

**SW COMPETITIVENESS AND EMPLOYMENT
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND
ENGLAND EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND PROGRAMME**

ESF PERFORMANCE & PROGRESS REPORT

Purpose

To provide background and detail on the SW ESF Competitiveness Programme performance management information.

Recommendation

To note the contents of this report and use this information to help inform the PMC of progress and in the delivery of the ESF Competitiveness Programme.

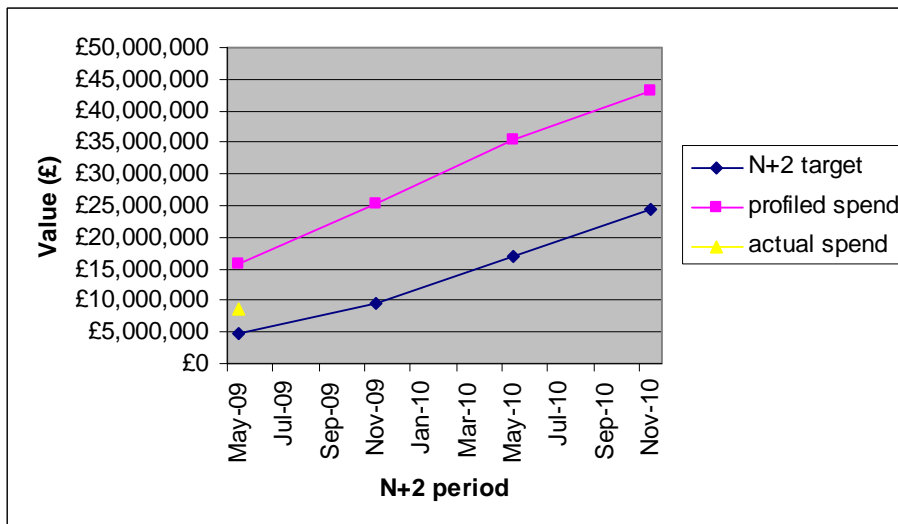
Invite members to discuss any issues arising.

Performance

Spend

Claims have been submitted for the period ending May 2009. Total cumulative spend from the LSC May claims was **£8.7m**. This exceeds the 2009 N+2 target of **£7.6m**. Latest information from ESFD also indicates that further claims from DWP have also been submitted.

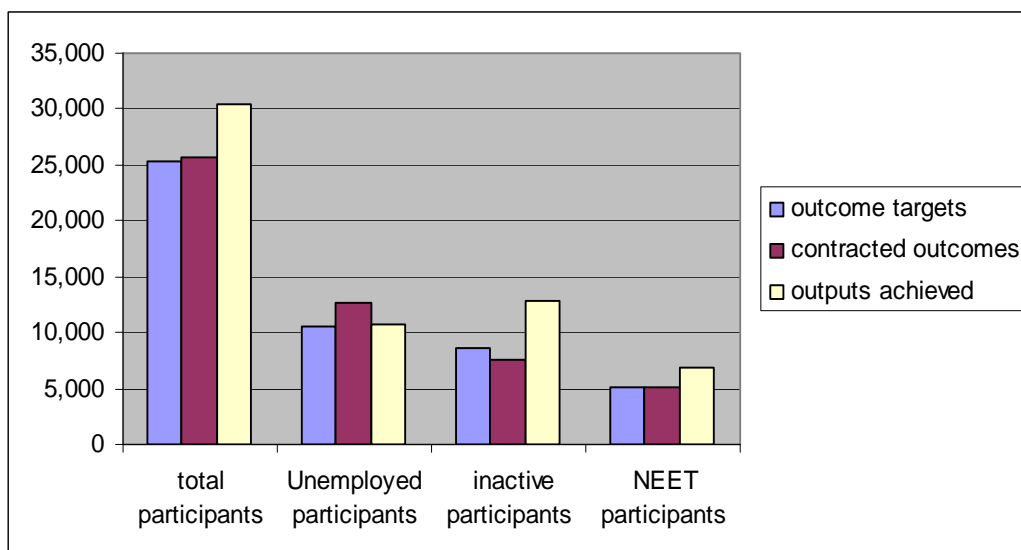
This means the 2009 N+2 target has already been achieved, subject to exchange rate fluctuations and final clearance of claims, as shown in the table below. In addition further claims are expected to be received from LSC and DWP by end of September 09



