

# European Social Fund Equality Impact Assessment (update)

2007-2013 European Social Fund (ESF) programme Equality Impact  
Assessment Update

August 2011

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# Equality Impact Assessment (update) for 2007-2013 European Social Fund (ESF) Programme

## Introduction

This section provides background on the European Social Fund (ESF) programme. It explains that the purpose of the impact assessment update is to consider the impact that has been made on groups with protected characteristics during the first half of the programme. The scope of the analysis is discussed in terms of the range of groups with protected characteristics and it explains why most of the analysis covers groups with protected characteristics of: gender; race; disability and age.

The Department for Work and Pensions has carried out an update to the equality impact assessment on the 2007-2013 European Social Fund programme for England and Gibraltar. The update considers the progress and impact of the ESF programme so far on a range of groups with protected characteristics as well as considering the likely impact on these groups for the second half of the programme (2011 – 2013).

This process will help to ensure that the Department has paid due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- advance equality of opportunity and support human rights for people from different groups; and
- foster good relations between people from different groups.

The equality impact assessment will show how the Department has demonstrated it has paid due regard when developing new services or processes to on the grounds of the protected characteristics. These are: race; disability; gender; age; gender reassignment; sexual orientation; pregnancy and maternity; religion or belief; and marriage and civil partnerships (in terms of eliminating unlawful discrimination only).

## A brief outline of the ESF programme

The European Social Fund (ESF) was set up to improve employment opportunities in the European Union and so help raise standards of living. It aims to help people fulfil their potential by giving them better skills and better job prospects.

As one of the European Union's Structural Funds, ESF has the strategic aim of reducing differences in prosperity across the EU and aims to enhance economic and social cohesion. ESF is a key part of the Europe 2020 strategy for jobs and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. It supports the European Union's goal of increasing employment by giving unemployed and disadvantaged people the training and support they need to enter jobs. ESF also aims to equip the workforce with skills needed by business in a competitive global economy.

The England ESF programme has two primary objectives:

The convergence objective aims to develop areas where the economy is lagging behind the rest of the European Union. In England, only Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly benefit from ESF funding under the Convergence Objective.

The regional competitiveness and employment objective covers all of England except for the 'convergence objective' area of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Within this objective, Merseyside and South Yorkshire benefit from transitional funding because they used to be 'Objective One' regions in the 2000-2006 programme.

The 2007-2013 ESF programmes 'priorities' are designed to focus ESF spending on specific activities and to ensure that it reaches people in most need of support. The ESF programme in England has two main priorities:

- Priority 1 is 'extending employment opportunities'. It funds projects which help unemployed and people with disadvantages in the labour market overcome the barriers they face in their search for employment. About £1.5 billion of ESF money is available for this priority in 2007-2013.
- Priority 2 is 'developing a skilled and adaptable workforce'. It supports projects to train people who do not have basic skills and qualifications needed in the workplace. About £823 million of ESF money is available for this priority in 2007-2013.

Priorities 4 and 5 in the Convergence area of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly are similar to Priorities 1 and 2 for the rest of England:

- **Priority 4:** Tackling barriers to employment (convergence objective); and
- **Priority 5:** Improving the skills of the local workforce (convergence objective)

**Priorities 3 and 6** provide technical assistance funding which is used to finance the preparatory, management, monitoring, evaluation, and information and control activities of the ESF programme. Priority 3 relates to ESF in the regional, competitiveness and employment objective whilst Priority 6 applies to the convergence objective.

The 2007-2013 England ESF programme is investing a total of £5 billion over the seven year period, of which £2.5 billion is from ESF and this is 'matched' with £2.5 billion of national funding. The ESF programme is considered **as one single programme** even though half of the funds come from domestic programme expenditure.

The European Social Fund Division within the Department for Work and Pensions acts as the Managing Authority for the England ESF programme and is responsible for preparing and negotiating the programme with the European Commission and subsequently ensuring that the programme is delivered in line with the agreed Operational Programme as well as the wider framework of EU Structural Fund regulations.

ESF funds are distributed through public agencies, the three main ones being: (i) the Skills Funding Agency; (ii) DWP; and (iii) the National Offenders Management Service (NOMS). These agencies are known as Co-Financing Organisations (CFOs). Their role is to bring together ESF and domestic funding for employment and skills so that ESF complements domestic programmes.

CFOs make ESF available to public, private and third sector organisations through a process of open competitive tendering. Successful bidders receive a single stream of funding from the CFOs and do not have to seek separate match funding from other public bodies. The procurement process with its tendering, contracting, contract management and monitoring arrangements are important processes for ensuring that equality issues are taken into account at the point of delivery. Annex 5 of the ESF Mainstreaming Plan provides further details on procurement arrangements in the first half of the programme:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/equal-opps-plan.pdf>

## Target groups

In **Priority 1** resources are focused on helping people who are unemployed or have become inactive in the labour market. In particular, it focuses on people who are most likely to face disadvantage or discrimination. Key target groups include:

- disabled people;
- lone parents;
- people aged 50 and over;
- people from ethnic minority groups;
- people without good qualifications; and
- young people not in education, employment or training.

(See the Next Steps section on future target groups for DWP Priority 1.)

**Priority 2** focuses on people in the workforce who lack basic skills or good qualifications. In particular, it focuses on those who are least likely to receive training. It also supports training for managers and employees in small firms, as well as

people made redundant or at risk of redundancy. Priority 2 aims to help people gain relevant skills and qualifications needed for their career progression and for business growth and innovation in the knowledge economy.

(See `Next Steps' section on future target groups for Skills Funding Agency Priority 2)

Further information about the ESF programme is available on the ESF website at:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/esf/resources/operational-programme/>

## Scope of the impact analysis update

This impact analysis update aims to consider:

- the impact of the ESF programme on ESF participants from groups with protected characteristics for the first half of the programme; and
- how ESF will change in the second half of the programme and issues which will need to be considered.

This impact analysis update mainly focuses on groups with the following protected characteristics:

- gender;
- race;
- disability; and
- age ( 50 or over).

When the ESF programme was being developed in England in 2007 a preliminary evaluation (ex-ante evaluation) was conducted which looked back at the lessons learned from the previous programme and also considered labour market analysis in order to identify the types of activity and target groups which the new programme should support ( i.e. the rationale for the new programme). There was no substantial labour market data available which could be used to justify targeting people according to the other protected characteristics of:

- religion or belief;
- pregnancy or maternity;
- sexual orientation; and
- transgender.

Although there is research evidence to indicate that people in the above groups experience discrimination in employment ,there was (and still is ) a gap in terms of the amount of official data gathered which can be used to justify targeting these groups at the time of the ex-ante evaluation for the current programme. This impact analysis does recommend (in the next steps / action plan section) action that could be taken to raise awareness and share good practice in promoting equality and

human rights for these groups with protected characteristics. This will include identifying and promoting good practice identified in the **EHRC's Triennial Review of equality (for example, EHRC's Trans Research review report No. 27)**.

There is a large amount of management and evaluation information for the ESF programme and the analysis in the main body of this report focuses on the key findings only. Further, more detailed analysis is provided in the various annexes to the main body of this report for the sake of transparency.

The analysis aims to answer the following six key questions:

- Did everyone have the same opportunity to use ESF or was it more difficult for some than others?
- Does ESF provide the same outcome for all?
- Did ESF affect relations between different groups? Did they favour a particular group or deny opportunities to another?
- Is there any evidence that ESF discriminated unlawfully against people from different groups?
- Is there any evidence that different groups had different needs which were affected by ESF policy or delivery?
- Did ESF policy address issues that were highlighted in the past as a negative or disproportionate impact?

## Consultation and involvement

The Managing Authority has consulted with a range of internal and external stakeholders on the production of this impact analysis update / review by setting up a working group to advise on the approach to the analysis. Partners included the:

- Equality and Human Rights Commission;
- Third Sector European Network (TSEN); and
- Co-Financing Organisations – DWP, Skills Funding Agency and National Offenders Management Service.

The DWP CFO has begun a process of engagement on the **delivery arrangements** under Priority 1 in terms of helping families with multiple problems in the second half of the programme. (It should be noted that ( and 25% of Priority 1 funds will be used to help people in receipt of Incapacity Benefit and Income Support access the Work Programme on a voluntary basis - these people would not normally be eligible). Given that the DWP CFO will be mostly targeting families with multiple problems it is difficult to identify any negative equality impact that could arise at this stage. There are no official labour market datasets aggregated at family level or precedents in terms of delivering holistic support ESF to families with multiple problems which can help predict likely impacts or results. The decisions concerning which families will be targeted for support will be made by local authorities in line with the Government's localism agenda. It will be necessary for DWP to conduct an equality-focused



engagement exercise in early 2012 to identify any equality issues which may be emerging from this new approach in Priority 1 and to take any mitigating action should this be required.

DWP/ESF does not gather management information on participants with the following protected characteristics:

- gender re-assignment;
- sexual orientation;
- pregnancy and maternity; and
- religion and belief.

In the absence of any suitable data, the ESF Division will undertake desk research as well as consult with suitable organisations to identify good practice in terms of promoting equality and human rights for people with the above personal characteristics which may be relevant to the work of ESF projects.

The DWP ESF Evaluation Team will explore how any future ESF cohort surveys could try to gather information on participants with these protected characteristics in future cohort surveys in the second half of the programme. (See `Next Steps' section action plan)

The cohort surveys conducted in the first half of the programme did ask participants about their expectations, experiences and levels of satisfaction about ESF and this report provides some of the key findings from this participant-level consultation.

# Question 1: did everyone have the same opportunity to use ESF, or was it more difficult for some than others?

In order to answer this question, this report considers the participation rates of the various groups with protected characteristics at both programme and priority level. The female participation rate is identified as being the key issue facing the programme given that it is 13 percentage points below the programme target of 51%. This shortfall is also reflected in Priority 1. It is an unintended consequence of using additional ESF funds to support unemployed people following the economic downturn – most of whom were male. The action to be taken to help increase the female participation rate is described.

Although good progress has been made towards achieving the participation targets for the other groups with protected characteristics at programme level, an issue has been identified with the participation rate for disabled people in Priority 2 being 8 percentage points below the target of 15%. The report recommends that the Skills Funding Agency CFO investigate this shortfall further and take mitigating action as required.

The principle of programming is to concentrate resources to meet a series of specific aims and objectives. In ESF the aim is to deliver eligible activity as defined in the ESF Operational programme and to help participants from the range of target groups also identified in the Operational programme. It is a legitimate aim for ESF to target people who are unemployed, inactive and / or disadvantaged in the labour market as well as help promote skills for those in employment since this is of a benefit to wider society.

Participants on ESF-funded activity are typically targeted by ESF providers according to whether or not they fall into one of the target group categories for the programme.

The programme also includes participants from national employment and training provision that is used to match-fund ESF. Match funding must support activity and target groups which are eligible in the ESF Operational Programme and which have been procured through competitive tendering routes. This match-funded activity is part of the overall ESF programme since it contributes to the programme's delivery, outputs and results.

