Delors Plan lays the foundation for the present-day ESF

There was no overall European strategy at the start. The funding was used on an ad hoc basis to promote multiple individual projects. Nevertheless, a common financing rule already applied back then: European Economic Community funding had to be supplemented by national funds. Economic upheavals during the second ESF from 1971 to 1983, during which entire sectors of industry were restructured, made it necessary to reform the fund, however. Instead of covering the expenses of the Member States retroactively, the ESF was now to decide in advance how the funds were to be allocated. Furthermore, measures not only of public agencies but also of private institutions also became eligible for financial support. In 1988 the Structural Fund was

TREATIES OF ROME:

The Treaties establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) were signed in Rome in March 1957 by the representatives of the governments of Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, the Federal Republic of Germany, France and Italy. Together with the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC 1951), the EEC and EURATOM make up the European Communities. The signing of the treaties is considered to be the date of the foundation of the European Union (EU).



Establishment of the European Economic Community and the **BIRTH OF THE ESF**

1957

FIRST FUNDING PERIOD
Establishing a balance between the Member States

1957–1971

THE SECOND ESF
Reducing youth unemployment

1972–1983

THE THIRD ESF
Setting the course for structural changes

1984–1988

Delors Plan is adopted

1988

THE FOURTH ESF
Support for disadvantaged regions

1989–1993

fundamentally reformed under the “Delors Plan”, which remains the working basis of the ESF to this present day. The aim was to tackle long-term unemployment and offer young people the opportunity to get their careers off to a successful start.

The 1990s: Rebuilding the East German economy and defining the European Employment Strategy

Following German reunification in 1990, the EC Commission decided to make a substantial contribution to the development and restructuring of the new federal states to make their integration into the Community as swift and harmonious as possible. The ESF supported initial and continuing vocational training measures, provided grants to keep businesses running and employment aid, and created inter-company training positions.

In October 1997, the European Heads of State and Government signed the Amsterdam Treaty in which they agreed to put employment at the centre of European policy and coordinate the labour market policies of the Member States within the framework of a European Employment Strategy (EES). The main priority areas were employability, entrepreneurship, adaptability and equal opportunities for men and women.

The ESF became the most important financial instrument for the professional development of people in Europe. Micro-funding was a new element of the ESF, whereby the Member States pledged to set aside a “appropriate contribution” of the ESF funds for the provision of small-scale grants.

The dawn of the new millennium: A time for equal opportunities

Overcoming discrimination in the workplace, access to employment, new and better jobs – these were the central topics at the turn of the millennium. In this respect, for the first time the focus was also on persuading employers that diversity in the workplace also made sense from a business perspective. The EQUAL Community initiative was an important new development in this connection.

In the 2007–2013 funding period, administration was also simplified to be able to use funds more efficiently and thereby address the challenges deriving from EU enlargement, an ageing society and globalisation more effectively.

2014 – 2020 funding period: Securing the skills base and lifelong learning

The “Europe 2020” European strategy for growth and employment, the National Reform Programme and the European Council recommendations on employment are the guideposts for the future orientation of ESF support. The fund will make a contribution to securing the supply of skilled labour, will promote social inclusion and combat poverty. Other priorities are the promotion of self-employment, ensuring a work/life balance and improving the level of education and lifelong learning.

€9.38 BILLION

in ESF funding were available in the 2007–2013 funding period.

German reunification and special support for the new federal states

1990

Creation of a funding instrument for structural policies

1994 – 1999

Treaty of Amsterdam

1997

Member States coordinate labour market policy

2000 – 2006

Strengthening transnational cooperation and supporting processes of convergence

2007 – 2013

THE CURRENT ESF
Creating better jobs and an inclusive society

2014 – 2020

FROM A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK TO SUPPORT ON THE GROUND

How the European Social Fund works

The ESF is implemented within the framework of seven-year programming periods. The first step involves negotiations between the EU Member States, the European Parliament and the European Commission on the fundamental strategic direction and the amount of funding within the Multiannual Financial Framework.

The allocation of funds to the individual Member States and regions is calculated on the basis of socio-economic data, including the regional gross domestic product (GDP), the gross national product (GNP) and population and unemployment data.

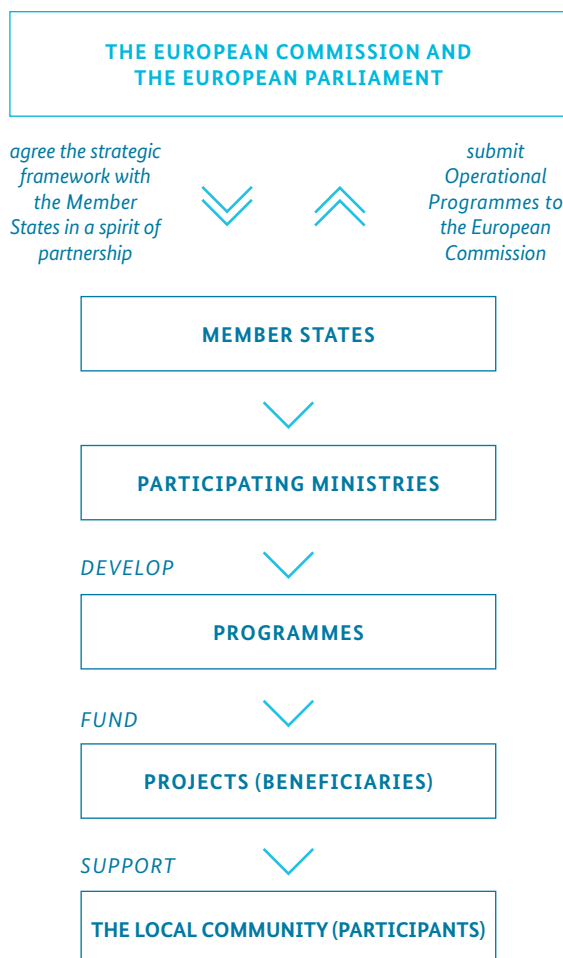
The Member States submit Operational Programmes to the European Commission for approval containing, inter alia, the strategic direction for the use of the ESF funds, types of measures and objectives.

In Germany, the ESF is implemented at the federal level in the form of programmes. This means that individual projects are eligible for funding if they can be allocated to one of the programmes and qualified in the tendering procedure. Relevant calls for applications and announcements are published regularly on the ESF website www.esf.de, which also contains information on the eligibility conditions, selection criteria and deadlines.

In addition, there are also programmes in which applications for support can be made on an ongoing basis, e.g. grants towards continuing vocational education and training (continuing education grant). Applications are made to intermediate bodies, rather than directly to the participating federal ministries. These intermediate bodies are responsible for application approval, administration and billing.