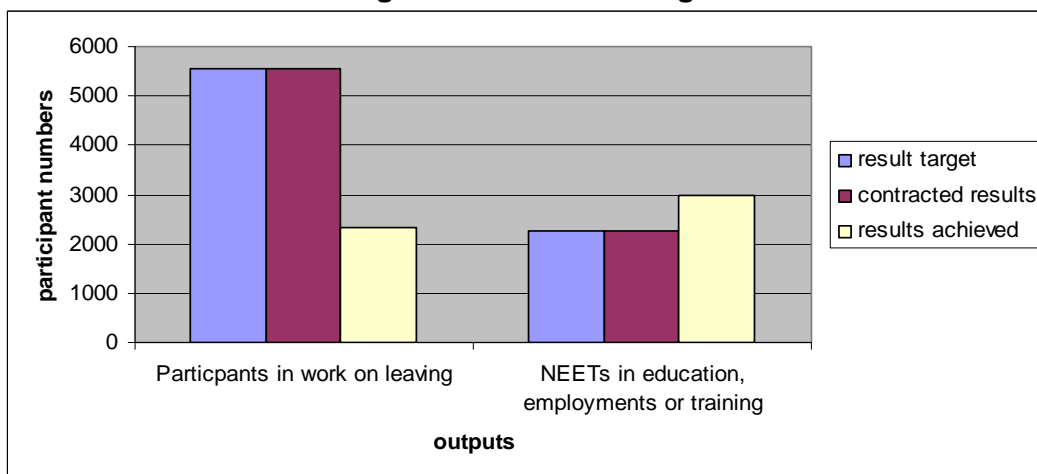
Figures taken from the May National Monitoring Report.

Priority 1 Outputs and Results

P1 ESF outputs delivered against 2010 output targets



P1 ESF results delivered against 2010 result targets

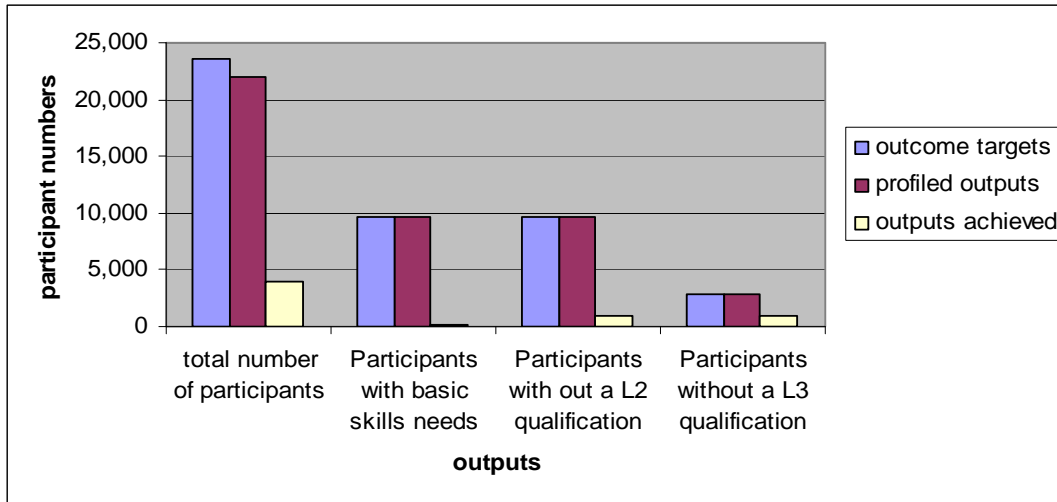


Progress towards P1 Outputs is very encouraging. With 18 months to go until the end of the first half of the Programme (December 2010), we have already achieved 30,463 (120%) of planned participant starts and 2,320 (42%) of the job outcomes. Good progress has been made on the movement of the NEET group into employment, education or training. The reported figure is 2,978 (128%) of the 2010 target.