The programme has a set of equality targets which aim to inform CFO plans, procurement and contract management arrangements to help ensure that people from the target groups and who also have protected characteristics are accessing ESF. These targets are applied at programme and priority level. Separate targets are **not** set for the 'match' and 'ESF' funding streams which, together, combine to make up the sum of ESF programme activity.

This impact analysis focuses on people with protected characteristics. In order to consider the extent to which people with protected characteristics, can access ESF it is necessary to consider **the participation rates of the different groups with protected characteristics**. This part of the impact analysis presents the various participation rates and also compares them with the equality targets and contextual baselines that have been set-out in the ESF programme. The analysis is at programme and priority level. It should be emphasised that these targets are not 'mechanistic' targets but are designed to stimulate the programme and act as benchmarks / points of reference. The targets are not quotas. ESF equality targets only relate to participation and have not been set for outputs / outcomes – although these are considered later in this report.

## Analysis of representation of groups with protected characteristics at programme level

**Table 1: Targets and participation rate profiles for groups with protected characteristics at programme level**

OP indicator reference no.	Programme Indicator	Target 2007-13 (Programme level target) *	Cumulative Achievement	Difference between cum. Achievement and target
1.	Total number of participants	1,790,000	2,409,758	+ 619,758
8.	Female participants	51%	38%	-13% points
7.	Participants from ethnic minorities	19%	18%	-1 % point
5.	Participants with disabilities or health conditions	19%	19%	0
6.	Participants aged 50 or over	19%	17%	-2 % points

Table 1 above compares the target participation rates for the various protected groups covered by this equality impact assessment update with the actual rate achieved (cumulative achievement) **at programme level**.

The key points to note from the table above are described below.

### **Gender representation at programme level (female participation target and rate)**

Although the programme has achieved its target for the total number of female participants the female participation rate, in percentage terms, is **13 percentage points below the target of 51%**.

Table A1.1 in Annex 1 shows that, at programme level, of those 38% of participants who are female:

- 19% are disabled or have a health condition;
- 14% are aged 50 or over ; and
- 19% are from ethnic minorities.

The above breakdown of personal characteristics for female participants broadly reflects the overall participation rates for the other protected groups at programme level (male and female).

The issue of the female participation rate being lower than anticipated was discussed at the meeting of the national ESF Programme Monitoring Committee in September 2010, following a presentation of a paper by the ESF Evaluation Team, who explained that there were two main reasons for the shortfall:

- there have been a higher number of unemployed participants in Priority 1 than forecast in the first half of the programme, and the higher number of male participants reflects the gender imbalance in the unemployed population; and
- the programme flexed to respond to the increase in unemployment which increased more among men than women in England – thereby supporting the European Economic Recovery Plan, especially in Priority 1.

The targets for female participation will remain for the rest of the programme period and the programme's Managing Authority (DWP ESF Division) and partners will take steps to try to increase the female participation rate as described below:

### **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) update**

This impact assessment focuses on

- the impact that the programme has had so far on female participation – as well as other equality groups with 'protected characteristics' (where data is available); and
- key strategic and operational issues that are likely to have an impact on female participants and participants with other protected characteristics for the second half of the programme period (see next steps) .

The EIA will provide an opportunity to explore in more detail where problems may be occurring in terms of attracting female participants to the programme as well as help identify further opportunities to promote female participation and performance in the ESF programme (along with other groups).

The EIA is likely to cover a range of issues which will help inform the action to be taken to increase female participation such as:

- assessing the role of CFO plans in promoting gender equality;
- the extent to which procurement processes and subsequent contract management and monitoring help promote gender equality ( at the time of writing, new contract schedules for equality and diversity are being developed prepared – see next steps future action); and
- how provider delivery arrangements and good practice including recruitment practices and the provision of child and eldercare, helps or hinders female participation ( see below – and next steps).

### **DWP CFO' s Priority 1 provision**

The DWP CFO will be re-aligning ESF provision provided in Priority 1 for the second half of the ESF programme.

DWP will add £66m of ESF funding (25% of funding nationally, 10% in Cornwall) to the Work Programme so that people in receipt of Incapacity Benefit and Income Support can now volunteer to participate in the Work Programme, where they would previously have been excluded. The Work Programme will be rolled out nationally from Spring 2011. It will be an integrated package of support providing personalised help for people who find themselves out of work based on need and not the benefit they claim.

The remaining 75% of ESF funds (£200m+) will fund support for families with multiple problems. Development is at an early stage but it is intended to add value to local authority and community support by providing holistic support at the level of the family in terms of tackling wordlessness, including intergenerational worklessness. This provision will be contracted using the DWP Framework. It is hoped that this support, with its family-focus, will help encourage or increase female participation given that most lone parents are female.

### **Action Research into unemployed female participation in ESF (Skills Funding Agency)**

In December 2010, the Skills Funding Agency launched a tender for action research. The aim of the project is to build on the Managing Authority's research by identifying, catalysing and disseminating a core of good practice in successfully engaging unemployed women in ESF programmes.

The objectives of this research are to:

- identify, collate and critically examine strategies that have proven to be successful in engaging with unemployed women;
- identify the transferable aspects of these successful strategies that could be adopted by other providers;
- produce high-quality case study examples of successful strategies, for dissemination across the ESF programme;
- act as a catalyst for partnerships between providers, and voluntary and community organisations, to engage under-represented client groups; evaluate the success of this approach;
- facilitate the dissemination of good practice through networks of ESF providers;
- consider the impact of multiple equality characteristics, for example how the needs of unemployed women differ by social class, ethnicity, caring responsibilities, age, disability (including mental health and learning difficulties), sexual orientation and gender reassignment; .
- adopt an inclusive approach to collating the experiences and outcomes of the various strategies ESF providers are utilising to recruit unemployed women; and

- create viable solutions to the issue of under-recruitment of unemployed women to ESF programmes.

The researcher will be expected to act as a catalyst for change, working in partnership with providers and voluntary and community sector organisations, to identify and resolve barriers to the participation of unemployed women.

Lessons learned from this action research will also inform future updates to the Equality Impact Analysis and be shared across other CFOs as examples of good practice.

The good practice identified from this project which, at the time of writing, is due to be published in summer 2011, will be used in future action for sharing good practice (see **next steps section**).

The Skills Funding Agency will explore ways in which they can bolster the main strands of their support to promote female participation in ESF. For example, the Apprenticeship programme can be used to help women move into non-traditional occupations or work towards vocational qualifications.

### **Sharing / Promoting Good practice**

The ESF Division will pilot an interactive on-line network for ESF providers / projects which will offer them the opportunity to share good practice in actively promoting gender equality and equal opportunities. If it is successful, and if there is sufficient demand for it to be worthwhile, the pilot will be extended to all providers interested.

The Managing Authority will update the gender equality good practice guide that was prepared at the beginning of the programme. The update will include good practice examples taken from Section 6 and Annex 3 of this report, for example:

- providing outreach facilities at family and children centres (DWP providers in East Midlands and South West);
- integrating female participation rates into provider contracts (London Councils and West Midlands Skills Funding Agency );
- providing financial assistance for child and eldercare support where required (Working Links, North West);
- encouraging men and women into non-traditional occupations and sectors; and encourage men and women to enter occupations or sectors where they are under-represented).

This update to the guidance may be done as part of a technical assistance project. The good practice will be informed by desk-research on good practice in helping lone parents and intergenerational workless families.

The ESF Mainstreaming Leader Awards for 2011 will have a special dedicated 'gender equality' award.

### **On-going monitoring and evaluation**

The Managing Authority will continue to monitor female participation during the second half of the programme to check that progress is being made in improving

performance against the targets. The on-going evaluation work will also provide useful information on gender equality through the various surveys being conducted. This progress will be checked by the equal opportunities sub committee and the national programme monitoring committee.

The Managing Authority will consider holding a gender equality workshop during the second half of 2011 to review progress by asking CFOs to report back on the efforts they have been making to achieve the female participation targets. Such a workshop may also provide a useful opportunity to share ideas and good practice and one or two providers may be asked to provide input to the workshop where appropriate (again, this workshop may be facilitated by a consultant as part of an ESF Technical Assistance project).

The gender equality and equal opportunities mainstreaming plan will contain a specific aim to improve the female participation rate during the second half of the programme. The proposed actions described in the bullet points above will be incorporated into the national mainstreaming plan and progress will be reported to the ESF gender equality and equal opportunities sub committee and national programme monitoring committee on an on-going basis.

**Representation of people from non-white ethnic minority groups at programme level (participation rate and target)**

**Table 2: Analysis of all ESF participants (starts) from ethnic minorities**

	<b>Total participants</b>	<b>Ethnic Minorities</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Disabled</b>	<b>Aged 50+</b>
<b>Target:</b>	1,790,000	19%	51%	19%	19%
<b>Cumulative achievement:</b>	2,409,758	18%	38%	19%	17%
<b>Ethnic Group</b>	Of whom.....	Of whom.....	Of whom.....	Of whom.....	Of whom.....
White British	72%	0%	70%	75%	75%
White Irish	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
White Other	4%	0%	5%	2%	3%
White and Black Caribbean	1%	6%	1%	1%	0%
White and Black African	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
White & Asian	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%



	<b>Total participants</b>	<b>Ethnic Minorities</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Disabled</b>	<b>Aged 50+</b>
<b>Target:</b>	1,790,000	19%	51%	19%	19%
<b>Cumulative achievement:</b>	2,409,758	18%	38%	19%	17%
<b>Ethnic Group</b>	Of whom.....	Of whom.....	Of whom.....	Of whom.....	Of whom.....
Other mixed	1%	3%	1%	1%	0%
Indian	2%	11%	2%	2%	3%
Pakistani	3%	14%	2%	2%	2%
Bangladeshi	1%	6%	1%	1%	1%
Other Asian	1%	7%	1%	1%	1%
Black Caribbean	3%	15%	3%	3%	2%
Black African	3%	19%	4%	2%	2%
Other Black	1%	5%	1%	1%	0%
Chinese	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Any Other Ethnic Group	2%	9%	2%	2%	1%
Not Stated	6%	0%	5%	8%	8%

Source: DWP (ESF `INES' database) November 2010

The participation rate for people from ethnic minorities at programme level is just one percentage point below the target of 18%.

Table A1.1 in Annex 1 shows that of those 18% of participants who are from ethnic minority groups:

- 40% are female;
- 15% are disabled; and
- 11% are aged 50 or over.

Table 2 above provides a detailed breakdown of the ethnic origin of the ESF starters. Targets have not been set at ethnic minority sub-group level. The four largest ethnic sub groups represented in the `non white' categories are for people who described themselves as being: (a) Black African (19%); (b) Black Caribbean (15%); Pakistani (14%); and Indian (11%). It would appear that there are no participants from: (a) Chinese; (b) White and Black African; and (c) White and Asian origin.