For information about eligibility conditions, selection criteria and deadlines visit

www.esf.de



1 »NOW I CAN CONVERSE WITH MY COLLEAGUES IN GERMAN«



COSMIN PAUN
IT specialist from Romania

At some point or other I would always be asked the same question: "Do you speak German?" Even though Cosmin Paun had studied computer science in Cottbus, Germany, his job-related German language skills were not satisfactory for German employers. "A lot of English is spoken in the field of computer science. Even the university course was through English, but you need to be able to speak German for German employers." He writes dozens of job applications but the response is lukewarm. Nevertheless, he would like to work in Germany. Berlin, in particular, offers so many opportunities, he thinks. Finally he signs up for a German language course for professional purposes, which is supported by the ESF; he crams vocabulary, swots up on grammar and continues to apply for jobs. And finally the hard work pays off: he is invited for an interview in Berlin where he gets to prove his language skills. "The course really helped. Beforehand, I could maybe say half of what I can say now." And in so doing also wins over his new employer, where he now works as a software engineer on a permanent contract.

FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COHESION IN EUROPE

The ESF in the 2014–2020 funding period

In the 2014–2020 funding period, the European Union has established the same implementation rules for all European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI funds), among them the ESF. This also includes the alignment of the funds to the Europe 2020 strategy, for example.

The ESI funds are one of the main EU sources for investment in the 28 Member States, and are therefore a central pillar of cohesion policy in the EU. They ensure that differences in economic and structural developments in the Member States are balanced out and that economic and social cohesion in the EU is strengthened.

80
BILLION
EUROS

.....
are available to all the
EU states in the
2014–2020 funding
period.

The EU defines the financing and the most important goals for the individual funds for a period of seven years (Multiannual Financial Framework – MFF). Countries with poor economic growth and high unemployment receive proportionately more funding from the

ESF than countries experiencing good economic development. The ESF enables investment in the employability of the people of Europe. ESF funding of roughly €80 billion is available for all the EU states in the 2014–2020

funding period, with Germany receiving around €7.5 billion, shared between the Federal Government (roughly €2.7 billion) and the federal states (roughly €4.8 billion).

The EU Member States only receive funding from the ESI funds of the EU if they enter a partnership agreement with the European Commission. This agreement sets out how the funds will be spent, which strategic goals will be pursued and how these tie in with the headline targets of the Europe 2020 strategy. The Operational Programme (OP) can be drawn up as soon as the partnership agreement has been concluded. The OP describes individual ESF programmes and concrete actions as to how the Member State proposes to reach the desired target groups and achieve the desired changes in the labour market. In Germany, there is one Federal Government OP and 16 OPs of the federal states. The individual ESF programmes and concrete actions are designed in collaboration with and with the agreement of the social partners and civil society organisations. The principle of partnership ensures that the funds are used where they are most urgently needed and where they will yield the greatest benefits.



THE FIVE ESI FUNDS:

- *European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)*
- *European Social Fund (ESF)*
- *Cohesion Fund (CF)*
- *European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)*
- *European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)*

THE EUROPE 2020 STRATEGY

The Europe 2020 strategy is the European Union's growth strategy that seeks to lay the foundation for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the EU. The strategy comprises five headline targets covering employment; research and development/innovation; energy and climate change; education; social inclusion and poverty reduction.

In their National Reform Programmes, which are updated annually, each EU country describes the current developments, progress and obstacles with regard to the delivery of the Europe 2020 strategy.



SECURING THE SKILLS BASE AND FIGHTING POVERTY

The Operational Programme of the Federal Government

The Operational Programme (OP) of the Federal Government for the current funding period was 2014 chiefly prepared by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) with the participation of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety.

With the ESF, the Federal Government will, above all, contribute to securing the supply of skilled labour and implement measures that promote social inclusion and tackle poverty. The promotion of self-employment, entrepreneurship and business start-ups, the reconciliation of work and personal commitments, and improvement in education levels and lifelong learning are other priority areas.

The Federal Government seeks to specifically target disadvantaged young people, the long-term unemployed, women and low-skilled or low-income workers and people with a foreign background. It is greatly committed to small and medium-sized enterprises: business start-ups and entrepreneurs receive support with regard to

competitiveness, sustainability and skilled labour supply. Under the Monitoring Committee framework, the participating ministries, social partners, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and representatives of the federal states and the European Commission work in partnership to oversee programme implementation. The consistency of all the Federal Government ESF programmes was coordinated and agreed extensively with the federal states in the early planning stage in



order to draw a clear line between content and to deliver integrated and interlinked ESF support in Germany. While the federal states primarily focus on regional problems with their ESF programmes,

ESF support at the Federal Government level ensures that already disadvantaged target groups, such as the long-term unemployed, can participate in Federal Government ESF support irrespective of their place of residence and of regional support offerings. Beyond the preparatory and initial phases of the programmes, there is an ongoing process of coordination between the Federal Government and the federal states during programme implementation in order to optimise ESF support in Germany and maximise synergies.

HORIZONTAL OBJECTIVES

The Operational Programme makes provisions for the following horizontal objectives:

- Promotion of gender equality
- Promotion of equal opportunities and non-discrimination
- Promotion of sustainable development

A twin-track strategy is pursued whereby the horizontal objectives are taken into account throughout and specific measures are additionally implemented, such as equality-focussed programmes and measures that make a targeted contribution to sustainability and to achieving climate targets.

THE MONITORING COMMITTEE

- 24 members
- As the managing authority for the ESF, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs chairs the Committee
- The Monitoring Committee meets at least once a year
- The Committee is made up of representatives of the participating Federal Ministries, social partners, the Federal Employment Agency, NGOs, the federal states and the European Commission
- In this funding period, the National Anti-Poverty Conference has joined the Monitoring Committee as an advisory member
- The Monitoring Committee's responsibilities include ensuring horizontal objectives are respected, problem analysis and approval of suggested changes to the OP



2 «IT REALLY BOOSTED MY SELF-CONFIDENCE»

LARISSA RUDOLPH
GERIATRIC NURSING ASSISTANT

Approaching strangers, speaking English, going abroad without one's friends – Larissa Rudolph never thought she would have the courage to do all that. After training as a geriatric nursing assistant she had to battle anxiety and lack of prospects. "Since I only did a one-year training course it was hard to find a job. I didn't have a reason to get up in the morning. What was there to get up for?"

Through her employment agency, she hears about an internship in Scotland that is supported by the European Social Fund. Should she dare? Larissa Rudolph overcame her fears and signed up for the internship. Following a preparatory course over several months, she headed to Scotland for the work placement in a nursing home in Edinburgh. Her old anxieties return but at some point the breakthrough came. "I am so proud of myself that I did it." Larissa Rudolph's new-found self-confidence pays off: just a few weeks after returning home she gets a permanent job in a clinic for people suffering from mental illness.

THE KEY THEMATIC AREAS IN THE 2014–2020 FUNDING PERIOD

#1

GETTING PEOPLE INTO JOBS

The ESF supports skills development, training and placement in employment so that people in Europe have better opportunities on the labour market. In addition, start-up entrepreneurs receive support after their start-up. Enterprises receive assistance in tackling demographic change, increasing their competitiveness and finding skilled labour.



#2

SOCIAL INCLUSION

The ESF finances projects that promote active inclusion and tackle poverty. Disadvantaged groups receive comprehensive support in (re-)integrating into the labour market in order to combat social marginalisation.