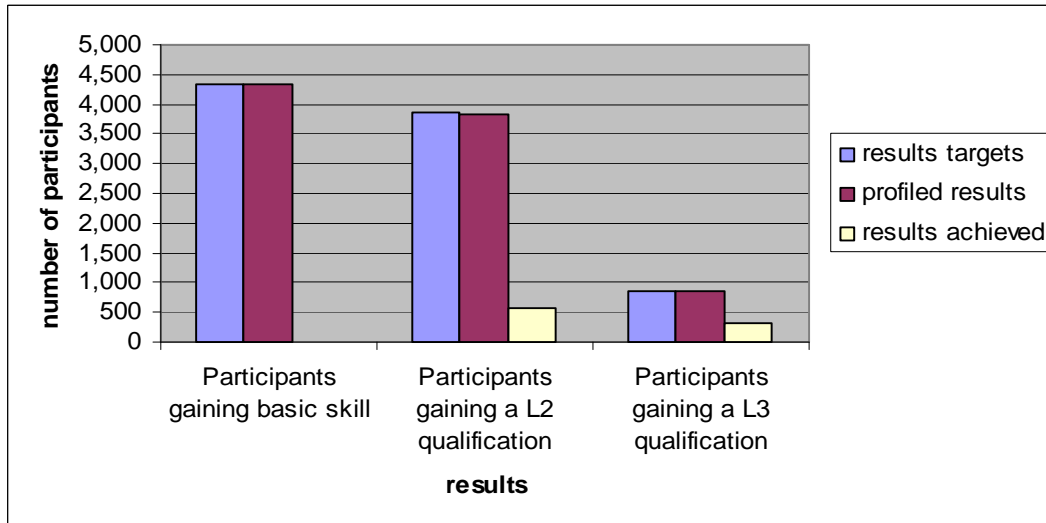
The tables above indicate that the verbal information provided at the May PMC by Jobcentre Plus has now been confirmed. The data demonstrates that there is a high demand for provision although achievement of outcomes is more challenging, which is to be expected in the current economic circumstances. **Annex 1** gives further narrative summary of DWP SW progress and additional local data with some good case study examples of how ESF is really helping people in the South West.

Priority 2 Outputs and Results

P2 ESF outputs delivered against 2010 output targets



P2 ESF results delivered against 2010 result targets

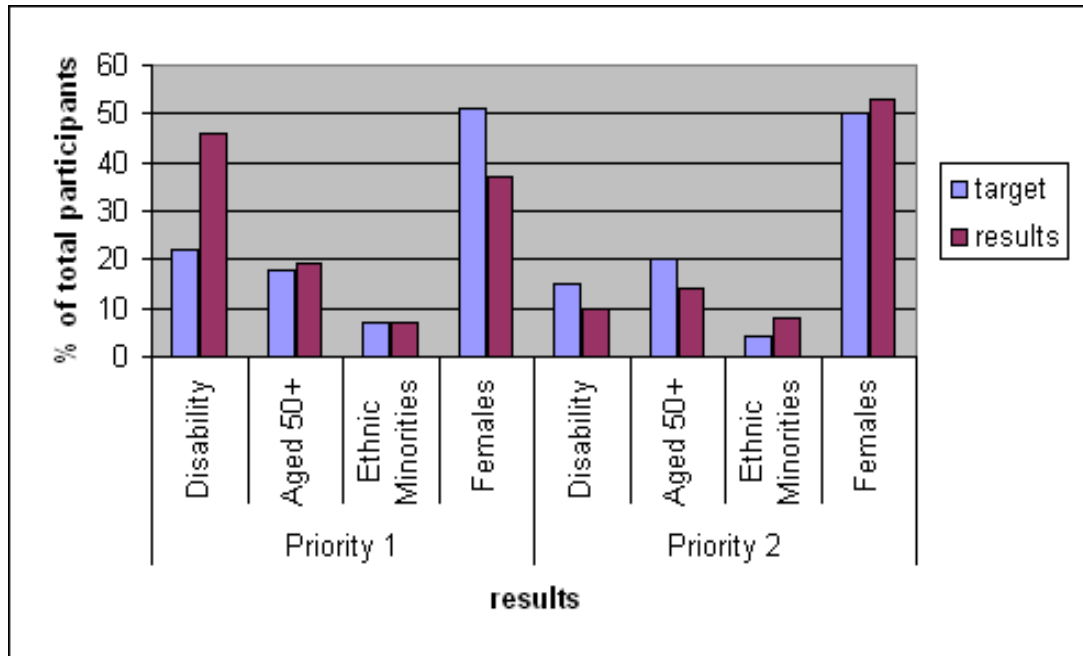


Progress with the LSC provision has been slower in Priority 2; Total Participants stand at 4,012, just 17% of the 2010 target. Participants with basic skills needs is causing particular concern with only 202 (5%) of the target achieved to date. Generally projects were late starting hence the starts and achievements being below profile. Recent feedback during the monitoring of contracts has shown that this is now improving and it is expected that these figures will show a marked improvement next quarter. Results are below profile across the board. It is the achievement of basic skills which gives the greatest concern with no individuals being reported as at May 09.