Table 2 above shows that the proportion of male and female participants across the non-white ethnic minority sub group is broadly similar.

Table 2 above shows that 78% of disabled participants are from white ethnic minority groups (75% are White British). Participants of Black Caribbean origin are the single largest non-white group who also describe themselves as being disabled (3%). Participants of Indian origin are the largest non-white ethnic minority group represented in the 50 and over category.

### **Representation of disabled participants at programme level (participation rate and target)**

The participation rate for participants with disabilities or health conditions is equal to the target of 19%.

Table A1.1 above shows that, of those participants who have a disability or health condition:

- 39% are female;
- 19% are aged 50 or over; and
- 14% are from ethnic minorities.

**Table 3: Participants with a disability or LTLI by priority**

Disability	% Respondents
No disability or LTLI	68%
Physical disability	47%
Learning disability / difficulty	5%
Mental health problem	27%
Long term illness	37%
Another type of disability or LTL	4%
Any disability or LTL	32%
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	

Source: Wave 1 ESF Cohort Survey (NatCen)

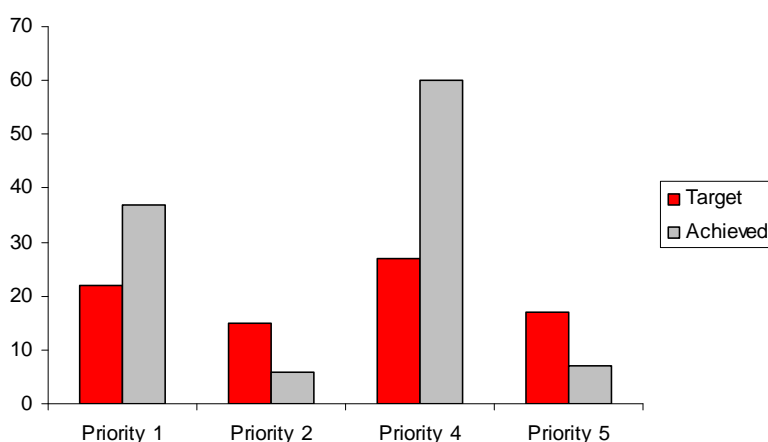
Table 3 above shows the results from Wave 1 of the ESF Cohort Survey and is based upon a survey of a representative sample of participants / leavers from the ESF programme. Of the total sample, 32 per cent of participants had a long-term illness, health problem or disability which limited their daily activities or the work that they could do. Of those participants who had a disability or long-term limiting illness,

47 per cent had a physical disability, 37 per cent had a long-term illness and 27 per cent had a mental health problem

A higher proportion of participants are recorded as having a disability in the ESF Cohort Study compared with current Management Information. It is thought that this is due to differences in the questions asked of participants about disability. In The Wave 1 cohort survey, a slightly broader question was asked to identify disabled participants. In the Wave 1 cohort survey, 'disabled participants' were survey respondents who report a long-standing illness (LTLI) illness, health problem, mental or physical disability or infirmity, which limited their daily activities or the work they could do.

**The proportion of participants with a disability or long-term limiting illness (LTLI) varied by priority**, with Priority 1 (37% compared with a target of 22%) and Priority 4 (60% compared with a target of 27%) exceeding their targets in this area.<sup>1</sup> Six per cent of Priority 2 participants and seven per cent of Priority 5 participants had a disability or long-term limiting illness, compared with targets of 15 per cent and 17 per cent respectively (Fig. 2.4 and Table 2.10).

**Table 4: proportion of participants with a disability or LTLI (extract from ESF Cohort Survey Wave 1)**



A higher proportion of match participants (41%) in Priorities 1 and 4 had a disability or long-term limiting illness, compared with ESF participants (28%). By contrast, the Priority 2 and 5 ESF sample had a higher proportion of participants with a disability or long-term limiting illness than the match sample (8% compared with 5%) – this is perhaps related to the younger age profile of the Priority 2 match sample (as there tends to be a lower incidence of disability among younger people; Table 2.12).

However, it is important to note that differences in the proportion of participants with a disability or long-term limiting illness by funding stream may also be linked to the type of courses being run by particular providers and potentially in specific regions to

target people who are economically inactive. Disability and long-term limiting illness status is a complex issue, which can be associated with gender and economic activity in addition to age.

Disability was associated with gender and age (see Table 5 below). Female participants were more likely than male participants to have a disability (35% compared with 31%). Older people were also more likely to say they had a disability or LTLI – for example, 58 per cent of those aged over 50 had a disability or LTLI, compared with nine per cent of those aged 16-19.

**Table 5: Representation of participants with a disability or Long Term Limiting Illness (LTLI) by age and gender**

Disability	Age					Gender	
	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-49	50+	Male	Female
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
No disability or LTLI	91	81	71	55	42	69	65
Any disability or LTL	9	19	29	45	58	31	35
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>1,824</i>	<i>1,525</i>	<i>1,852</i>	<i>3,494</i>	<i>2,206</i>	<i>5,832</i>	<i>5,094</i>

Source: Wave 1 ESF Cohort Survey

**Representation of participants aged 50 and over (participation rate and target)**

Table 2 shows that the participation rate for participants aged 50 or over is 17%, which is two percentage points below the target of 19% at programme level.

Table A1.1 Annex 1 shows that, of those 17% of participants who are aged 50 and over:

- 38% are female;
- 24% disabled; and
- 13% are from ethnic minority groups.

People aged 50 or over are more likely to be disabled than other groups.

### **Programme level analysis of the extent to which ESF participants from groups with protected characteristics have multiple disadvantages**

The initial Equality Impact Assessment that was prepared for the 2007-2013 programme explained that the ESF programme targets those facing more than one type of labour market disadvantage.

The original assessment explained the significance of multiple disadvantage by referring to the extensive research undertaken by Richard Berthoud for his report, “Multiple Disadvantage in Employment: A Qualitative Analysis” (Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2003) which identified that, although the nature of the disadvantage provides an indication of the depth of the problem facing an individual, it is the **number** of disadvantages that provide a more direct assessment of their distance from the labour market.

The Wave 1 cohort survey provides further analysis on the extent to which ESF participants have multiple disadvantages.

The Wave 1 cohort survey identified a range of categories of disadvantage which are broadly comparable to those identified in Berthoud’s report (although it replaces one category ‘those who live in low employment density regions’ with ex-offenders and those with issues relating to alcohol or substance abuse). The categories used in the Wave 1 report are listed below:

- people from ethnic minority groups;
- people who do not normally speak English at home;
- people with a disability or long term limiting illness;
- lone parents;
- people with caring responsibilities;
- people aged 50 and over;
- people who are long term unemployed ( for 12 months or more);
- young people classified as NEET:
- returners to the labour market;
- offenders and ex-offenders;
- people without qualifications;
- people who have issues with alcohol or substance abuse; and
- people with citizenship and VISA issues.

The Wave 1 Cohort Survey Report explains that:

Multiple disadvantages varied by priority

- More people in Priority 1(85%) and Priority 4 (87%) faced at least one disadvantage compared to Priority 2 (36%) and Priority 5 (39%) – which is not surprising given that Priorities 2 and 5 target employed participants (see Table A1.21).

- Over half of Priority 1 participants (57%) faced two or more disadvantages, with the figure rising to 63% for Priority 4 participants (See Table A1.21, Annex 1).

There was some variation by gender:

- Women were more likely than men to have multiple disadvantages – this may be due to some types of disadvantage being more likely to be experienced by female participants (for example, being a lone parent or a returner to the labour market) – see Table A1.22, Annex 1.

There was variation by ethnicity:

- 20% of white participants had three or more disadvantages, compared to 57% for Asian/Asian British, 52% for Black/Black British, 48% mixed race and 70% Chinese or other ethnic groups – see Table A1.23, Annex 1.

There was variation between disabled and non-disabled participants

- 88% of disabled participants had two or more disabilities compared to 25% of participants without a disability – see Table A1.24, Annex 1.
- 58% of disabled participants had a three or more disabilities compared to 12% of non-disabled participants – see Table A1.24, Annex 1.

There was variation by age

- Older participants tended to face higher numbers of disadvantages (not surprising given that being over 50 was, in itself a disadvantage, and also older people often had caring responsibilities) – see Table A1.25, Annex 1

## Analysis of the representation of groups with protected characteristics at Priority level

**Table 6: Participation rates, targets, profiles and contextual baselines for groups with protected characteristics in Priority 1**

OP Indicator Ref. No.	Programme Indicator	Target 2007-13 (Programme level target)	Cumulative Achievement	Difference between cumulative achievement and target	Contextual Baseline (LFS)  OP LFS baseline + latest LFS baseline (where available)
1.1	Total number of participants	887,000	1,476,742	+598,742	Not applicable
1.9	Proportion of Priority 1 participants who are female	51%	33%	-18 % points	Proportion of women among unemployed people and inactive people who want to work (LFS)= 51%
1.8	Proportion of Priority 1 participants who are from ethnic minorities	25%	20%	-5% points	Proportion of ethnic minority people in workless population (LFS) = 18%
1.5	Proportion of Priority 1 participants with disabilities and health conditions	22% (i.e.195,140)	25% (i.e. 369,185)	+3% points	Proportion of people with disabilities or health conditions in the workless population (LFS) = 19%
1.7	Proportion of unemployed and inactive Priority 1 participants aged 50 or over	18%	16%	-2%	Proportion of people aged 50 or over in the workless population (LFS) = 28%

Source: DWP (ESF `INES' database) November 2010

Table notes:

1.1 = The number of `participants' in Priority 1

1.9 = The number of female priority 1 participants divided by the total number of Priority 1 participants

1.8 = The number of Priority 1 participants who are identified as in an ethnic minority group divided by all priority `participants' with known ethnicity.

1.5 = Number of Priority 1 `participants' who on starting participation are identified as disabled.

1.7 = The number of Priority 1 participants aged equal to or greater than 50, divided by the total number of Priority 1 participants who are not in the 14-19 NEET group

Table 6 above shows that for Priority 1, the total number of participants for the programme is already 598,742 above the target of 897,000 which was set for the entire programme period of 2007-2013.

Table 6 above compares the actual participation rate (cumulative achievement) with the programme target rate and, for certain indicators, compares the rates against contextual baselines – most of which are based on Labour Force Data.

### **Participation of female participants (gender) in Priority 1**

Table 6 shows that the female participation rate of 18 percentage points below the target of 51% (and the contextual baseline which is also 51%).

Table A1.2 Annex 1 shows that in Priority 1, of those 33% of Priority 1 participants who are female:

- 28% are disabled;
- 12% are aged 50 or over;
- 21% are from ethnic minority groups.