#3

BETTER EDUCATION

The ESF supports initiatives to improve general and vocational education. The focus is on young people transitioning from school to work, and the aims are to get lower-attaining young people into vocational training and strengthen in-company training. The continuing education of workers and strategies for lifelong learning are also central priorities of the ESF.



AN OVERVIEW OF THE ESF PROGRAMMES OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

For the 2014–2020 funding period

25
**FUNDING
PROGRAMMES**

.....
*under the ESF for the
current funding period*

There are a total of 25 ESF programmes at federal level in the current funding period. Each programme is assigned to the individual key thematic areas of the ESF: “Getting people into jobs”, “Social inclusion”, “Better education” (see p. 13).

In addition, each federal department focuses on specific topics and target groups: for example, with nine programmes in total the focus of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is on securing the supply of skilled labour and on actions to promote social inclusion and combat poverty.

With its five programmes, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research places a priority on the promotion of education in enterprises and municipalities, strengthens continuing education and training activities and supports research into the future of education and work.

The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) offers five programmes that focus on support for young people, families and women.

The Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy primarily addresses small and medium-sized enterprises with its four programmes in order to strengthen competitiveness and offer strategies to meet the challenges of demographic change. Furthermore, the focus is also on programmes to promote and support business start-ups.

The Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community (BMI) places a priority on local community work.

Lastly, the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety promotes job-related sustainable development skills.



AROUND

7.5

BILLION EURO

**WILL BE ALLOCATED TO THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT AND THE FEDERAL
STATES FROM THE ESF IN 2014–2020**

FEDERAL MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

#1

ESF programme of the Federal Government: Career entry support

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Get young people into vocational training

PROGRAMME CONTENT: Career entry mentors provide individual and continuous support to young people making the transition from school to working life. Measures commence in the penultimate year of general education schools and continue for up to six months into the vocational training. If the individual does not manage to successfully transition from school to vocational training, mentoring continues in the transitional field for up to 24 months.

TARGET GROUP: Pupils at lower-secondary schools and special schools

#2

Programme to reduce long-term unemployment

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Integrate long-term unemployed persons into the labour market on a lasting basis

PROGRAMME CONTENT: In order to promote the recruitment of long-term unemployed individuals, new job centre agents who are responsible for enlisting businesses into the programme provide advice and guidance to potential employers. If the individual takes up employment, the employer receives financial compensation and the new employees receive individual coaching.

TARGET GROUP: Long-term unemployed persons who are aged over 35 and do not have any admissible vocational training

#3

ESF federal programme Akti(F) - Active for families and their children

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Improving the living conditions and social participation of families and their children who are at risk of social exclusion and poverty.

PROGRAMME CONTENT: Support for parents in starting adequately remunerated employment and in finding assistance available at the local and regional level, including social benefits. It is also intended to expand cooperation structures for the provision of better support for families.

TARGET GROUP:

- Families/parents with children under the age of 18 who receive benefits in accordance with the Second or the Twelfth Book of the German Social Code (including supplementary or so-called top-up benefits),
- Families who receive child supplements or are entitled to child supplements, including single parents and persons with disabilities (where applicable, also persons who are fully or partially incapacitated for work)

#4

ESF federal programme - centres for the future

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Support for the East German Länder to help them cope with demographic change and digital transformation in a socially fair manner

PROGRAMME CONTENT: Besides regional and sector-related counselling and networking, in-company skills development is currently being reinvented and tested with the aim to promote self-

learning skills and competences to shape the future in a creative manner.

TARGET GROUP: Small and medium-sized enterprises, their employees as well as self-employed persons, in particular own-account workers

#5

ESF training and qualification within the context of the Recognition Act (funding programme "Network IQ")

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Creating the conditions for the full recognition of professional qualifications obtained abroad and/or supporting the entry of people with foreign credentials into the German labour market, in a position that corresponds to their individual level of qualification.

PROGRAMME CONTENT: Programme modules include: counselling on credential recognition as well as on relevant opportunities for skill advancement; adaptation training measures for regulated professions; upskilling courses for training occupations within the dual system of vocational training; bridging measures for university graduates and preparation for the external examination in cases where a qualification has not been recognised or is unlikely to be recognised. The programme aims at improving the labour market integration of migrants, including asylum seekers and refugees. Besides providing measures directly targeting migrants, it also offers specific counselling and training services to key labour market stakeholders and decision makers, in order to have a positive structural impact on the general context of labour market integration.

TARGET GROUP: People with a professional qualification obtained abroad, especially migrants, asylum seekers and refugees



#6

Federal ESF Integration Directive

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Integrate young people and young adults with particular difficulties in accessing the labour market into work or training or encourage them to complete school education in order to get a school-leaving certificate.

PROGRAMME CONTENT: The projects are implemented in “cooperative networks” with the active involvement of business enterprises or public administration institutions as well as job centres or employment agencies. The programme supports projects in three priority areas:

- Integration, not exclusion (IsA) a.o. with the focus on the qualification of unemployed young migrants in close cooperation with operational actors
- Integration through Exchange (IdA) with a focus on transnational mobility in the form of work placements abroad
- Integration of asylum seekers and refugees (IvAF)

TARGET GROUP: Specifically aimed at young people and young adults aged 18 to 35 years who have particular difficulties and who are not reached or no longer reached successfully by the job centres or employment agencies. Also aimed at immigrants from other EU Member States and asylum seekers and refugees with at least secondary access to the labour market

#7

ESF Social Partner Initiative “Securing the skilled labour base: vocational training and education (CVET) and gender equality”

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Secure the supply of skilled labour, adapt to demographic and technological change and promote gender equality

PROGRAMME CONTENT: The focus is on measures to create continuing vocational training and education (CVET) structures in enterprises, to increase the CVET rate in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and to promote equal opportunities in the workplace. This

should be achieved through the targeted HR development of key persons, by implementing CVET measures particularly for older workers, women, low-skilled workers and staff with a foreign background, and by initiating dialogue across branches of industry. Furthermore, support is given to the development of work time models geared towards specific phases in a worker's life and to strengthening the action skills of workplace actors to promote equality of opportunities. The programme has been developed with social partner organizations and is steered by public service and social partners in a cooperative way.

TARGET GROUP: Social partners and enterprises, particularly SMEs

#8

unternehmensWert:Mensch (Human resources: a valuable asset)

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in devising viable, age-related and employee-focussed HR policies

PROGRAMME CONTENT: Lasting processes of change are set in motion in the areas of HR management; equality of opportunity and diversity; health; and skills and knowledge. The programme includes a three-stage, participative consultation process (initial consultation, process consultation, discussion of results) that is specifically aligned with the needs of the participating businesses.

TARGET GROUP: SMEs with up to 249 workers

#9

Tailwind – for workers and enterprises in the social economy

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Maintain the employability of workers in the social economy and sustainable personnel and organisational development in the enterprises in the social economy

PROGRAMME CONTENT: Support is provided to integrated projects that improve staff adaptability and employability and that align the enterprises more with demographic developments.