The **Annex 2** to this paper shows the detail of each P2 project to identify where performance is of most concern, the LSC will be able to explain at the meeting how the performance management is being progressed following the individual project performance reviews that the LSC has completed on all projects, including where necessary claw back of funds.

Equality and Diversity Performance

Delivery of the ESF equality and diversity targets are progressing reasonably well. Both the LSC and DWP have systems in place to monitor and record equality and diversity and all providers (CFO and non CFO) have attended Equality and Diversity workshops at GOSW, delivered by Ecotec who have been funded nationally through Technical Assistance.



Summary

In summary, ESF spend is progressing well and ESF is working well in parts, particularly in supporting the increased volumes of participants due to the economic changes in Priority 1 and helping to ensure those who are most disadvantaged are not forgotten during the recession.

The key issue is to support the delivery partners to ensure that the targets can be met even in this very testing economic climate. There is more work to be done to successfully deliver P2. The LSC is taking a firmer line with its providers to ensure programme delivery and is starting to withdraw funds from those providers who are not performing. It is hoped that this will send a clear message that all providers must improve their delivery and strive to fulfil their contractual obligations to the LSC and thus the Competitiveness Programme. GOSW will continue to monitor this closely and will report back to the PMC on progress.

GOSW
September 2009

DWP ESF SW Competitiveness Programme Progress Report September 2009

It is pleasing to be able to report that as we reach the end of the first year of ESF provision DWP in the SW are 4% above the starts profile and have a job entry rate of 36% against a target of 22%.

Contracting

Strong working relationships exist between the DWP Contract Managers and the Jobcentre Plus District ESF Teams. District Staff are invited to Provider Performance Review meetings and Contract Managers are welcomed at District Provider Engagement Meetings.

The Regional ESF Manager is using information from both sources to conduct an annual review of each of the 10 contracts. These will be completed by the end of September 2009.

Each District is undertaking Customer Experience Monitoring and generally feedback from participants is very positive and encouraging. Devon District are about to begin an exercise seeking feedback from those participants who left provision to go into work

Where contracts are performing well we are considering invoking the upper tolerances agreed at post tender negotiations, whereby the provider receives additional money which will enable them to increase the number of participants on the provision.

The new contracts being tendered for in Dorset and Somerset, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Swindon and West of England are on target to be awarded in October 2009 with provision starting in December.

A Provider event was held at the end of June to provide a networking opportunity for potential sub-contractors for these new contracts. It was well attended and contacts were made.

Publicity

A good news story from the Family Focus Project in Dorset and Somerset was included in a two page spread in the Western Morning News on 8 July as part of the ESFD ESF Awareness Week.

Good news stories are filtering in and we are hoping to publicise the success of an ex-Woolworth's employee in gaining employment in the near future.

Cross-cutting Themes

All Contract Managers have undertaken Ecotec Training in Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development and are working with providers on their action plans.

Performance

Performance information to June 2009 has been received and is detailed below.

DWP Performance to June 2009 – ESF Only

| | Profile | Actual | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|--------|-------------|
| | | ESF | % Variation |
| Starts | 3845 | 4007 | + 4% |
| % participants unemployed | 66% | 52% | -14% |
| % participants inactive | 34% | 48% | +14% |
| Job Outcomes | 962 | 540 | -44% |
| Job Entry Rate (Outcomes/Leavers) | 22% | 36% | +14% |
| % Female | 51% | 45% | -6% |
| % Ethnic Minority | 7% | 12% | +5% |
| % Disabled | 22% | 29% | +7% |
| % 50+ | 18% | 14% | -4% |

The figures are un-validated and therefore subject to change

Claims

Claims to February 2009 have been submitted and are awaiting payment.

Provider spend to the end of May amounts to £3,185,636 against a profile of £3,451,591 (92%). The shortfall in predicted spend is due to the lower numbers of job outcomes being claimed and this in itself is a reflection of the economic downturn.

Case Studies

Four of our 10 contracts are performing very well in terms of starts and job outcomes and I have included some information about each one.

Torbay Plus – Working Links

The aim of this project is to increase employment rates and reduce working age benefit claim rates across the whole of the Torbay Unitary Authority area with additional targeting in the wards of Tormohun (Torquay) and Roundham with Hyde (Paignton).

The project also aims to facilitate a flexible labour market and support ERDF and other regeneration investment through extending sustainable employment opportunities to more people who are disadvantaged in the labour market.

Currently it is 38% above its starts targets and is achieving 93% of the job outcome profile.

