



European Structural and Investment Funds (2014-2020)
Growth Programme for England

Growth Programme Board, March 2024

Progress on ESF *(please note this paper should be printed in colour)*

Purpose

This paper will focus on the overall performance of the ESF Programme. Additionally, a slide presentation, to be delivered at the meeting, will update members on the key highlights of ESF; the combination providing a full and detailed overview of the Programme.

Summary:

The level of ESF commitment as of 01 March 2024 was 100% of our allocation.

ESF has engaged with **2,353,679** participants of which:

- **330,342** unemployed participants have moved into employment
- **226,933** inactive participants have moved into either job search or employment
- **379,226** participants have gained a Basic Skill
- **803,469** participants have gained a Qualification on leaving
- **136,159** participants have been supported through the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)

Over the lifetime of the Programme, ESF has supported

- **570** Direct Bid (DB) projects, paying out £1.1bn in grants.
- **161** MoUs for the 4 National Co-Financing Organisations (CFOs) paying out £1.7bn in grants (with more claims expected by the end of February 2024)
- **43** ESF Funding Agreements for Technical Assistance (TA) paying out £43m

The Fast-Care project has been concluded with payment of £148.6m ESF to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in late December. GIAA are planning an audit of the project in the middle of 2024.

The final payment application of the 2023 calendar year (IPA29) was submitted on 08 December 2023 for €200m (£173m). We received payment for this on 22 December 2023 for €96m (£83m) ESF.

The first payment application of the 2024 calendar year (IPA30) is currently being compiled and is due to be submitted in April 2024. This has a current estimated value of €255m* (£218m) against which we would anticipate a payment of around €139m (£118m) ESF, after EC retention.

**The value of this payment application is likely to be in excess of the value quoted as work is continuing to ensure all available expenditure is included.*



ESFD have claimed 81% of the total allocation from the European Commission. The remaining allocation will be claimed in future payment requests. These are subject to fluctuations in the exchange rate.

The Annual Accounts Package was submitted to the EC on 27 February 2024, with a Residual Total Error Rate of 0.42% (EC tolerance 2%). This highlights the quality of the work that the team have been doing over the last two years.

To support the future development of DWP programmes for disadvantaged groups, an ESF Legacy Portfolio is being developed. This Legacy Portfolio will capture the Programme's development and design, its successes in terms of outcomes and case studies along with lessons learned along the way. The documents will be stored and made available through the DWP Library

Publicising ESF achievements:

In November 2023, the ESF Managing Authority published its **2023 ESF Programme booklet** providing an update on its implementation and impact.

The booklet, published on GOV.UK, provides latest performance information and links to:

- ESF case study booklets, annual information reports and citizens summaries
- findings from DWP ESF evaluations to date
- governance related information

It covers the ending of project delivery in December 2023 and transition to a Programme closure phase.

View the 2023 ESF Programme case study booklet [here](#).

The booklet contains activities, achievements and lessons from the ESF programme as project delivery moves into its latter stages. Sharing of the booklet with colleagues, delivery partners and networks is strongly encouraged.

Cross Cutting themes (CCT's)

The Equality and Diversity, and Sustainable Development Mainstreaming reports are produced each year by the Managing Authority.

The Programme Management Office (PMO) have responsibility for completing the reports. As these reports cover the final year of ESF operation, separate lessons learned papers have been developed for each of the two Cross Cutting Themes.

The draft lessons learned papers and Mainstreaming reports will be shared with GPB ahead of submission to the EC on 30 September 2024.



