



European Union

European Structural
and Investment Funds

**European Structural and Investment Funds
2014 - 2020**

Growth Programme for England

ESI Funds Growth Programme Board

European Social Fund (ESF) 2014-2020 Programme: Evaluation Plan

Purpose:

To provide the Board with detail of the England ESF 2014-2020 Programme evaluation which will provide evidence to understand and track progress against the delivery of the England ESF Operational Programme Strategy. This paper is submitted seeking the Board's formal approval of our evaluation plan in accordance with CPR Article 110.

Recommendation(s):

That the Board approve the England ESF 2014-20 Programme evaluation plan.

Summary:

1. This is the evaluation plan for the European Social Fund (ESF) Operational Programme 2014-2020 for England, prepared in accordance with the **EU Common Provision Regulation No 1303/2013**. It sets out a framework so that progress can be measured against Programme priorities. The estimated cost of planned evaluations for the ESF 2014–2020 Operational Programme is likely to be in the region of £3.7 million. This cost will be met 50/50, from ESF Technical Assistance and match funded by DWP departmental research budgets.
2. The ESF Operational Programme is part of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) Growth Programme for England. It will deliver the Programme's priorities to increase labour market participation, promote social inclusion and develop the skills of the potential and existing workforce. It will incorporate Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) money for areas with very high rates of youth unemployment.
3. In accordance with Article 54 of the Regulations, evaluations under this plan will be carried out to improve the quality of programme design and implementation, as well as making an assessment of effectiveness, efficiency and impact. DWP will provide resources necessary for carrying out evaluations and shall ensure that procedures are in place to produce and collect the data necessary for evaluations, including data related to common and programme-specific indicators. Evaluations shall be carried out by the DWP ESF Evaluation Team, which is functionally independent of the Managing Authority responsible for implementing the ESF Operational Programme. All evaluation results shall be made available to the public and will be published through the DWP Social Research Series publications on Gov.UK.
4. The evaluation of the new programme will be based on three methods: (i) analysis of ESF monitoring data; (ii) ESF participants' leavers' survey; (iii) research strands covering

important themes such as gender equality, equal opportunities, disadvantaged groups and impact analysis of ESF and YEI on participants' results.

5. Planned evaluation activities and their estimated costs comprise:

2016	(Strand One) Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) Strategy and Implementation evaluation, theory of change and feasibility study for impact evaluation	£80,000
2016 - 2020	(Strand Two) Annual Monitoring to 2018: Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) Participant leavers survey and 12 month follow up survey	£950,000
2016 - 2018	(Strand Three) Youth Employment Initiative (YEI): Effectiveness and efficiency review of YEI provision; Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) Impact evaluation	£250,000
2016 - 2018	ESF Theory of change (Priority Axes 1 and 2) to inform feasibility for impact evaluation	£60,000
2016 - 2018	ESF Participant leavers survey 1 (reporting 2015-2018): Monitoring of longer term result indicator	£980,000
2016 - 2018	Evaluation of England Co-financing system	TBC
2017	Evaluation of unit cost for 2014-2020 ESF Programme	TBC
2017 - 2018	Horizontal Principles (Cross cutting) evaluation on themes including: Gender, equality and equal opportunities; sustainable development	£210,000
2017 - 2018	Evaluation of ESF publication and communications strategy	TBC
2018	Synthesis of evidence (covering the first half of the programme)	TBC
2018 – 2025	ESF Participant leavers survey 2 (reporting 2018-2025): Monitoring of longer term result indicator	£980,000
2018 - 2020	ESF Impact Evaluation (Priority Axes 1 and 2) – Quantitative impact evaluation	£150,000
2022	Synthesis of evidence	£60,000

6. The Growth Programme Board (as the programme monitoring committee) is given examination and approval functions by Article 110 of the Regulation. Article 114 of the Regulation states the evaluation plan shall be submitted to the monitoring committee no later than one year after the adoption of the operational programme (i.e. from September 2015).