Torbay Plus is working with a number of partners who can offer specialist help to participants as this example shows

A married mature male, over 50 years of age attended a group induction at which he strongly expressed how dire his situation was and how he had been requesting help for the first time in his working life as he had never been unemployed before.

He was facing court proceedings for repossession and desperately wanted our support to help find him work. As his financial and housing situation was so desperate he could no longer recognise or acknowledge his skills and work focused experience; through an intense diagnostic assessment we were able to identify his transferable skills in animal management and driving.

He also has some driving certificates but, due to his negative mind set, he kept focusing on the additional and specialist training that he lacked rather than the years of multi-drop and long distance driving experience he has acquired.

Immediately after the group induction, Working Links referred our client to our CAB partner for debt and money advise – the advisor accompanied our client to court the next week and they came away with a 56 day extension on the repossession order to give our client time to find employment.

We created a positive and functional CV with covering letter which uplifted our client's mood to the extent that he proudly sent copies off to a variety of job vacancies. Within a week our client was offered work which he states has saved him from repossession.

He secured full time work at a fruit and vegetable wholesalers with a record for rapid staff turnover. However our client needed this work to prevent his house being repossessed and he views this as a first step from which to find better paid work

Our client received post employment training in product knowledge, route awareness, delivery supplies and premises. Working Links will also part fund with Jobcentre Plus additional training in the carrying of dangerous substances.

Working with this client really showed how a joint partnership effort has had a massive impact on someone's life and allowed our client to stay in his house and rebuild his family life with pride and hope for the future.

Plymouth Works Plus – A4E

This project is looking to increase economic participation in neighbourhoods where there are high concentrations of workless people and so increase employment rates to reduce benefit claim rates in Plymouth, through extending employment opportunities to more people who are disadvantaged in the labour market.

As with Torbay Plus the participants are drawn from the following groups:

- Long Term IB Customers
- Workless parents and carers
- People with multiple barriers (offenders/refugees etc.)
- Other workless people including those at risk of becoming workless through large scale redundancies

This provision is operating at 11% above their starts target and is achieving 84% of their job outcomes.

One of their participants, Celestin, was granted refugee status and was ready to move into employment after A4e helped him to overcome multiple barriers. He started a two week work trial with Vue cinema who were very happy with his progress and it is anticipated that he will be offered full time employment.

Path 4 U – Maximus Training UK

The aim of the project is to provide mentoring, coaching and guidance and general benefit support to participants with physical disabilities, mild/moderate learning difficulties and/or mental health issues, who wish to pursue employment of 8 hours plus, work experience, voluntary work, further training or work trials.

Path 4 U is 7% above their starts profile and reaching 73% of job outcomes.

Mike joined Path4U as he had a health condition; he was looking to find work where he could build up his hours as he adjusted to working again.

Mike was fully trained in the practice and teaching of Reiki, and this was something he really wanted to pursue as paid employment.

With the support of his Employment Consultant, Mike managed to secure a voluntary position with Turning Point in Frome using his skills as part of the drug and alcohol rehabilitation process. The voluntary work gave Mike a chance to build his confidence and stamina and to explore opportunities available in going self-employed in this area.

Mike loved the voluntary work and decided that working self-employed as a Reiki healer was what he wanted to do. However due to Mike's medical history and the fact he had financial commitments going self-employed was a worry to him. A Better Off In Work Calculation (BOIWC) was carried out and as a result Mike decided to look for additional work which he could do around his self-employed hours until he was more established and earning enough money.

Mike found a job cleaning in the new Frome hospital for 14 hours that fitted his requirements for travel and hours he wanted to work. MAXIMUS supplied Mike with an invoice book, business cards and a massage table so he started self-employment in the same week.

Family Focus – Shaw Trust

This project is designed to provide support and advice for customers by reducing barriers to work. It will work with the most disadvantaged customers who have childcare responsibilities – this may include minority ethnic groups, ex-offenders, those with a history of drug and/or alcohol misuse, the homeless and inactive residents in deprived communities/workless households.

Again this provision is 43% ahead of their profiled starts and reaching 63% of their job outcome target.

Mark was claiming Incapacity Benefit following an industrial accident approximately two years ago. His marriage then ended and he lost his accommodation. Since then he has been living in a temporary home.

Mark was given the full range of appropriate developmental support following which he gained an interview for a sales position. Help was given with interview techniques and advice on how to deal with his health condition. Mark was successful in securing this position and is currently thriving in post.

**Christine Vine, Jobcentre Plus
August 2009**