

# ENGLAND 2014-2020 EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND PROGRAMME

**Questions and Answers (Q&A) related to the FAST-CARE Call published by the European Social Fund (ESF) Managing Authority – Call reference: OC50S23X1846**

European Social Fund FAST-CARE (Priority Axis 5: Integration of Third Country Nationals) Call and needs to be read in conjunction with the Call Specification, including its supporting documents. It has no application to any other Call and or activity within the ESF programme.

## Table of Contents

Questions about FAST-CARE and the funding available .....	4
1. Question 1: Where has this funding come from and why is it being made available now? .....	4
2. Question 2: Why is funding only available for activity that supports people fleeing Ukraine and not for those fleeing other countries, for example, Afghanistan? .....	4
3. Question 3: Why are you only asking for FAST-CARE bids from Upper Tier Local Authorities or other types of delivery partnerships, for example led by Local Enterprise Partnerships or local Co-financing Organisations? .....	4
4. Question 4: Will all Local Authorities in England be eligible to apply for this funding? .....	5
5. Question 5: What has determined the level of funding available via the FAST-CARE Call? .....	5
6. Question 6: What are the arrangements for London? .....	5
Submitting Claims for FAST-CARE funding .....	5
7. Question 7: How do Local Authorities claim funding from the Managing Authority and what are the payment arrangements? .....	5
8. Question 8: Will a Participant Data Schema (PDS) be required? .....	6
9. Question 9: Can you confirm whether every refugee must be registered on the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) DELTA system? .....	6
10. Question 10: If the funding is available for up to 26 weeks, why are we only being paid for 19 weeks? .....	6
11. Question 11: What if the 19 weeks falls after the 31 August 2022? .....	6
12. Question 12: When will I receive payment from the Managing Authority? ...	6
13. Question 13: How will the Grant Recipient distribute the approved funding across the consortia partnership? .....	6
14. Question 14: What can the ESF funding be used for once it has been claimed and paid? .....	7
15. Question 15: Can a Grant Recipient submit a claim for project administration costs? .....	7
16. Question 16: What are the main reporting and evidence requirements for Grant Recipients? .....	7
Questions on Eligibility .....	7
17. Question 17: Which Refugees that my Local Authority has supported are covered by this Call? .....	7
18. Question 18: Will this funding be granted for Unaccompanied Minors? .....	8

Miscellaneous questions .....	8
19. Question 19: What is the position on State Aid and FAST-CARE? .....	8
20. Question 20: How long does the Grant Recipient need to keep FAST-CARE records? .....	8
21. Question 21: As the funding is retrospective what are the ESF publicity requirements for this Call? .....	8

## **Questions about FAST-CARE and the funding available**

### **Question 1: Where has this funding come from and why is it being made available now?**

The ESF Managing Authority is using existing funds available within the England ESF programme, to fund support provided via Local Authorities to people who are fleeing Russian military aggression in Ukraine.

The support is being delivered against the [EU FAST-CARE regulations](#) approved in 2022. Amongst other things, FAST-CARE allows funding for refugee support (for people fleeing Ukraine) of various types, such as:

- access to the labour market
- education
- training
- language support
- food
- accommodation

This Call is being published now as the financial support is available to the Managing Authority, and all ESF programme funding needs to be spent by 31 December 2023.

### **Question 2: Why is funding only available for activity that supports people fleeing Ukraine and not for those fleeing other countries, for example, Afghanistan?**

This Call is being delivered against [EU FAST-CARE regulations](#) published by the EU, which have been developed to specifically support those fleeing Russian military aggression in Ukraine. Refugees fleeing other countries and conflicts cannot be supported via this Call.

### **Question 3: Why are you only asking for FAST-CARE bids from Upper Tier Local Authorities or other types of delivery partnerships, for example led by Local Enterprise Partnerships or local Co-financing Organisations?**

The Managing Authority has decided to work with Upper Tier Local Authorities as this reduces the administrative burden for bidding and claiming; and creates a more effective and efficient way of focussing and distributing the available funding to Local Authorities that have helped the tens of thousands of people who have fled Ukraine. If an individual Upper Tier Local Authority can meet the Call requirements it may submit its own application.

The Managing Authority is encouraging applications from consortia of Local Authorities to further reduce the administrative burden placed upon individual Local Authorities. Consortia could also be led by Local Enterprise Partnerships, Local Co-financing Organisations, or Combined Authorities in line with the arrangements set out above.