### **Participation of participants from ethnic minority groups in Priority 1**

Table 6 shows that in Priority 1, the participation rate for people from ethnic minority groups is 20%, which is:

- 5 percentage points below the target of 25%; and
- 2 percentage points above the contextual baseline of 18% ( i.e. "the proportion of people from ethnic minorities in the workless population" (LFS) = 18%)

Table A1.3 Annex 1 shows that of those 20% of Priority 1 participants who are from ethnic minority groups:

- 37% are female;
- 20% are disabled; and
- 10% are aged 50 or over.

### **Participation of disabled participants in Priority 1**

Table 6 above shows that the proportion of Priority 1 participants with disabilities and health conditions is 25%, which is 3 percentage points above the target of 22% and 6 percentage points above the contextual baseline of 19% i.e. "the proportion of people with disabilities or health conditions in the workless population = 19% (LFS).

Table A1.4 Annex 1 shows that, of those Priority 1 participants who are disabled:

- 37% are female;
- 19% are aged 50 or over; and
- 18% are from ethnic minorities



**Table 7: Types of disability (Priority 1)**

Disability	% priority 1 participants ( respondents in survey sample)
No disability or LTLI	63%
Physical disability	47%
Learning disability / difficulty	5%
Mental health problem	27%
Long term illness	37%
Another type of disability or LTL	4%
Any disability or LTL	37%
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	

Source: Wave 1 ESF Cohort Survey (NatCen)

The results from the Wave 1 Cohort Survey show that 37% of respondents had a disability or LTLI. Of the 37% who had a disability or LTLI, 47% had a physical disability and 37% had a long term illness and 27% had mental health problems ( see Table 7 above).

### **Participation of participants aged 50 or over in Priority 1**

Table 6 above shows that the participation rate for unemployed or inactive Priority 1 participants aged 50 or over was 16% which is two percentage points below the target of 18% and 22 percentage points below the contextual baseline of 25% ( i.e. the proportion of people aged 50 or over in the workless population = 28% (LFS)

Table A1.5 Annexe 1 shows that, of the 16% of participants who are aged 50 or over:

- 33% are female;
- 39% are disabled; and
- 16% are from ethnic minorities

Table 8 below shows that the total number of participants for Priority 4 has already exceeded the total set for the entire programme period.

**Table 8: Participation rates, targets, profiles and contextual baselines for groups with protected characteristics in Priority 4**

OP Ref no.	Programme Indicator	Target 2007-13 (Programme level target) *	Cumulative Achievement	Difference between cum. Achievement and target	Contextual Baseline (Labour Force Survey LFS) OP LFS baseline
4.1	Total number of participants	24,500	31,586	+7086	Not applicable
4.9	Proportion of Priority 4 participants who are female	51%	42%	-9% Points	Proportion of women among unemployed and inactive people who want to work (LFS) 51%
4.8	Proportion of Priority 4 participants who are from ethnic minorities	1%	2%	+1% Point	Not available
4.5	Proportion of Priority 4 participants with disabilities or health condition	27%	40%	+ 13% Points	Proportion of people with disabilities or health conditions in the workless population (LFS) 23%
4.7	Proportion of unemployed and inactive participants aged 50 or over	30%	19%	- 11 % Points	Proportion of people aged 50 or over in the workless population (LFS) 42%

Source: DWP (ESF 'INES' database) November 2010

Table notes:

4.1 = Total number of 'participants' in Priority 4

4.9 = the number of female priority 4 participants divided by the total number of Priority 4 participants (4.1)

4.8 = The number of Priority 4 'participants' who are identified as being in an ethnic minority group divided by all Priority 4 'participants' with known ethnicity

4.5 = Number of Priority 4 'participants' who on starting participation are identified as disabled divided by the number of Priority 4 'participants'.

4.7 = Number of Priority 4 'participants' aged equal to or greater than 50, divided by the total number of Priority 4 'participants' who are not in the 14-19 NEET group.

### Gender participation in Priority 4

The participation rate for female participants in Priority 4 is 42% which is 9 percentage points below the target set for the Priority. It is also 9 percentage points

below the contextual baseline of 51% (i.e. the proportion of women among unemployed and inactive people who want to work).

The reasons for the shortfall have been explained above.

Table A1.6 Annex 1 shows that, of those participants who are female in P4:

- 40% are disabled ;
- 14% are aged 50 or over; and
- 2% are from ethnic minority groups.

#### **Participation of participants from ethnic minority groups in Priority 4**

The proportion of Priority 4 participants who are from ethnic minorities is one percentage point above the target of 1%. This low percentage target reflects the low number of people from ethnic minorities living in the programme's Convergence area of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

No baselines have been set for this Priority.

#### **Participation of participants who have a disability or health condition in Priority 4**

Table 8 shows that the proportion of participants who are disabled or who have health conditions in Priority 4 is 40% which is 13 percentage points above the target of 27% and 17 percentage points above the contextual baseline of 23% ( i.e. the proportion of people with disabilities or health conditions in the workless population = 23% (LFS)).

Table A1.8 Annex 1 shows that, of those Priority 4 participants who are disabled or who have health conditions:

- 41% are female
- 18% are aged 50 or over; and
- 1% are from ethnic minorities.

#### **Participation of participants aged 50 or over in Priority 4**

Table 8 above shows that the proportion of unemployed or inactive participants aged 50 or over is 19% which is 11 percentage points below the target of 30%

Table A1.9 Annex 1 shows that, of the 19% of Priority 4 participants who are aged 50 or over

- 43% are female;
- 54% are disabled: and
- 1% are from ethnic minority groups.

**Table 9: Participation rates, targets, profiles and contextual baselines for groups with protected characteristics in Priority 2**

OP indicator reference no.	Programme Indicator	Target 2007-13 (Programme level target) *	Cumulative Achievement	Difference between cum. Achievement and target Number / percentage points	Contextual Baseline (Labour Force Survey LFS) OP LFS baseline + latest LFS baseline ( where available)
2.1	Total Number of Participants in Priority 2	825,000	848,769	23,746	Not applicable
2.8	Proportion of Priority 2 participants who are female	50%	45%	-5% points	Proportion of employed people in the working age population who are female = 46%
2.7	Total number of participants in Priority 2 who are from ethnic minorities	13%	17%	+4% points	Proportion of employed people in working population who are from ethnic minorities (LFS) : 10%
2.5	Proportion of Priority 2 participants with disabilities and health conditions	15%	7%	-8% points	Proportion of employed people in working age population with disabilities or health conditions = 13%
2.6	Proportion of Priority 2 participants aged 50 and over	20%	18%	-2% points	Proportion of employed people in working age population aged 50 or over = 20% (LFS)

Source: DWP (ESF `INES' database) November 2010

Table notes:

2.1= Number of Priority 2 `participants' (starts)

2.8 = Number of female Priority 2 `participants' divided by the number of Priority 2 `participants'

2.7 = The number of Priority 2 `participants' who are identified as in an ethnic minority group divided by all Priority 2 `participants' with known ethnicity.

2.5 = Number of Priority 2 `participants' who on starting participation are identified as `disabled' divided by the number of Priority 2 `participants'

2.6 = Number of Priority 2 participants aged equal to or greater than 50 divided by the total number of Priority 2 participants who are not in the 14-19 NEET group

Table 9 above shows that the total number of participants for Priority 2 has almost reached the target set for the entire programme period ( it represent 97% of the original target set at Priority level).

### **Gender representation in Priority 2**

Table 9 above shows that the participation rate for female participants in priority 2 is 45% which is:

- 5 percentage points below the Priority 2 target of 50% for female participation; and
- 1 percentage point below the LFS contextual baseline for the proportion of employed people in the working population who are female.

Table A1.10 Annex 1 shows that, of the 45% of Priority 2 participants who are female:

- 17% are from ethnic minorities;
- 8% are disabled; and
- 17% are aged 50 or over.

### **Participation of participants from ethnic minority groups in Priority 2**

Table 9 above shows that the participation rate for Priority 2 participants from ethnic minorities is 17%, which is 4 percentage points above the programme target of 13% and 7 percentage points above the LFS contextual baseline of 10%.

Table A1.11 Annex 1 shows that, of the 17% of participants who are from ethnic minorities:

- 47% are female
- 5% are disabled; and
- 13% are aged 50 or over.

### **Participation of participants with a disability or health condition in Priority 2**

Table 9 shows that the participation rate for disabled participants in Priority 2 is 7% which is 8 percentage points below the Priority 2 target of 15% and 6 percentage points below the LFS contextual baseline.

Table A1.12 Annex 1 shows that, of these 7% of disabled participants:

- 50% are female;
- 20% are aged 50 or over; and
- 11% are from ethnic minorities.

It is not clear why the participation rate for disabled people is below-target although it should be noted that Priority 2 targets employees rather than unemployed. There may be an issue of disclosure.

### **Participation of participants aged 50 or over in Priority 2**

Table 9 shows that the participation rate for Priority 2 participants aged 50 or over is 18% which is 2 percentage points below the Priority 2 target of 20% and 2 percentage points below the LFS contextual baseline for the proportion of employed people of working age aged 50 or over.

Table A1.13 Annex 1 shows that, of the 18% of Priority 2 participants who are aged 50 or over:

- 42% are female;
- 8% are disabled; and
- 12% are from ethnic minorities.

**Table 10: Participation rates, targets, profiles and contextual baselines for groups with protected characteristics in Priority 5**

OP indicator reference no.	Programme Indicator	Target 2007-13 (Programme level target) *	Cum. Achievement	Difference between cum. achievement and target	Contextual Baseline (Labour Force Survey LFS) OP LFS baseline
5.1	Total number of participants In Priority 5	50,200	52,661	2,461	Not applicable
5.11	Proportion of Priority 5 participants who are female	50%	53%	+3 % points	Proportion of employed people in working age population who are female = 47%(LFS)
5.10	Proportion of Priority 5 participants who are from ethnic minorities	1%	2%	+1% point	Not available
5.8	Proportion of priority 5 participants with disabilities or health conditions	17%	10%	-7% points	Proportion of employed people in working age population with disabilities or health conditions = 15% (LFS)
5.9	Proportion of Priority 5 participants aged 50+	22%	17%	- 5% points	Proportion of employed people in working age population aged 50 or over = 25% (LFS)

Source: DWP (ESF `INES' database) November 2010

Table notes:

5.1= Number of Priority 5 `participant' starts

5.11= Number of female Priority 5 `participants' divided by the number of Priority 5 `participants)

5.10 = The number of Priority 5 `participants' who are identified as in an `ethnic minority group' divided by all Priority 5 `participants' with known ethnicity.

5.8 = Number of Priority 5 participation are identified as disabled divided by the number of Priority 5 `participants'.

5.9 = The number of Priority 5 `participants' aged equal to or greater than 50 divided by the total number of Priority 5 participants who are not ion the 14-19 NEET group.

## **Priority 5**

Table 10 above shows that the total number of participants in Priority 5 has already exceeded the target set for the programme period as a whole by 2,461.

### **Gender representation in Priority 5**

Table 10 above shows that the participation rate for female participants in Priority 5 is 53% which is 3 percentage points higher than the programme target of 50% and 6 percentage points higher than the LFS contextual baseline for the proportion of employed people of working age population who are female.