TARGET GROUP: Workers at non-profit organisations, services and associations and the enterprises in the social economy

German for Professional Purposes (ESF-BAMF programme)

Since the end of 2017 job-related German language courses have been continued on the basis of section 45a of the Residence Act (vocational language courses as a permanent national standard programme) with federal funds but without ESF funds.

FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

#10

Continuing education grant

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Encourage people on a low income to take part in job-related continuing education and training (CET) and increase their levels of CET participation.

PROGRAMME CONTENT: The grant is offered to persons who are in gainful employment for at least 15 hours a week and have an annual taxable income of up to €20,000, or up to €40,000 if taxes are assessed jointly. The Federal Government covers 50% of the fees of a continuing education and training measure, up to a maximum of €500 per grant voucher. One grant voucher may be issued per person each year. In federal states with programmes to fund measures which are aimed at the Federal



Government's target group and for which the participation fees exceed €1,000 (incl. VAT), the education grant only covers up to €1,000 (incl. VAT) of the cost of participating in a CET measure.

TARGET GROUP: Persons in gainful employment on a low income who did not or could not take part in CET measures up to now for financial reasons.

#11

Future of work

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: The programme addresses the challenges facing businesses and workers as a result of structural changes, automation and increasing globalisation in the working world.

PROGRAMME CONTENT: Development and trialling of concepts and models in close collaboration with research, the business community and social partners. The topics addressed include implementing human resources, organisational and skills development measures to boost innovative capacity, continuing training and knowledge transfer at the workplace in the context of demographic change, preventive health measures, professional development aligned with phases in the worker's life and work/life balance.

TARGET GROUP: Employees, enterprises (especially SMEs), social partners

#12

JOBSTARTER plus

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Strengthen in-company vocational training, maintain the willingness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to provide training, and improve regional training structures

PROGRAMME CONTENT: The programme supports innovative strategies and structural developments in the field of training that help SMEs to enhance the quality of their training programmes and thereby recruit new target groups to secure the supply of skilled labour. This also includes the development of close-

to-enterprise strategies to improve the transition from school to in-company training and to deliver a better match between companies offering training and young people willing to enter an apprenticeship. Overall, the programme aims to improve the training situation.

TARGET GROUP: SMEs

#13

Digital media in vocational training

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Use digital media to make a contribution to quality assurance and quality improvement in vocational training and to bring about structural changes and developments in methodology and didactics in initial and continuing vocational education and training.

PROGRAMME CONTENT: Support is granted to pilot projects that create viable initial and continuing vocational education and training courses, establish a new culture of learning and strengthen the action skills of stakeholders (including media skills).

TARGET GROUP: Education providers in the field of initial and continuing vocational education and training, commercial enterprises (especially SMEs), social partners involved in continuing vocational education and training, the chambers, professional associations, research institutes and universities running projects that focus on the development and use of digital media in initial and continuing vocational education and training.

#14

Integrated education

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Sustainable continued development of municipal educational landscapes and better local educational offerings

PROGRAMME CONTENT: Support is granted to the creation and continued development of integrated education systems at the municipal level. This is to be achieved through interdepartmental education management that brings

together local education actors, builds sustainable management structures in administration and the political arena, and establishes professional education monitoring and education reporting as control instruments.

TARGET GROUP: Municipalities in collaboration with local education actors

FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR FAMILY AFFAIRS, SENIOR CITIZENS, WOMEN AND YOUTH (BMFSFJ)

#15

Encouraging Youth in the Neighbourhood (BMFSFJ/BMI joint programme)

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Individual support for young people in disadvantaged urban areas and districts and strengthening of these neighbourhoods

PROGRAMME CONTENT: Youth welfare-related assistance is provided for disadvantaged, hard-to-reach young people at the transition between school and work and linked to existing projects in the neighbourhood. The aims are to prepare young people for (re-)integration into school, training or work and to develop support structures for the target groups in disadvantaged urban areas and districts, the areas of the "Socially Integrated City" urban development assistance programme or similar deprived areas. The municipalities involved in the programme work closely with non-state bodies in the area of youth social work, job centres, employment agencies, schools, neighbourhood management, enterprises and other local partners.

TARGET GROUP: Individually or socially disadvantaged young people aged 12 – 26 years

#16

Strong in the work place – Migrant mothers get on board

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Help mothers with a foreign background move into work that secures a livelihood and raise awareness among relevant la-



ESF programmes

bour market stakeholders of the potential this group offers

PROGRAMME CONTENT: The women participating in the programme are individually supported on their path towards employment by the project providers through advisory, skills development and activation measures, and their access to existing labour market integration services is improved. At the same time, the programme will also raise business awareness of the potential this group offers and forge better links between existing structures and local stakeholders. The project providers therefore seek to combine structure-related and target group-specific approaches that can be applied to similar good practice offerings.

TARGET GROUP: Mothers with a foreign background

#17

Career Change – Men and Women in Early Childhood Education and Care

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Facilitate career change without interrupting employment, give access to lifelong work-oriented learning and make careers in early childhood education and care more open to men

PROGRAMME CONTENT: The programme supports the colleges and day-care facilities in creating or optimising training formats for adults aimed at male and female career changers wanting to become state recognised educators. The training programmes are specially tailored to the needs of the target group and incorporated into employment in a child day-care facility subject to social security contributions.

TARGET GROUP: Employed or (long-term) unemployed men and women with training/qualifications in another field

#18

Perspective Re-entry – developing potential

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Support female individuals return to a qualification

adequate job with mandatory social security coverage following a career break for family and/or care reasons or a reduction of work hours due to caregiving responsibilities.

PROGRAMME CONTENT: Provision of activation, advisory, coaching and skills development measures for people returning to work. The programme is complemented by addressing employers, the involvement of partners and support in availing of household-related services. With the optional “Back-to-work and caregiving responsibilities” and “Women in Minijobs” components, the scope of the programme is extended to include two new thematic areas, and the programme is implemented in a manner that specifically reaches out to the target group through online skills development measures at the “PRE-Online” return-to-work-module.

TARGET GROUP: Female individuals returning to work following a career break for family and/or care reasons and employees with family and caregiving responsibilities

#19

Opportunities for parents II – getting families involved in education early on

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Support families as places of learning and child-rearing with professional, competent services

PROGRAMME CONTENT: Professionals working in the field of family education and in early learning, care and education facilities receive advanced training to become a parental adviser. As parental advisers their role is to work with parents during the early childhood education stage and advise parents with regard to their children’s learning and developmental trajectory, everyday educational opportunities and transition points in the education system. The programme strengthens parenting skills and a family’s ability to cope with everyday problems and increases equality in education and equality of opportunities for children.

TARGET GROUP: Professionals working in family education, child day-care facilities, parent and child centres, family centres, intergenerational homes and other places of early childhood education

Reconciling work and family life

Since 1 April 2018 the programme has been continued with federal funds but without ESF funds.

FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND ENERGY

#20

EXIST

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Technology and knowledge-based business start-ups at universities and research institutions are supported through the two modules that make up the EXIST programme: EXIST Transfer of Research and EXIST Business Start-up Grant. The “EXIST-Potentials” programme has been established in the framework of the “EXIST Culture of Entrepreneurship” programme line which is not subsidized by the ESF.

PROGRAMME CONTENT: The focus of the EXIST Transfer of Research module is to provide support to research teams at universities and non-university research institutions with research-based start-up projects that are associated with complex, high-risk development work. Under the EXIST Business Start-up Grant, start-up teams at universities and research institutions receive support, particularly with the creation of a viable business plan and the development of marketable products and services. As part of the EXIST Culture of Entrepreneurship module measures are supported to establish a culture of entrepreneurship and encourage more entrepreneurial spirit at universities.

TARGET GROUP: Start-up projects from universities and research institutions in Germany

»Continued from page 18

#21

Promoting entrepreneurial expertise

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Increase in SME's entrepreneurial know-how in order to increase or restore success prospects, performance and competitiveness as well as the utilisation and adaptability of SMEs. The objective is to secure the existence of SMEs and the jobs they offer.

PROGRAMME CONTENT: New and well-established SMEs alike can obtain an allowance towards their costs incurred for any counselling measures covering economic, financial, HR and organisational questions related to corporate governance (general counselling) or on handling structural imbalances (special counselling), such as: Counselling related to the introduction of family-friendly measures, work(place) design adjusted to the needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities, and a better integration of migrants.

TARGET GROUP: New and well-established enterprises as well as companies in difficulties. Entrepreneurs with and without a migrant background.

#22

Micro-mezzanine fund

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Strengthening the performance and competitiveness of business start-ups and small enterprises and safeguarding jobs

PROGRAMME CONTENT: Through silent participations of up to €50,000; for enterprises that are part of the ESF target group up to €150,000, the micro-mezzanine fund aims to increase the economic equity of business start-ups and small enterprises and support them in the long-term financing of their business.

TARGET GROUP: Micro-enterprises, small and new enterprises and business start-ups. Enterprises that train, are founded by unemployed persons, run by women or people with a migrant background are part of the special target group of the ESF. Commercially-oriented social

enterprises and environmentally-oriented enterprises are a particular target.

#23

The right candidate for the job – helping SMEs to find the right applicant to fill training positions and integrate foreign skilled professionals

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Support for training enterprises when filling training places with suitable domestic young applicants and support to enterprises in connection with the integration of foreign apprentices and skilled employees. The aim is to secure the future supply of skilled labour, thus strengthening the performance and competitiveness of SMEs.

PROGRAMME CONTENT: Support is granted towards counselling services and support measures provided by the chambers and other non-profit economic players. Consultants employed with such organisations support enterprises nationwide by developing, amongst other things, skills and job specifications, looking for suitable candidates, sifting applications and assessing competences and skills. Based on the results, they create a short-list and make a recommendation to the business that is tailored to its needs.

TARGET GROUP: SME

FEDERAL MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, BUILDING AND COMMUNITY (BMI)

#24

Education, Economy, Work in the Neighbourhood (BIWAQ)

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Give people in disadvantaged urban areas and districts (areas under the "Social City" urban development grants programme) better employment and training prospects. The local economy is to be strengthened.

PROGRAMME CONTENT: Support is granted to innovative projects focussing on integration into employment and

training and the strengthening of the local economy. The labour market projects are linked to integrated urban development and urban planning investments on the ground, e.g. with measures of residential environment improvement (such as creation of neighbourhood garden). This will create a visible added value for the area, strengthen solidarity in the neighbourhood. With the new funding round 2019–2022, the cross-cutting theme "digitisation/digital inclusion" gets special attention.

TARGET GROUP: (Long-term) unemployed men and women (aged 27+) and local businesses in disadvantaged urban areas and districts

The Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community is also implementing the „Encouraging Youth in the Neighbourhood“ ESF federal programme in conjunction with the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (see page 17).

FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, NATURE CONSERVATION AND NUCLEAR SAFETY

#25

Promoting vocational education for sustainable development. Enabling green skills for climate-friendly, resource-efficient action at work.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE: Integrating sustainability in vocational orientation and vocational working-day routine.

PROGRAMME CONTENT: The "Skills development across trades in the energy-efficient refurbishment of buildings" action area develops and trials practice-oriented modules for both apprentices and training staff. In the "Every job is green" action area, work camps demonstrate possibilities for resource-friendly action at work and access to such jobs.

TARGET GROUP: Young people and young adults under 25, journeymen, masters of a trade and training staff

FIVE QUESTIONS FOR ...

Arnold Hemmann, head of the ESF managing authority at the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs on what is new in the current funding period

#1

WHAT HAS CHANGED IN THIS FUNDING PERIOD COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS ONE?

Important and far-reaching changes in the present funding period are chiefly in the form of a far more results-oriented approach than before and a stronger thematic concentration of funding. In addition, new conditions must also be met: for example, at least 20% of ESF funds must be set aside for the thematic objective "Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination". Under the Operational Programme of the Federal Government, we will allocate 38% of ESF funds to this objective in the new funding period. Added to this, we have pared down the number of ESF programmes: instead of the more than 60 ESF federal programmes in the previous period, we now have only 25 ESF programmes at federal level so we can concentrate more on the selected funding areas. The Federal Government and the federal states systematically coordinated their programmes in consistency talks in advance of the new funding period.

#2

WHAT PROMPTED THESE CHANGES?

Compared with before, the European Structural Funds need to more critically examine where positive results are achieved through funding and what specific contribution they make to promoting growth and employment in the European Union. For the ESF this means that it must be clear how the people in need of support are reached and how the ESF contributes to strengthening integration into the labour market and improving the employability of programme participants. Funding is to be concentrated on priority areas in order to deliver quantifiable results.

#4

WHY IS ESF FUNDING STILL SO IMPORTANT IN GERMANY?

Not everyone benefits in the same way from good economic performance. In Germany, too, opportunities for integration into the labour market depend on the region, education levels and a host of other factors. Support is geared (inter alia) towards the labour market integration of the long-term unemployed, migrants and young people experiencing placement difficulties, the promotion of continuing education and a secure supply of skilled labour.

#5

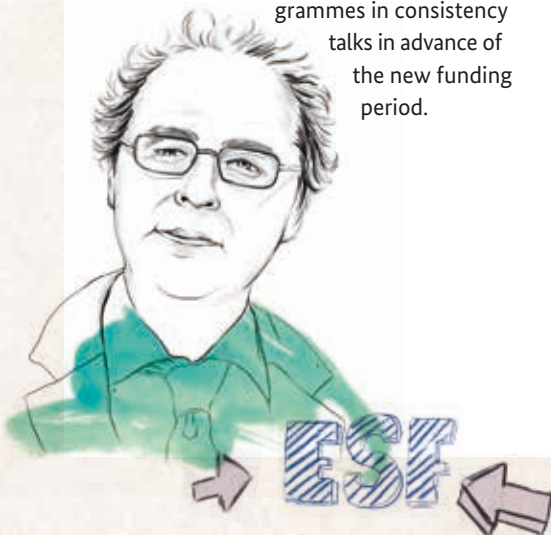
HOW DOES THE ESF CONTRIBUTE TO THE EUROPEAN IDEA?