These Local Authority focussed arrangements are expected to simplify the distribution of funding and reduce the potential risk of duplication of funding.

**Question 4: Will all Local Authorities in England be eligible to apply for this funding?**

All levels of Local Authority in England can benefit from the funding. However, only Upper Tier Local Authorities in England will be eligible to apply for this funding, individually or as part of a consortium. Appendix 1 of the Call lists the eligible Upper Tier Local Authorities.

If Upper Tier Local Authorities choose not to apply, or not to be included as part of a consortia bid (see Q&A above), they will not be eligible for funding.

**Question 5: What has determined the level of funding available via the FAST-CARE Call?**

The value of available ESF funding is restricted as we are close to the end of the programme. To date approximately £3bn ESF has been allocated to projects supporting employment and skills across England. The Managing Authority has sought to maximise the amount of funding and will be revisiting this later in the year to see whether any additional funding can be made available.

**Question 6: What are the arrangements for London?**

All Upper Tier Local Authorities will be eligible to apply for this funding, including those in London. The arrangements for Upper Tier Local Authorities in London are the same as elsewhere in England. Where the Upper Tier Local Authority has entered into a European Social Fund Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the past, a new ESF MoU will be agreed if the Upper Tier Local Authority is a successful bidder.

**Submitting Claims for FAST-CARE funding**

**Question 7: How do Local Authorities claim funding from the Managing Authority and what are the payment arrangements?**

When an application is approved, the Managing Authority will enter into a Funding Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding with the organisation that has applied. They will become the Grant Recipient for the project.

The Grant Recipient will need to submit a claim covering the whole value and retrospective period, which is expected to be the total amount set out in their Funding Agreement.

A flat rate unit cost of £84.00 per week is paid for each refugee, regardless of age or status.

The Managing Authority will publish the detailed claims process to support successful FAST-CARE applicants.

**Question 8: Will a Participant Data Schema (PDS) be required?**

Grant Recipients will not need to submit a Participant Data Schema or details of individual refugees supported. The claim to the Managing Authority will only need to confirm the total number of refugees supported and covered by the claim.

**Question 9: Can you confirm whether every refugee must be registered on the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) DELTA system?**

The proportion of the ESF funding awarded to each Local Authority is determined by the number of arrivals through the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine). Refugees must have been registered with the Local Authority and declared to DLUHC via the DELTA system between 24 February 2022 and 31 August 2022. The use of the DLUHC DELTA system information ensures an equitable basis for distributing the ESF funding.

**Question 10: If the funding is available for up to 26 weeks, why are we only being paid for 19 weeks?**

Although individuals are eligible for up to 26 weeks, The Managing Authority has carefully selected 19 weeks duration. This is based on the funding the Managing Authority has chosen to make available for this purpose.

**Question 11: What if the 19 weeks falls after the 31 August 2022?**

The FAST-CARE eligibility rules explain that the number of new Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine) registrations on the DLUHC DELTA System is used as the informed estimate of the number of refugees fleeing Ukraine. If the start was registered between 24 February 2022 and 31 August 2022 on the DLUHC DELTA system, then this new registration will be used as the basis for allocating ESF funds. If the period of 19 weeks extends beyond 31 August, then that is acceptable providing the individual was registered on or before 31 August 2022. Any registrations made after 31 August 2022 will fall outside the eligible period.

**Question 12: When will I receive payment from the Managing Authority?**

The payment is made after the ESF funding claim is submitted to the Managing Authority. The Managing Authority will aim to finalise payment into the Grant Recipient's Bank Account within 30 working days from the point at which all claim information is agreed by the ESF Managing Authority as correct and complete.

**Question 13: How will the Grant Recipient distribute the approved funding across the consortia partnership?**

The Grant Recipient is solely responsible for ensuring that the approved funding is distributed across the consortia and that consortia members are content with how this is done.

**Question 14: What can the ESF funding be used for once it has been claimed and paid?**

The funding is awarded for activities undertaken to support Ukrainian refugees in the period 24 February 2022 – 31 August 2022. Eligible activities are explained in the Call document. Once the funding has been paid to the Grant Recipient, there are no special conditions or restrictions applied to how the ESF granted is spent under this Call. Grant Recipients and any consortia members can decide how they use the funding.

**Question 15: Can a Grant Recipient submit a claim for project administration costs?**

No. There is no separate ESF funding set aside for project administration costs. The funding available via this Call is based on a flat rate unit cost, which is intended to cover any administration costs incurred in applying for and delivering an ESF project.