Table A1.14 Annex 1 shows that, of the 53% of female Priority 5 participants:

- 2% are from ethnic minorities;
- 9% are disabled; and
- 18% are aged 50 or over.

### **Representation of participants from ethnic minority groups in Priority 5**

The participation rate for participants from ethnic minorities in Priority 5 is 2% (see Table 10), which is one percentage point above the programme target of 1%. This figure is small - reflecting the number of people from ethnic minorities who live in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

### **Representation of disabled participants in Priority 5**

Table 10 shows that the participation rate for disabled participants in Priority 5 is 10%, which is 7 percentage points below the Priority target of 17% and 5 percentage points below the Labour Force Survey contextual baseline for the proportion of employed people in the working age population with a disability or a health condition.

Table A1.16 Annex 1 shows that, of the 10% of Priority 5 participants who are disabled:

- 50% are female;
- 21% are aged 50 or over; and
- 2% are from ethnic minority groups

### **Representation of participants aged 50 or over in Priority 5**

The participation rate for people aged 50 or over in Priority 5 is 17%, which is 5 percentage points below the Priority target of 22% and 8 percentage pints below the

Labour Force Survey contextual baseline for the proportion of employed people in the working age population aged 50 or over ( see Table 10).

Table A1.17 Annex 1 shows that of the 17% of Priority 5 participants who are aged 50 or over:

- 52% are female;
- 12% are disabled; and
- 2% are from ethnic minorities

### Concluding remarks

Although the target for the total number of female participants for the whole programme period (2007-2013) has already been achieved at the half way stage of the programme, the percentage target (the participation rate) is **13 percentage points below** the programme target of 51% ( **see table 1**). This is an unforeseen and unintended consequence resulting from the increase in unemployed people accessing the programme – most of whom are male and action will be taken to try to increase the female participation rate in the second half of the programme, although it will not be possible to achieve the 51% target.

The recent ESF Evaluation Synthesis report raises a number of issues around the methodology used for equality target-setting in the ESF programme arguing that the targets would be more realistic if they took into account the likely characteristics of participants on the domestic programmes used to match the ESF provision (particularly relating to gender and disability). The ESF Managing Authority will not change the targets for the current programme and is committed to increasing female participation rates on the programme. However, it may be necessary to review target-setting methodology in light of lessons learned for any future ESF programme post 2014. (This is the first time such a comprehensive set of equality targets have been integrated into the ESF programme.)

There are no other significant issues concerning the participation **rates at programme level**, with the target rate for disabled participants being exceeded in Priorities 1 and 4 and the targets for ethnic minorities and participants aged 50 or over being only 1-2% short of the target set at the beginning of the programme

It is clear from the analysis that the programme is also reaching multiply disadvantaged people with a number of protected characteristics

At priority level, the shortfall in the female participation rate is reflected most in Priority 1 where the female participation rate is 18 percentage points below both :(i) the Priority target of 51%; and (ii) the Labour Force Survey contextual baseline for the proportion of women among unemployed and inactive who want to work, which is also 51% (see table 6). The female participation rate is higher in Priority 4 than Priority 1 – although it is still 9 percentage points below the Priority 4 target of 51% (see table 8).

The main issue for Priority 2 is the participation rate for disabled people which is **8 percentage points below the Priority level target of 15%** and is 5 percentage



points below the Labour Force Survey contextual baseline for the proportion of employed people in the working age population with a disability or health condition – (see table 9). Most of the participants in these priorities are already employed and there may be an issue of participants not being willing to disclose a disability - or not seeing any particular reason to do so. The ESF good practice guidance on helping people with disabilities does recommend that participants are told why they are being asked to disclose a disability and the ESF managing Authority will raise this issue with the Skills Funding agency to see how this good practice may be better – disseminated in future. A further explanation may possibly be linked to findings from a recent evaluation report on in-work training in ESF which found that Priority 2 and Priority 5 projects tended to target companies at a strategic, sectoral or skills level, in line with regional skills frameworks and CFO plans (rather than targeting provision according to personal characteristics). It would be difficult to target provision without knowing the composition of each employer's workforce beforehand. There is no evidence of negative impact or of any participants from particular groups being denied access because of their characteristics.

The female participation rate is higher in Priority 2 than in Priority 1 and is just 5% below the 50% target set for the Priority and one percentage point below the Labour Force Survey contextual baseline for the proportion of employed people in the working age population who are female ( 46% – see table 9).

The proportion of participants from ethnic minorities is 4% points above the Priority 2 target of 13% and is 7 percentage points above the Labour Force Survey contextual baseline for the proportion of employed people in the working age population who are from ethnic minorities (10% – see table 9).

The participation rate for female participants has exceeded the Priority 5 target of 50% by 3 percentage points and is 6 percentage points above the Labour Force Survey contextual baseline for the proportion of employed people in the working age population who are female (see table 10).

## Question 2: does the proposal provide the same outcome for all?

ESF aims to help a diverse range of disadvantaged people, all of whom start from different levels of ability and employment status. Given that disadvantaged people are being targeted, it is inevitable that outcomes differ between individuals and groups. ESF therefore aims to tailor support according to individual needs.

A differential impact has emerged for some groups with protected characteristics in terms of their longer term employment patterns. Disabled people and older people being less likely than non-disabled people and younger people to be in work by the time of their 'Wave 2' Cohort Survey interview.

There is also some variation in terms of the achievement of skills and full qualifications with: women being more likely than men to achieve level 2,3 and 4 qualifications ( and men being more likely to achieve level 1); people from ethnic minorities more likely to achieve level 1 and 4; and people from younger age groups more likely to achieve a full qualification than older participants aged 50 or over.

The analysis shows that ESF is having a positive impact in helping a diverse range of people at programme and priority level achieve employment outcomes and skills and qualifications.

This section of the analysis considers the extent to which groups with protected characteristics are achieving: (i) job outcomes; (ii) basic skills; and (iii) qualifications. Although no targets were set for performance in terms of outcomes, the analysis does compare the performance of participants in the protected groups.

The analysis begins by considering aggregate results in similar priorities. Therefore the analysis begins with a focus on the extent to which protected groups are:

- going into **employment** ( Priorities 1 and 4 ); and
- gaining **basic skills or qualifications** ( priorities 2 and 5).

The analysis then considers the performance of different protected groups in each Priority in turn.

When the ESF Division negotiated and agreed the ESF programme with the European Commission, a decision was made not to set equality targets for the number of jobs, skills and qualifications gained by participants in the protected groups. This was mostly due to methodological difficulties in setting such targets, as well as issues concerning the extent to which such targets could be incorporated into the programme's procurement and contracting arrangements.

## **Job outcomes for groups with protected characteristics: Priority 1 and Priority 4**

At the mid-point of the programme, 172,291 participants from Priority 1 were identified as being in work on leaving, representing 85% of the target for the total number of P1 and P4 participants going into work on leaving for the programme period (2007-2013).

Of those Priority 1 and Priority 4 leavers going into work:

- 35% were female;
- 16% were participants from non-white ethnic minorities
- 22% were disabled
- 12% were aged 50 or over

Although good progress has been made towards achieving the programme target, the figures above need to be seen in the context of a difficult labour market, with a large proportion of disadvantaged leavers not going into work. For example, 15% of **all P1 leavers** went into work on leaving (see table A 2.2).

### **Priority 1**

15% of **all Priority 1 leavers** went into work on leaving, and of these:

- 35% were female;
- 16% were participants from non-white ethnic minorities
- 22% were disabled
- 12% were aged 50 or over

**Table 11: Impact on protected groups in Priority 1 – employment (key points)**

Protected Group	% of leavers from protected group going into work on leaving	Impact ( positive / negative / no change)	Employment pattern for the 4 periods covered by the Cohort Survey	Comparison of employment patterns for the 4 periods covered by the Cohort Survey
<u>Gender</u> Female leavers	16% (See table A 2.3)	<b>Positive</b>	Employment rate rose by 26 percentage points (See table A 2.4)	Employment patterns are broadly similar between men and women.  _(See table A 2.4)
<u>Ethnicity</u> Leavers from non-white ethnic minority groups	13 % (See table A 2.5)	<b>Positive</b>	Employment rate increased by 21 percentage points  _(See table A 2.6)	Employment patterns similar between white participants and participants from ethnic minority groups from the week before the course until the Wave 2 interview. White participants more likely to be in work 12 months before course.  (See table A 2.6)
<u>Disability</u> Disabled leavers	14 %  (See table A 2.7)	<b>Positive</b>	Rate of employment increased 13 percentage points from one week before the, BUT. Inactivity increased 7 percentage points for same period. (See table A 2.8)	Priority 1 participants with a disability or LTLI less likely than those with out to find work between the time the start the course and the Wave 2 interview  (See table A 2.8)
<u>Age</u> Leavers aged 50 and over	16 %  (See table A 2.9)	<b>Positive</b>	Rate of employment for those aged 50 or over increased by 10 percentage points.  (See table A 2.10)	.Participants aged 16-19 and 20-49 were more likely to be in employment at the time of the Wave 2 interview than those aged 50+  (See table A 2.10)

#### **Jobs: Priority 4**

Table A2.11 shows that 17% of all Priority 4 leavers went into work on leaving ESF and of, these:

- 38% were female;
- 32% were disabled;

- 18% were aged 50 or over; and
- 1% were from a non-white ethnic minority group

**Table 12: Impact on protected groups in Priority 4 - employment (key points)**

Protected Group	% of leavers from protected group going into work on leaving	Impact	Employment pattern	Comparison
<b>Gender</b> Female leavers	16% (See table A2.12)	<b>Positive</b>	Employment rate increased by 23 percentage points (See table A2.13)	Similar increase in employment pattern for women and men (See table A 2.13)
<b>Ethnicity</b> Leavers from non-white ethnic minority groups	9% (See table A 2.14)	<b>Positive</b>	– but no analysis of pattern	
<b>Disability</b> Disabled leavers	15% (See table A2.15)	<b>Positive</b>	Employment rate increased by 14 percentage points  (See table A2.16)	Less likely to find work than those without a disability or LTLI. The employment rate rose by 15 percentage points (compared to 41% for non-disabled). (See table A2.16)
<b>Age</b> Leavers aged 50 and over	24% (See table A2.17)	<b>Positive</b>	Employment rate increased 19 percentage points from week before the course.  See table A 2.18)	Unemployment fell by 3 percentage points for Priority 4 leavers aged 50+, compared to a 13 percentage points drop for those aged 16-19 and 18 percentage points drop for those in the 20-49 age range. (See table A2.18)

## **Achievement of basic skills and qualifications by participants from protected groups**

There are a number of technical issues which need to be borne in mind when reviewing programme performance in terms of participants achieving basic skills and / or qualifications.