Employment and social affairs are fundamental components of the EU. The ESF makes the concept of Europe tangible for the citizens of the individual EU countries. The people of Europe can experience first-hand that Europe not only means economics and finance but also delivers very real, direct support.

#3

WHY IS LESS MONEY AVAILABLE IN THIS FUNDING PERIOD?

One of the aims of the ESF is to give people in economically weaker Member States prospects of integration into the labour market. The distribution of the money in the structural funds to the Member States is based on a number of indicators, such as employment, unemployment and the strength of the economy. Compared with other EU Member States Germany is doing well, and very well in some cases. Therefore, Germany received less EU funding this time than in the previous programming period.



THE PRINCIPLES OF ESF FINANCING

The European Commission and Member States pursue a policy of co-financing

The financing principles set down in the EU Regulations must be considered in the financing of programmes, projects and labour market integration measures through the ESF.

The ESF funds are distributed on the basis of the principle of shared management. Here, the EU Member State – and not the European Commission – chooses who will receive the ESF grants and manages the expenditure according to national law. A comprehensive monitoring and control system is in place to ensure that the ESF funds are used and managed properly and appropriately.

Within the framework of project funding, funds from the ESF are generally given in the form of a “non-repayable grant”. In a large number of funding guidelines, ESF funding for the projects is supplemented by other fund providers, including national funds of the Federal Government (national co-financing), funds of the project providers, and funds from local authorities or enterprises (third-party funding).

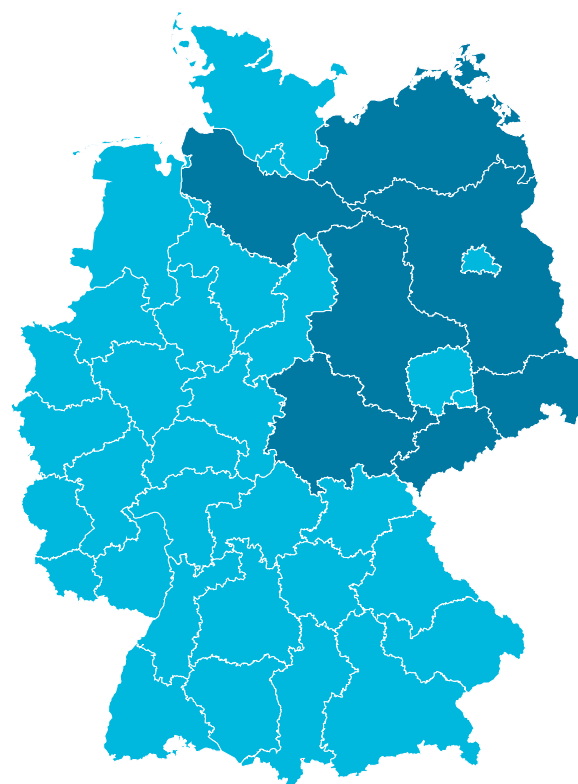
The ESF intervention rate sets down the maximum percentage of total project expenditure that can be covered by ESF funds. The intervention rate varies by target area. In Germany there are:

- More developed regions with a gross domestic product (GDP) of more than 90 % of the EU average: up to 50 % of the cost of ESF projects in these regions is covered by ESF funds
- Transition regions with a GDP between 75 % and 90 % of the GDP: up to 80 % of the cost of ESF projects in these regions is covered by ESF funds

A special feature is the Lüneburg transition region (75 - 90 % of the GDP): up to 60 % of the cost of ESF projects in this region is covered by ESF funds.

The amount of own funds required for a project to qualify for ESF funding is set down in the funding guidelines of the individual programmes.

DISTRIBUTION OF TARGET AREAS IN GERMANY:



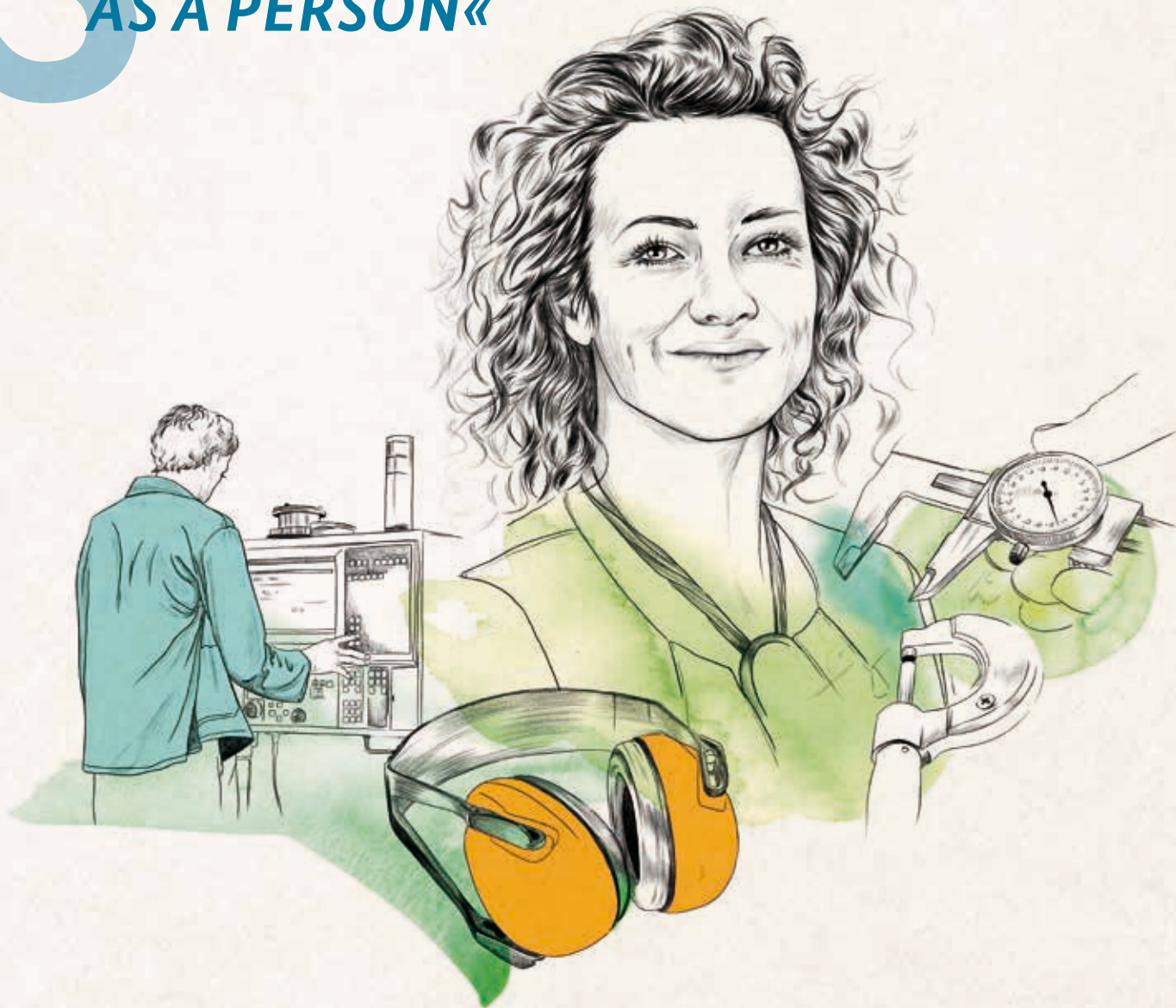
■ Transition regions with a GDP between 75 % and 90 % of GDP
■ More developed regions with a GDP of over 90 %