**Question 16: What are the main reporting and evidence requirements for Grant Recipients?**

Reporting arrangements for this Call have been simplified to reduce the administrative burden for both the Grant Recipient and the Managing Authority.

The outputs numbers must align with the DLUHC DELTA system in Appendix 1 of the Call specification or where you believe these numbers are no longer correct, then the numbers of refugee arrivals being claimed for should be revised down to reflect the correct position and justification provided.

Each Ukrainian refugee claimed is counted as one output under the output indicator CPR01. The indicator reference CPR01 is used to record this.

Please see the FAST-CARE Eligibility Rules Guidance for a more complete answer about the evidence that needs to be retained for audit purposes.

## **Questions on Eligibility**

**Question 17: Which Refugees that my Local Authority has supported are covered by this Call?**

The distribution of funding for this Call is based upon the number of 'Refugees' arriving in England under the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine) and registered with Local Authorities between 24 February 2022 to 31 August 2022. When submitting applications, applicants should ensure the number of refugees being claimed for, and declared to DHLUC, remains correct. Where applicants believe these numbers are no longer correct, then the numbers of refugee arrivals being claimed for should be revised down to reflect the correct position.

The funding available is set out by Upper Tier Local Authority area in Appendix 1 of the Call.

**Question 18: Will this funding be granted for Unaccompanied Minors?**

The distribution of funding for this Call is based upon the number of 'Refugees' arriving in England under the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine) and registered with Local Authorities between 24 February 2022 to 31 August 2022. Unaccompanied minors (children under 18) are 'Refugees' so if they were registered on the DLUHC DELTA System they will contribute to the overall total of eligible 'Refugees'.

A flat rate unit cost of £84.00 per week is paid for each refugee, regardless of age or status.

**Miscellaneous questions****Question 19: What is the position on State Aid and FAST-CARE?**

The State Aid rules apply to FAST-CARE applications and to Priority Axis 5 (PA5). Please refer to the following guidance [European Social Fund: state aid - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/european-social-fund-state-aid)

**Question 20: How long does the Grant Recipient need to keep FAST-CARE records?**

The Grant Recipient should retain documents and records using a suitable management control system in line with the following guidance [European Social Fund: document retention - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/european-social-fund-document-retention). All relevant records and documents should be made available on request to facilitate verification and audit.

**Question 21: As the funding is retrospective what are the ESF publicity requirements for this Call?**

The ESF FAST-CARE Call provides retroactive financial support for activities supporting refugees fleeing the military aggression in Ukraine that have already taken place at a local level. This means there is no live project delivery, including no engagement or work with individual ESF participants. These factors impact significantly on the publicity measures that Grant Recipients can undertake.

It is the responsibility for ESF Grant Recipients to comply with the [European Structural and Investment Funds \(ESIF\) Branding and Publicity Requirements](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/european-structural-and-investment-funds-esif-branding-and-publicity-requirements) published on GOV.UK, which cover the ESF and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programmes.

The view of the ESF Managing Authority is that there is scope for Grant Recipients, and their partners if they have a consortium or co-delivery arrangement, to undertake some publicity measures to acknowledge the FAST-CARE support from the ESF programme in line with EC requirements. With reference to Section 3 of the [ESIF Branding and Publicity Requirements](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/european-structural-and-investment-funds-esif-branding-and-publicity-requirements), which provides additional detail, examples of such measures may include:



- the display of an ESF poster in their premises for the duration of the Funding Agreement for the project, (minimum size A3) with information about the project, including the financial support from the Union, at a location readily visible to the public, such as the entrance area of a building. [See section 3.3.]
- appropriate references to ESF FAST-CARE support for the duration of the Funding Agreement for the project in any relevant:
  - print and publications, for example: newsletters, reports and papers related to financial and other support for refugees fleeing from Ukraine, or broader finance related communications. [See section 3.4.]
  - electronic materials, for example: a website or E-newsletter featuring details of financial or other support for refugees fleeing from Ukraine. or broader finance related communications. [See section 3.5.]
  - media releases, or social media posts featuring financial or other support for refugees fleeing from Ukraine. [See section 3.6.]

Grant Recipients are encouraged to read the 'ESIF Branding and Publicity Requirements', and as part of this also take note of Section 3.9 'List of Operations', and 3.10 'Evidencing of Publicity Activities'.