Firstly, this section of the analysis includes data on the achievement of full qualifications for participants **`on leaving`** as well as longitudinal analysis which aims to consider the achievement of qualifications which were undertaken by participants during the ESF course but only awarded to the participant some time **after leaving**. The issue here is that there is often a delay between the participant leaving ESF and receiving notification of the award of a **`full`** qualification. The *on leaving* data recorded on the INES database therefore tends to underestimate outcomes in terms of participants achieving full qualifications because of this time-lag. The longitudinal Cohort Survey helps to provide a more complete analysis by gathering results at a later stage. It is for this reason that the results for the achievement of full qualifications tend to be higher in the longitudinal analysis (Cohort survey) than in the **`on leaving`** results (ESF INES database).

Secondly, data relating to the achievement of basic skills recorded on the INES MI database should be treated as an underestimate because the Skills Funding Agency MI system only records the highest qualifications achieved. This means, for example, that participants who acquire basic skills and then go on to achieve a level 1 qualification, will only have the achievement of level 1 recorded on the database. However, the Skills Funding Agency will undertake further investigation of the MI database to include all the participants who had also gained Skills for Life qualification.

## **Achievement of basic skills and qualifications: programme level**

Table 13 shows that nearly 80,000 participants have gained basic skills in Priorities 1, 2, 4 and 5 and that, of these participants gaining basic skills on leaving:

- 49% are female
- 12% are disabled;
- 14% are aged 50 or over; and
- 29% are from non-white ethnic minority groups.

Table 13 also shows that, of those Priority 1,2, 4 and 5 participants gaining full qualifications on leaving:

- 46% are female;
- 8% are disabled;
- 19% are aged 50 or over; and

- 17% are from non-white ethnic minorities.

**Table 13: Participants gaining basic skills and qualifications**

ESF OP Ind. Ref	Programme Indicator	Target	Cumulative Achievement		Female %	Disabled %	Aged 50+ %	Ethnicity %
11.	Number of participants gaining basic skills (Priorities 1 - 2 and Priorities 4-5)	160,000	79,535	>	49%	12%	14%	29%
12.	Number of participants gaining full qualifications at level 2 or above (Priorities 1 - 2 and Priorities 4-5)	174,000	249,482	>	46%	8%	19%	17%

Source: DWP (ESF `INES' database) November 2010

Table notes:

11. = The number of `participants' who gained basic skills on leaving the participation  
 12. = The number of participants who on leaving ESF gained one of the following qualification levels: level 2,3,4,5 or higher.

Table 13 above shows that nearly 80,000 participants have gained basic skills. **This figure should be treated as an underestimate since the Skills Funding Agency MI system only records the highest levels achieved – which means that participants who achieve basic skills and then go on to achieve higher levels are not counted.**

Where details of participants gaining basic skills have been recorded, it would appear that of those Priority 1, 2, 4, and 5 participants gaining basic skills on leaving:

- 49% are female
- 12% are disabled
- 14% are aged 50 or over; and
- 29% are from non-white ethnic minorities

The table above also shows that the target number of participants gaining full level 2 qualifications or above has been exceeded by 75,482.

The table above also shows that , of those Priority 1,2,4 and 5 participants gaining full qualifications at level 2-5 or higher on leaving:

- 46% are female
- 8% are disabled;
- 19% are aged 50 or over; and
- 17% are from non-white ethnic minorities.

The tables below provide a more detailed Priority level analysis for each protected group.

### **Achievement of basic skills and qualifications by protected group in Priorities 2 and 5**

Tables 14 and 15 below highlight the main points to note from the analysis concerning the achievement of basic skills and qualifications in Priorities 2 and 5 respectively.

Further tables and analyses are provided in Annex 3.



**Priority 2**

**Table 14: Achievement of basic skills and full qualifications by protected groups**

Protected group	% of leavers achieving basic skills	Full qualifications Achieved ( % of Wave 2 survey respondents)				Main points to note: (achievement of full qualifications)
		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4 and above	
Gender	36%	8%	32%	25%	9%	Wave 2 survey and multivariate analysis suggest that women are more likely than men to gain full qualifications at levels 2, 3, and 4. Men are more likely to gain qualifications at level 1.  (See Table A3.3)
Female leavers	(See table A 3.2)	(See table A3.3)	(See table A3.3)	(See table A3.3)	(See table A3.3)	
Ethnic Minorities	13%	16%	23%	16%	13%	The Wave 2 survey results indicate that 68% of Priority 2 participants from ethnic minority groups achieved full qualifications – this is not significantly different from the proportion of white participants who gained qualifications  (70%) Participants from ethnic minorities were more likely to gain qualifications at level 1 and 4+  (See table A 3.6)
Leavers from non-white ethnic minority groups	(See table A3.5)	(See table A 3.6)	(See table A 3.6)	(See table A 3.6)	(See table A 3.6)	
Disabled	36%	16%	23%	15%	12%	The Wave 2 cohort survey results indicate that 67% of Priority 2 participants with a disability or qualification gained a qualification.  There were no statistically significant differences in proportions of disabled people gaining qualifications compared to those without a disability – although disabled participants were less likely to achieve a level 3 qualification. (See table A 3.8)
Disabled leavers	(See table A 3.7)	(See table A 3.8)	(See table A 3.8)	(See table A 3.8)	(See table A 3.8)	
Age 50+	33%	19%	18%	10%	7%	Participants aged 50 or over were less likely than participants in younger age groups to have gained qualifications  (See table A 3.10)
Leavers aged 50 and over	(See table A 3.9.)	See table A 3.10	See table A3.10	See table 3.10	See table A3.10	

**Table 15: Priority 2 - achievement of basic skills and full qualifications by protected group (main points)**

Protected group	% of leavers from group achieving basic skills	(iii) Full qualifications Achieved ( % of Wave 2 survey respondents)				(iv) Main points to note: (achievement of full qualifications)
		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4 and above	
Gender Female leavers	100%  (See table A3.12)	9  (See table A3.13)	24  (See table A3.13)	21  (See table A3.13)	13  (See table A3.13)	Female participants were more likely than male participants to have gained a full qualification at level 4 (13% compared to 3 %) and at level 3 21% compared with 13%). Men were more likely to achieve level 1 qualification 17% compared to 9% of female participants. (See table A 3.13)
Ethnic Minorities Leavers from non-white ethnic minority groups	6% (See table A 3.15)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Disabled leavers	10% (See table A 3.15)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Age 50+ Aged 50 and over	7% (See table A 3.17)	14 (See table A3.18)	25 (See table A 3.18)	13 (See table A 3.18)	7 (See table A 3.18)	Participants aged 50 or over were less likely than younger age groups (25-34 and 35-49) to achieve a qualification. 42% of participants aged 50 or over did not achieve a qualification compared to 38% of 25-34 year olds and 33% of 35-49 year olds Participants aged 50+ were slightly less likely to achieve a level 2 or 3 qualifications when compared with age groups 25-34 and 35-49. (See table A 3.18)

# Did ESF: affect relations between different groups?; favour a particular group?; or deny opportunities to another?

There is no evidence available that suggests that the design and delivery of ESF affected relations between different groups in the first half of the programme. The management information and evaluation systems do not specifically aim to explore relations between groups. However, if there were significant issues, it is likely that these would have become apparent through informal ad-hoc feedback from partners – given that we are three years into the programme.

Although there is no evidence that the design of ESF affected relations between different groups, there is evidence that there is some variation in the way that individuals are referred onto ESF employment programmes / projects in Priorities 1 and 4 by Jobcentre Plus. A recent qualitative evaluation of ESF employment provision looked at the referral mechanism for placing potential ESF participants onto ESF provision. The evaluation found that Jobcentre Plus advisers interpreted the eligibility criteria for ESF provision differently. In some areas eligibility was strictly restricted to the target groups (although this was not the intention of the OP), whereas in other areas provision was open to all those of working age who were unemployed or inactive. The application of eligibility criteria also varied over time in some cases, with 'stricter' interpretations based around the ESF 'target groups' giving way to interpretations based on all those who were unemployed or economically inactive.

Where a strict eligibility criteria was applied there was evidence that where advisers were convinced that a customer could benefit from ESF provision, but did not fit into one of the 'target groups' they would seek to, as one put it, '*...work round the system...*'. In such cases, advisers would seek to 'fit' the customer in question into a target group by asking whether they could consider themselves as perhaps having a disability. While examples of such 'manipulation' of criteria were rare, they do perhaps illustrate the unintended consequences of approaching 'eligibility' from this strict perspective.

Similarly, where providers had been given guidance that they should restrict engagement to participants from the specific target groups (beyond all those who were simply unemployed or inactive), related examples of working around imposed criteria were evident. This, however, was the case in only one of the areas covered by the ESF Employment provision evaluation.

In other areas, consultations with Jobcentre Plus advisers revealed a number of typical considerations when deciding whether to refer customers to ESF provision, which went wider than the ESF target groups. These can be summarised as follows:

- the availability (or otherwise) of alternative provision such as that offered through mainstream Jobcentre Plus employability programmes;
- the needs of the customer and the types of provision perceived as being helpful in supporting individuals towards or back into work;
- perceptions of how 'eager' or committed customers are to returning to work in the judgement of advisers, connected to the voluntary nature of provision and
- perceptions that such commitment is thus significant;
- the perceptions of individual advisers as to the quality of ESF provision available in their local areas, often based on customer feedback whether through satisfaction surveys or more informally received; and
- eligibility for referral and / or particular guidance received by advisers around the 'types' of customer that should be considered for referral.

The research indicated some variability between the different areas and Jobcentre Plus offices visited as to the relative significance of the above considerations. However, in general consideration of the needs of the individual customer, and a judgement over the relevance of ESF provision to their needs, were the most commonly cited across all locations visited.

These differing approaches towards identifying customers for referral to ESF employment provision both suggest that, although the target groups are broadly defined, some customers who were disadvantaged may not have been able to access ESF provision. In areas applying a strict approach, disadvantaged customers may not have been able to access ESF support because they did not fall into one of the target groups, and in other areas some customers were only able to access ESF provision because advisers took a wider view of disadvantage. This variation in treatment was undesirable and unintended.

The Next Steps section of this report explains that employment provision in Priority 1 and Priority 4 will mainly be specifically targeted at disadvantaged families in the second half of the programme and that the referral mechanism will be lead by Local Authorities ( although eligibility will be checked by Jobcentre Plus). **There is clearly a need for clearer and more standardised guidance to be issued at the local office level in future. This will have implications for DWP Priority 1 provision in the second half of the programme (even though referrals will be made by local authorities in future).**

# Is there any evidence that any part of the ESF policy or service discriminated unlawfully against people from different groups?

There is no evidence that ESF policy or service discriminated unlawfully against people from different groups. ESF Division of DWP is not aware of any legal action being taken against ESF providers delivering the programme in relation to equality law.

Although there is no evidence of unlawful discrimination, the different approaches adopted by Jobcentre Plus, particularly where referrals have been strictly limited to those with protected characteristics, were inconsistent with the programme's approach to tackling disadvantage in the labour market and action will need to be taken to ensure that clear guidance is issued to referral agencies for the second half of the programme.