Source: European Commission: Cohesion Policy and Germany, March 2015

THE FEDERAL ESF INTEGRATION DIRECTIVE

Within the context of project funding under the Federal ESF Integration Directive (see p. 15), ESF and federal funds will cover 90 % of eligible expenditure. In more developed regions, 50 % of project expenditure is covered by ESF funds and 40 % by federal funds. In contrast, in transition regions 80 % of project expenditure is financed by ESF funds and 10 % by federal funds. Consequently, the project providers must demonstrate own funds of 10 % when submitting a project application under the Federal ESF Integration Directive.

3 »THAT'S WHEN I REALLY GREW AS A PERSON«



HEIKE DOMARATIUS

CEO of Gemino Maschinenbau GmbH

Heike Domaratius has been around milling and CNC machines since childhood. She has since taken over the reins of Gemino Maschinenbau GmbH from her parents. "At some point, we had to consider what path the company should take going forward and how we can make our business fit for the future." They replace the entire management team, create new positions and promote long-standing employees to management level. However, the change of role does not prove easy for some colleagues, which is why the Domaratius family decided to seek professional help from outside. Coaching specifically for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which is supported by the ESF, improves internal communication, clearly defines the roles of the new managers and provides training on how to interact with staff. "Personally I've become a lot more confident in my new role as CEO. And the entire company has benefitted from the process: the whole team has come closer together and processes, such as shift change, now run a lot more smoothly."

FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Whom does the ESF support?

The ESF benefits people in Europe who require support in their search for work, training or skills development. At the same time, the ESF also gives particular support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in sourcing suitable skilled staff or in measures to improve their competitiveness.

ESF funding at the Federal Government level is granted through the 25 individual federal programmes (see p. 14 – 19). The programmes define who can apply for the ESF funding and how, and which specific groups are targeted by the programmes.

In the current 2014 – 2020 funding period, the ESF activities of the Federal Government are primarily geared towards disadvantaged young people, (long-term) unemployed persons, migrants, start-up entrepreneurs and SMEs.

In general, however, these groups cannot apply for ESF support directly, and instead must turn to the ESF projects in their local area. Depending on the ESF programme, these projects are implemented by non-state associations (e.g. charities), employment agencies and local authorities.

Three examples of how individuals can receive ESF support:

SUPPORT THROUGH PROJECT PROVIDERS:

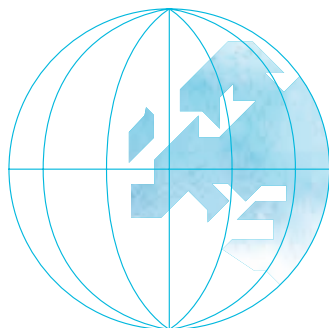
The ESF programme “Strong in the work place – Migrant mothers get on board” supports mothers with a foreign background enter employment that secures a livelihood. The Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, which runs this programme, selects suitable project providers (e.g. charitable associations, migrant organisations, educational institutions) in a call for proposals. These providers offer different local services to activate, advise and train mothers with a foreign background. Those interested in support can access the programme website through the ESF portal www.esf.de where they will find suitable offerings there of the projects supported.

SUPPORT THROUGH EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES:

The ESF programme to reduce long-term unemployment is geared towards people in long-term unemployment. In this case, job centres implement the programme, approach the long-term unemployed directly and place them in the ESF programme.

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT:

The “Continuing education grant” is one of the few ESF programmes that provides direct support to individuals. It is aimed at people on a low income who can receive a grant towards continuing education measures. The first port of call are advice centres, which refer people to suitable continuing education measures for applicants and issue the voucher to co-fund the measure.



» 1.5 «

MILLION PEOPLE

*received integration-into-employment
support through ESF-funded measures of the
Federal Government between 2007 and 2013.*

APPLICATION, PROCEDURES AND POINTS OF CONTACT

The most important questions and answers concerning the ESF

The ESF website www.esf.de provides information on all the ESF programmes of the Federal Government. Click the links to the individual ESF programmes for more detailed information on the programmes, the funding guidelines and application forms.

The website also contains information about the points of contact and websites of the ESF funding agencies of the federal states.

#1

HOW CAN I MAKE AN APPLICATION?

The funding guidelines of the individual ESF programmes define who can apply for funding. Depending on the orientation of the programme, this can be non-state bodies or private providers, employment agencies, local administrations, small and medium-sized enterprises, social partners, but also private individuals (see p. 23).

Eligible parties can submit their applications for ESF funding to the bodies responsible for programme implementation in line with the funding guidelines. The applications are examined and the best applications are selected for ESF funding.



#2

WHEN CAN I MAKE AN APPLICATION?

There are fixed application deadlines for most ESF programmes. Under the “Förderperiode 2014 bis 2020” section of the ESF website www.esf.de, there is a sub-item called “Offene Aufrufe/ Ausschreibungen” (in English: open invitations/calls for proposals). This lists all the ESF programmes that are currently accepting applications.





#3

CAN PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS ALSO APPLY FOR ESF FUNDING?

In the current 2014 – 2020 funding period, private individuals can apply for ESF support in two of the 25 ESF programmes:

- 1) “Continuing education grant” ESF programme: Low-income earners can receive a grant towards continuing education costs (see programme description on p. 16).
- 2) “Promoting entrepreneurial expertise” ESF programme: Start-up entrepreneurs receive a grant towards coaching measures to help get the business up and running (see programme description on p. 19).



#4

HOW DOES FINANCING WITH ESF FUNDS WORK?

ESF funding is provided in the form of “non-repayable grants”. This means that the ESF funds only cover a portion of the costs of the project and labour market measures. Therefore, the ESF funds must be supplemented by other resources, such as national funding of the Federal Government, funds of the project providers, third-party funds of the municipalities, or enterprises (see p. 21).

The percentage of the overall project costs that can be funded by the ESF is dictated by the ESF rate of intervention, which ranges between 50 % and 80 % depending on the ESF programme and the economic strength of a region.

#5

WHERE CAN I FIND AN EXPLANATION OF THE TECHNICAL TERMINOLOGY?

This programme brochure explains the principles of the ESF, its history and all the important elements of the current 2014 – 2020 funding period. Should any information be missing, you can be sure to find it on the ESF website at www.esf.de. If you have any other questions please contact: esf@bmas.bund.de.