# Was there any evidence that different groups had different needs which were affected by ESF policy and service delivery?

There is no evidence to suggest that different groups have been affected negatively by ESF policies and service delivery. ESF support is tailored to meet the needs of individuals, which includes providing specialist support.

The Cohort Survey asks ESF participants about: their experience; expectations; reasons for leaving early; and overall levels of satisfaction with their course. Although, inevitably, there is some variation across such a diverse range of participants, the differences are not significant.

The ESF programme requires ESF providers to ensure that the activities and support they deliver are **tailored to meet the needs of participants in a holistic way**. The two annual mainstreaming progress reports that have been produced so far provide many examples of projects targeting and assisting a wide range of participants with differing needs, including specialised support for disabled people.

The reports are published on the national ESF website and are available using the weblinks below:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/esf/resources/gender-equality-and-equal/>

Examples of projects funded in the first half of the programme can be found in the 2009 and 2010 mainstreaming progress reports.

## **Expectations and experiences of participants (Extract from ESF Cohort Survey Wave 1)**

The Wave 1 Cohort Survey report (NatCen) provides information on the expectations and experiences of ESF participants. The survey asked participants a number of questions about their expectations and experiences of ESF provision.

Although the expectations and experiences of participants recorded during the survey do not, in themselves, constitute an impact, the results do help to provide some

further insight into the views of participants from protected groups who have been on ESF.

Some of the main points are described below.

### **Expectations and experiences by gender**

#### **Expectations**

Participants' expectations of the course varied by gender. Women were more likely than men to expect the course to improve their self-confidence about working (77% compared with 66%) and the skills needed at work (74% compared with 70%).

#### **Experiences**

Participant's experiences differed by gender. Women were more likely than men to be positive about their actual experiences of the course in terms of skills needed for work: 73 per cent of women and 67 per cent of men said that they were gaining the skills needed for work, while 75 per cent of women compared with 68 per cent of men were gaining self-confidence).

Men were more likely than women to be gaining practical help in finding work (63% compared with 59%; Table 3.17).

### **Expectations and experiences by age**

#### **Expectations**

Participants expectations varied by age. Younger people aged 16 to 19 had higher expectations of the course than participants in other age groups, in terms of improving skills, gaining qualifications, raising self-confidence and getting practical help in finding work. For example, while 85 per cent of 16 to 19 year olds said that the course would improve their self-confidence about working, among those aged 20 and over the proportion was between 60 per cent and 72 per cent.

#### **Experiences**

In terms of their actual experiences of the course, younger people aged 16 to 19 were also more likely than other age groups to say that they were gaining skills needed for work (83% of participants in the youngest age group compared with between 60% and 72% of those in older age groups).

Participants aged 16 to 19 years were also more likely than those aged over 20 to be gaining and improving self-confidence about working – 84 per cent of 16 to 19 year olds said that they were gaining confidence, compared with between 59 per cent and 72 per cent of those in other age groups.

**Table 16: Expectations and experiences by age and gender**

Expectations of the course	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Improve skill needs at work	88	69	73	69	63	70	74	72
Provide me with qualifications	76	54	58	51	42	54	57	55
Improve my self-confidence about working	85	72	69	65	60	66	77	70
Give me practical help in finding a job	88	82	80	74	67	78	78	78
None of these	3	6	5	10	17	8	8	8
<b>Experiences of the course</b>								
Gaining or improving skills needed for work	3	67	72	68	60	67	73	69
Gaining or improving self-confidence about working	84	72	69	68	59	68	75	70
Gaining practical help in finding a job	69	68	65	57	47	63	59	61
None of these	8	12	12	16	24	15	14	14
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>1819</i>	<i>1522</i>	<i>1849</i>	<i>3479</i>	<i>2195</i>	<i>5819</i>	<i>5074</i>	<i>10,893</i>

Source: Wave 1 Esf Cohort Survey (NatCen)

## Expectations and experiences of people from ethnic minorities

### Expectations

People from ethnic minority groups were more likely than white people to think that the course would improve the skills needed at work (76% compared with 71%) and that it would improve their self-confidence about working (77% compared with 68%).

### Experiences

When reporting their actual experiences of the course, participants from ethnic minority groups were more likely than white people to have gained confidence (76% compared with 69%) and to have received practical help in finding work (72% compared with 59%; Table 16).



## **Expectations and experiences of disabled participants**

### **Expectations**

People with disabilities or a long-term limited illness (LTLI) were more pessimistic about their expectations of the course than people without disabilities or a LTLI. For example, 75 per cent of people with a disability or LTLI expected practical help in finding a job compared with 80 per cent of people without a disability or LTLI. Only 43 per cent of people with a disability or LTLI thought they would gain qualifications, compared with 61 per cent of those without a disability or LTLI.

### **Experience**

People with a disability or LTL had more negative perceptions than participants without a disability or LTLI about their experiences of the course. For example, in terms of improving skills needed for work (74% of people without a disability or LTLI said they were gaining work skills compared with 60% of those with a disability or LTLI), gaining self-confidence (73% compared with 64%) and receiving practical help in finding work (64% compared with 56%; Table 16).

## **Expectations and experiences of participants from other disadvantaged groups**

There were some small differences in expectations and experiences by disadvantaged group. For example, lone parents were less likely than people who were not lone parents to expect qualifications from the course (48% compared with 56%). There were no differences in lone parents' actual experiences of the course, compared with participants who were not lone parents (Table 17).

There were also no differences in expectations according to whether respondents had caring responsibilities compared with those without. However, in terms of their experiences of the course, those who were not carers were more likely to have gained practical help in finding a job (62% compared with 55%; Table 17).

There were no differences in the expectations of people without qualifications compared with those with qualifications. However, in terms of experiences, participants with no qualifications were less likely than those with qualifications to be gaining the skills needed for work (63% compared with 71%; Table 17).

**Table 17: Expectations and experiences of participants from ethnic minorities, disabled participants and participants with other disadvantages.**

	Disadvantage									
	Not lone Parent	Lone parent	Not Carer	Carer	White	Ethnic Min.	Not Disab or LTLI	Has a Disab. or LTLI	Has Quals	No Qual
Expectations of the course										
Improve skills needed at work	72	71	72	71	71	76	76	63	72	70
Provide me with	56	48	55	56	55	55	61	43	56	52
Improve my self confidence	70	74	70	73	68	77	73	64	70	69
Give me practical help in finding a job	78	76	78	76	78	82	80	75	79	74
Experiences of the course										
Improve skills needed at work	69	71	69	72	69	73	74	60	71	63
Improve my self confidence	70	74	70	72	69	76	73	64	71	68
Gaining practical help in	62	59	62	55	59	72	64	56	62	59
None of these	14	14	14	16	15	10	10	22	13	20
<i>Unweighted</i>	<i>9002</i>	<i>959</i>	<i>9973</i>	<i>898</i>	<i>920</i>	<i>1607</i>	<i>8339</i>	<i>2534</i>	<i>9449</i>	<i>1430</i>

### Course completion and early leavers

There were no significant differences in the proportions of men and women leaving the course early, although there was some variation by age with young people aged 16 to 19 being more likely to leave the course early than those aged 25 and over (37% of young people aged 16 to 19 left the course early compared with between 24% and 26% of those aged over 25; Table 3.4).

Table 18: Course completion and reasons for leaving early – by age and gender

Employment status	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
<b>Early leavers</b>								
Finished the course	63	67	75	76	74	72	70	71
Left the course early	37	33	25	24	26	28	30	29
<b>Why lefty early</b>								
I was not satisfied with the course	21	12	11	14	9	14	12	13
I found a job or moved jobs	22	38	44	33	30	35	32	34
I started a course at college or training centre	11	2	0	3	2	3	5	4
Financial reasons	2	1	0	2	3	2	2	2
Caring responsibilities	1	2	2	1	3	1	3	2
I had problems relating to my disability	0	1	4	3	5	2	2	2
I became ill	6	10	13	16	21	12	15	13
Other personal or domestic reasons	12	13	10	10	4	9	13	10
Other	30	28	23	22	27	28	23	26
Unweighted bases	1492	991	951	1797	1253	3776	2723	10,947

Source: Wave 1 ESF Cohort Survey (NatCen)

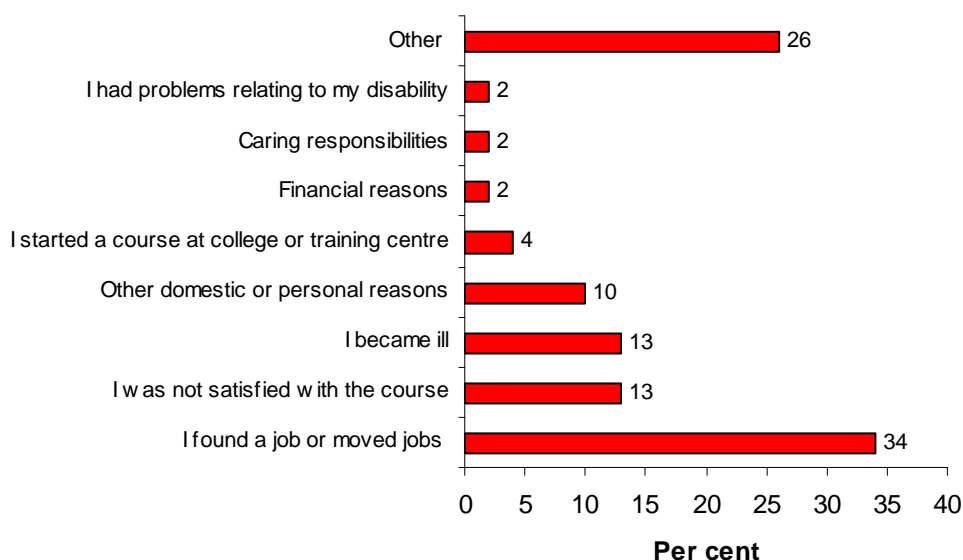
Please note that participants were able to say an unlimited number of reasons for leaving the course early so percentages sum to more than 100.

The most common reason given for leaving a course early was 'I found a job or moved jobs' (34%). This reason was more commonly cited among people with no disadvantages (45%) compared with people with two or more disadvantages (between 4% and 33% of participants with two or more disadvantages mentioned this reason). Compared with people aged 20 to 49, younger people aged 16 to 19 were

also less likely to say they left early due to finding work or moving jobs (22% compared with an average of 34%), although they were more likely to mention leaving early to start another course at a college or training centre (11% compared with an average of 4%; Fig 18).

Table 19 Reasons for leaving course early

Base: 10,947



Please note that participants were able to say an unlimited number of reasons for leaving the course early so percentages sum to more than 100.

Thirteen per cent of early leavers said that they left because they were not satisfied with the course.

There were no significant differences in people saying that they were not satisfied according to priority, disadvantage or gender. However, young people aged 16 to 19 were more likely to cite this reason than people aged 20 to 49 (21% of 16 to 19 year olds mentioned this reason compared with between 9% and 14% of participants aged 20 to 49; Table 3.4).

A similar proportion of participants (13%) said that they left the course because they 'became ill'. Illness was more likely to occur among people with two or more disadvantages (with between 15% and 31% of this group mentioning this reason) compared with participants with no disadvantages (9%), and among people aged 35 and over (between 16% and 21%) compared with young people aged 16 to 19 (6%; Table 3.4).

'Other domestic or personal reasons' affected 10 per cent of early leavers, while financial reasons and caring responsibilities were a problem for two per cent (Table 3.4).

There was no significant variation in the proportion of participants mentioning these reasons by gender, age or disadvantage (ethnicity, disability etc).

## Levels of satisfaction with ESF support

### Satisfaction by age and gender

Women were slightly more likely to express satisfaction with their ESF course than men (80% of women said that their course was relevant to their needs compared to 76% of men), with 77% of women being very or fairly satisfied compared to 71% of men.

**Table 20: Satisfaction by age and gender**

Satisfaction	Funding stream within priority							Total %
	Age					Gender		
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Not relevant to needs	15	24	23	23	27	24	20	22
Relevant to needs	85	76	77	77	73	76	80	78
Too basic	32	46	37	37	39	42	33	39
About right	64	51	57	59	57	54	63	57
Too advanced	4	3	6	4	4	4	4	4
Very or fairly satisfied	82	68	74	74	71	71	77	73
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	7	13	9	10	10	10	10	10
Fairly or very dissatisfied	12	20	17	16	19	19	14	17
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>1824</i>	<i>1518</i>	<i>1849</i>	<i>3490</i>	<i>2207</i>	<i>5831</i>	<i>5085</i>	<i>10,947</i>

Source: Wave 1 ESF Cohort Survey (NatCen)

### Satisfaction by other protected characteristics and disadvantages

#### Participants from ethnic minorities

Seventy three percent of participants from ethnic minorities said that the level of course was 'about right' compared to 59% of white participants.

#### Participants with disabilities / LTLI

Participants with a disability or long-term limiting illness tended to be less satisfied with their ESF course. For example, they were less likely than people without a disability or LTLI to say that their course was relevant to their needs (70 percent compared to 81%).

**Table 21: satisfaction by disadvantage**

Satisfaction	Disadvantage									
	Not Lone Parent %	Lone Parent %	Not Carer %	Carer %	White %	Ethnic Minority group %	No disability or LTL %I	Has disability or LTLI %	Has quals	No quals
Not relevant to needs	23	18	22	27	23	21	19	30	22	24
Relevant to needs	77	82	78	73	77	79	81	70	78	76
Too basic	39	30	39	36	41	20	38	40	40	30
About right	57	64	57	59	59	73	58	55	57	61
Too advanced	4	6	4	5	0	6	4	5	3	8
Very or fairly satisfied	72	82	73	73	73	73	76	67	73	73
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10	8	10	8	10	11	9	12	10	8
Fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	18	10	17	18	17	16	15	22	17	19
<i>Unweighted base</i>	9923	961	9992	902	9218	1613	8354	2542	9462	1440

Source: Wave 1 ESF Cohort Survey (NatCen)

Does ESF address issues that have been highlighted in the past as having a negative or disproportionate impact?

No negative or disproportionate impacts were identified in the previous programme.

# Monitoring and evaluation

Equal opportunities are embedded into the monitoring and evaluation arrangements of the ESF programme.

## Monitoring ESF

The ESF Managing Authority has a monitoring system which complies with the requirements of EU regulations and which provides management information for the effective performance management of the programme, including the monitoring of participation and performance of groups with protected characteristics in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010.

Information on individual participants is taken from the individual CFO databases, taking into account data protection requirements. For example, the information that the Skills Funding Agency submits has been drawn from their Individual Learner Record (ILR) which their clients complete when signing up to any Skills Funding Agency provision. The ESF INES MI database system has the facility to allow ESFD Managing Authority staff to run standard performance management reports, including reports covering representation and performance of groups with protected characteristics.

The national ESF gender equality and equal opportunities sub committee oversees the programme's national gender equality and equal opportunities mainstreaming strategy, which is now due to be updated in summer 2011 to cover the second half of the programme. The national sub committee also comments on the annual mainstreaming progress reports that are produced by ESFD and which are published on the ESF website.

The national sub committee reports on the progress made in promoting equality on the programme to the national programme monitoring committee via the ESFD Managing Authority.

The national programme Monitoring Committee monitors performance and results, including the participation and performance of groups with protected characteristics, for example, a paper was submitted to the national PMC on the female participation rate for the programme in 2010.

## Evaluation

The ESF programme is subject to on-going evaluation. The main sources of data for the various evaluations are: the INES MI database and the participant cohort surveys, which aim to provide a more detailed picture of participants characteristics as well as a longer term view of the impact the programme made on the different



types of participant helped. In addition, various ad-hoc evaluation research studies are commissioned to provide qualitative information on the implementation and effectiveness of programme. The ESF Evaluation team commissioned an independent evaluation of gender equality and equal opportunities mainstreaming during 2009-2010 and the evaluation report is available on the national ESF website

The ESF programme's evaluation strategy and copies of the various evaluation reports are available at the links below:

# Next steps

This section describes some of the main changes that will be made to the programme. The DWP CFO's Priority 1 support will be realigned alongside the new Work Programme and the Skill Funding Agency's Priority 1 support will be refocused to support the Coalition Government's skills policies.

The renewed focus will be on helping people with the greatest needs. These changes to the programme will continue to be monitored and assessed during the remainder of the programme and progress will be presented to the ESF national gender equality and equal opportunities sub committee and the national programme monitoring committee.

## Priority 1 – DWP CFO provision

The most significant change to ESF delivery in the second half of the programme will be the re-alignment of the DWP CFO's Priority 1 provision. The key changes will be:

- £66 million to be allocated to supporting voluntary places in the Work Programme for people in receipt of Incapacity Benefit and Income Support (including lone parents, those with caring responsibilities and sick and disabled people) who would not normally be eligible for the Work Programme;
- the remaining ESF support in Priority 1 to be used to help families with multiple problems move closer to and find employment through a holistic, family-centred approach. This provision will support individuals of working age within the families with multiple problems move closer to employment. Local Authorities will identify families with complex needs who will benefit from this support. ESF providers recruited via the DWP Framework, will work with local partners to deliver holistic support at the level of the family and will take intergenerational and complex barriers to help family members find work or progress onto the Work Programme.

Between 12 April and 6 May 2011, DWP ran an online call for evidence to gather input on helping families with multiple disadvantage from a variety of stakeholders. A number of engagement events were also held with Local Authorities and selected local organisations.

In terms of delivery arrangements, there was widespread support for using ESF to support families in a way which is aligned top local provision .There was further

agreement that local authorities and their agencies would be best-placed to identify families with multiple problems.

It is likely that the precise criteria used to identify families with multiple problems will vary across the country since decision about who will participate will be made at the local level by Local Authorities.

However, DWP has set a broad definition for eligibility within which the Local Authorities have to operate. This broad definition for eligibility has two main conditions:

- at least one member of the family must be on a DWP working age benefit;
- either no-one in the family is working, or there is a history of worklessness across generations.

Given that families with multiple problems are being targeted it is unlikely that a negative impact will occur. There may be a differential impact across various groups. There is no labour market data at the level of the family which can be used to baseline or benchmark the approach that will be undertaken by DWP in the second half of the programme. The DWP CFO will work closely with the ESF Evaluation Team to consider the impact that the new arrangements have had on ESF participants and the results will be presented to the national programme monitoring committee as well as the ESF Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Mainstreaming Sub Committee of the programme.

## Priority 2 – Skills Funding Agency CFO provision

The Skills Funding Agency will re-align its Priority 2 provision so that it supports the Coalition Government's skills policies. The key changes are described below:

### **NEET / young people delivery**

ESF provision will no longer focus on young people in jobs without training. Provision will, in future, focus on the hardest to reach, i.e. young people aged 14-19 who are not in employment, education or training as well as those who are at risk of becoming NEET.

Provision will focus on local needs and Local Authorities as well as other stakeholders helping young people in the 14-19 age range.

### **Adult delivery**

In terms of skills training and support for adults, ESF will no longer support:

- the Train to Gain programme, which is being wound down;
- people who are economically inactive as the Government focus is now concerned with focusing support on those who are work ready; or.

- qualifications at Levels 3 and level 4 (although, as an exception, level 3 qualifications will continue in the Convergence region of Cornwall and Isles of Scilly until loans for higher level qualifications are introduced).

ESF will continue to fund level 2 and lower level qualifications since they are a key element of the Coalition Government's skills strategy.

The ESF Managing Authority will continue to monitor the impact of these new arrangements and results will be presented to the ESF gender equality sub committee and the ESF programme monitoring committee.

## Future Action

The ESF Managing Authority will, by September / October 2011, set up an ESF Technical Assistance Project which will help take forward the key action necessary to promote gender equality to try to improve the female participation rate on the programme. This will include:

- Undertaking desk research and consultation with partners on good practice in helping lone parents and women in workless households back to work ( which can be incorporated into good practice guidance for Priority 1 DWP CFO )
- Designing and delivering a national ESF gender equality workshop which will involve CFOs and providers. Issues such as contracting, monitoring and the use of equality targets will be covered as well as issues relating to project delivery, including care issues and good practice. The workshop to identify good practice will seek to update equality guidance for CFO staff, including contract managers and monitoring officers..
- Updating the ESF gender equality good practice guidance so that it is tailored to meet the needs of the CFOs and providers and written in a style which is relevant to their work – and which draws upon work undertaken by Skills Funding Agency.

The Technical Assistance project will also aim to promote good practice identified in the **EHRC's Triennial Review of equality (for example, EHRC's Trans Research review report No. 27)** in terms of promoting equality for the trans community as well as good practice in promoting equality for other protected groups.

The ESF Division will ask the DWP CFO to produce appropriate guidance for referral agencies highlighting the importance of not restricting access to ESF to people who only have protected characteristics as identified under the Equality Act 2010. This will help ensure that people with a range of other disadvantages are not excluded from ESF.

Managing Authority will continue monitoring female representation and performance and reporting on this issue in future mainstreaming progress reports on an on-going basis.

The Managing Authority will, by October 2011, update the mainstreaming plan to include a specific aim to improve the female participation rate (and to reflect the action contained in this report).

The Managing Authority will, by October 2011, promote gender equality through the ESF Leader Awards for 2011 by having a specific gender category of the award.

The Managing Authority will by October 2011 ask the Skills Funding Agency to identify possible reasons for underperformance for representation for disabled people in Priority 2 and to report to the Managing Authority with a list of actions to be taken. This could include, for example, encouraging more disclosure on disability from participants by explaining why they are being asked about this personal characteristic.

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