4

»HE HELPED ME DISCOVER MY AMBITION«



BERTRAM AUST
Career entry mentor

"I could never have done it without him. He showed me how everything is possible," says Sarah Föhr. The 19 year-old from Scheuerfeld in Rhineland Palatinate is training to be a metalwork technician. Just like her co-apprentice, Kevin Löschenbach. Career entry mentor, Bertram Aust, helped pave the way to Kevin and Sarah's training. "Neither received much support from home", explains Aust. "So the first step was to find out which profession they would both be interested in. At the start I couldn't have imagined that Sarah would like metalwork so much." Aust has also been mentoring Kevin Löschenbach for several years. "Mr. Aust was the first person to ever write applications with me. He has always been there for me."

Motivating, guiding, boosting young people's self-esteem: all in a day's work for a career entry mentor. But first and foremost career start mentoring is about building trust. Every career entry mentor generally coaches 20 young people in lower-secondary schools and special schools. And each pupil has his or her own individual needs. Take the young Serbian whom Bertram Aust mentored. Her main concern was whether she would get a work permit and permission to stay. "She was incredibly motivated but her parents were sceptical of her plans to enter training. Until I went and had a cup of mocha with her father. We hit it off straight away, even though he only spoke a little German and I don't speak a word of Serbian." His daughter then successfully completed her training as a specialist in the hospitality industry.

"It's great to see the young people standing on their own two feet and taking charge of their lives," says Bertram Aust. He is still in touch with some of the young people even after the mentoring. In his job, it is important to have a connection with the young people, he explains. "It's all about appreciation. You should be able to listen to them and relate to the young people's world." Career entry support generally starts two years before the end of school and can last up to four years. According to Bertram Aust, the continuous individual attention is important particularly considering the increasing complexity of the working world. "Parents and teachers don't have the resources for this." He explains that it sometimes also takes a little persuasion to encourage employers to hire graduates of lower-secondary schools or special schools. "Maybe our young people don't have the best school-leaving qualification but they certainly have other skills. They are motivated and integrate well into the business structures." That is why many manage to get a training position by doing an internship first where they can prove they have what it takes. But to get to that stage, the young people need a helping hand – from someone like Bertram Aust.

IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT TRANSPARENCY AND CIVIC INVOLVEMENT

The public is involved in the development of the Operational Programme

Citizens have a right to know how the ESF funds will be invested. This is why the goals, results and achievements of the fund are accessible to the public.

A communication strategy focussing on various target groups is developed for every funding period. In the current funding period, the aim is to reach the public through a range of measures such as press conferences, regionally focussed informative tours regarding ESF projects, publications such as flyers, and video clips. The website www.esf.de has also been redesigned and is now far more user-oriented and service-centric. For example, users who have no knowledge of the ESF but are interested in learning more can simply use the “Ich suche Förderung für ...”/“I am looking for support for” filter to be taken directly to the ESF funding programmes that match their profile. To guarantee transparency of the use of funds, a database with a list of the projects can also be accessed on the website.

The ESF is also represented on YouTube (www.youtube.com) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/esf.deutschland). The ESF's Facebook page allows citizens not only get to know different ESF projects and experience the personal stories of project participants, but also simply contact the ESF.

For more information visit
www.esf.de



Apart from information and transparency, close communication with our citizens is a cornerstone of the ESF. This is why the public was involved in the development of the Operational Programme right from the early planning stage. Roughly 800 partners took part in an online consultation on the future ESF priorities of the Federal Government in October 2012.

In addition to the participating government departments, external partners – such as the private sector and social partners, charitable associations and civil society bodies – were also very much involved in the creation of the Operational Programme. The ESF priorities of the Federal Government were identified on the basis of these consultations and then presented to the public in a workshop and discussed.

From 2016 onwards, the European Commission will receive an annual report on the implementation of the individual ESF programmes. Citizens' information pertaining to the content of the reports will be made available to the public.



ENSURING THE FUNDS ARE CHANNELLED TO WHERE THEY ARE NEEDED

Monitoring and evaluation

In the 2014 – 2020 funding period, the legal framework for the use of the European Structural and Investment Funds aims at placing a far greater focus on goals and results, and the greater efficiency and effectiveness of the funds deployed.

Accordingly, the regulations set down more stringent conditions regarding the monitoring and evaluation of the ESF-funded projects. This includes the introduction of a performance reserve and a performance review based on a performance framework in the Operational Programmes, as well as the possibility of the European Commission imposing financial penalties if objectives are not achieved.

Furthermore, the regulations also stipulate that individual data on participants and results of the ESF measures must be recorded and saved in computerised form. For example, it is mandatory to collect data on the professional and social situation of the individual participants both at the start of support through the ESF and at the latest four weeks after the completion of the measure.



In addition, information on the professional situation of the participants is also collected on a sample basis six months after the completion of the measure. In future, no support can be granted to individuals who provide no or incomplete core data, such as their labour status, level of education or age. Refusal to agree to the use of the data for direct and indirect performance evaluation also disqualifies the party from receiving Federal Government ESF support.

The financial and physical progress of the Operational Programme will be presented in annual implementation reports. In addition, the evaluation will also involve an analysis of the effectiveness and efficiency of the Operational Programme, particularly with a view to the specific goals and the long-term results of programme implementation. Further to this, the contribution to the Europe 2020 strategy and the national goals of this strategy (National Reform Programme) will also form part of the evaluation.



THE ESF AT A GLANCE

Moving people into work

#1

WHAT IS THE ESF?

The ESF is the EU's main tool for promoting employment in Europe. It improves access to the labour market and to more and better jobs, offers skills development and supports social integration.

#2

WHY DO WE HAVE THE ESF?

The ESF is part of the European cohesion policy to support economic and social cohesion in Europe. In 2014–2020, the Federal Government and the federal states will receive roughly €7.5 billion from the ESF. The ESF programmes of the Federal Government for employment and mobility, better education and combating social marginalisation will make €2.7 billion available, while €4.8 billion are earmarked for the ESF activities of the federal states.

#3

WHOM DOES THE ESF HELP

In the current funding period, the ESF programmes of the Federal Government are primarily directed at (long-term) unemployed persons, (disadvantaged) young people, migrants, start-up entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises.

#4

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE ESF?

The ESF supports practice-oriented projects that have a local impact. In the 2014–2020 funding period, the 25 programmes at federal level aim to support roughly 730,000 people in Germany integrate into the labour market and develop their skills. In addition, some 260,000 small and medium-sized enterprises will receive assistance in their search for skilled labour and in dealing with demographic change.

#5

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ESF?

On the ESF portal www.esf.de, you can find detailed, up-to-date information about the European Social Fund of the Federal Government. On Facebook (www.facebook.com/esf.deutschland) and YouTube (www.youtube.com) you get an insight into the work of the various ESF projects and learn about the personal stories of people who have benefited from the ESF.



LIST OF ESF CONTACTS IN GERMANY AND THE EU

AN OVERVIEW OF THE ESF CONTACT POINTS CAN ALSO BE FOUND ON THE ESF WEBSITE AT www.esf.de/kontaktstellen.

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Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,
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