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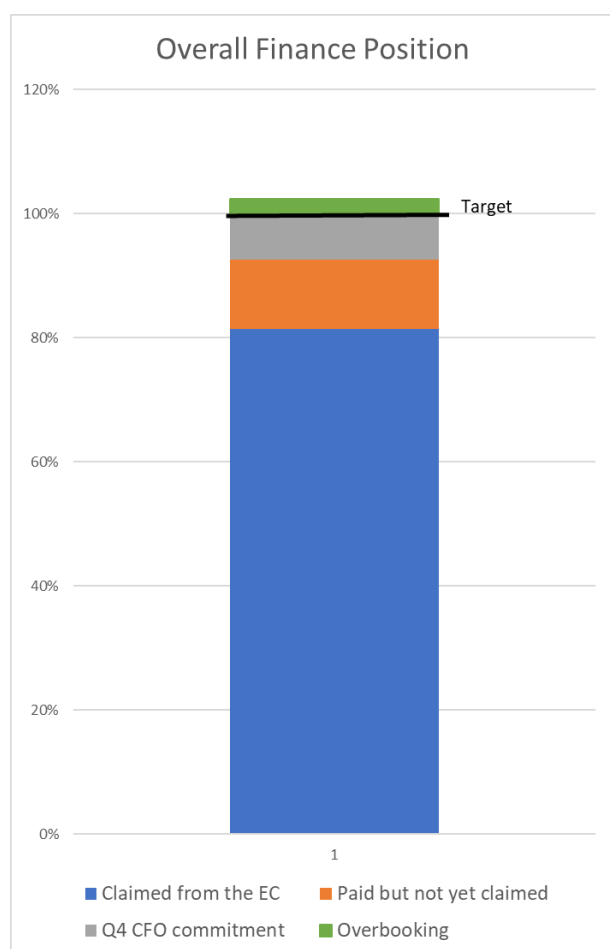
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The previous ESF programme recommended embedding CCTs in every part of the ESF process. The ESF 2014-2020 programme has successfully applied this lesson, reinforcing the significance of CCTs within the Managing Authority (MA) and with all Grant Recipients (GR) through:

- GR learning events
- MA learning events
- 'Continuous improvement' and improved guidance for all, giving clear examples of what 'good looks like'
- Celebrating success with a National Awards ceremony
- engagement about CCT by the MA at every ESF stage.

CCTs are now inherent. Improved training, processes and confidence has enabled the Contract Managers and GRs to ensure quality policies and plans based on the best practices are in place for CCTs.

Programme Highlights



The level of ESF commitment as of 01 March 2024 was 100% of our allocation.

To ensure we maximise the total programme funding and in line with EC rules the MA have included an element of overbooking in the forecasts.

ESF Programme is valued €3.49bn, €6.4bn (including national “match” funding), receipts of €2.786bn have been received to 01 March 2024.



Until all claims have been submitted and progressed, we will be unable to provide final project spend figure, this will be determined by fluctuations in the exchange rate.

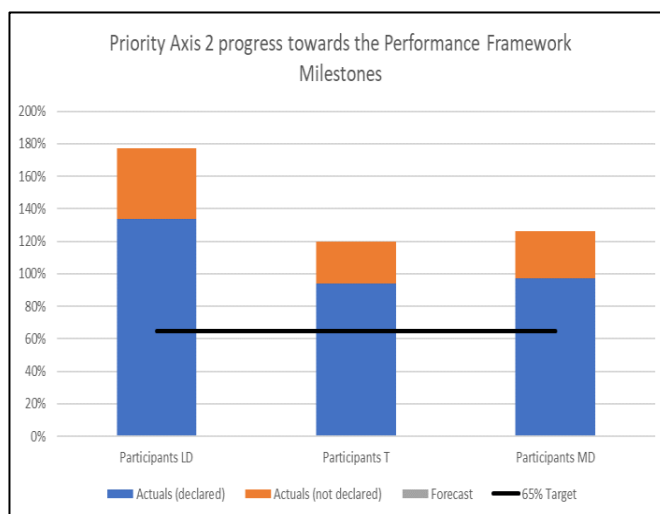
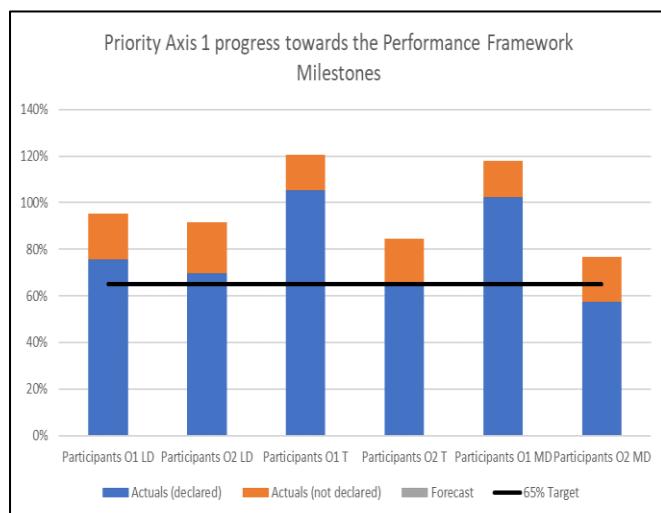
Claims to the EC are expected to be submitted in April and July, with July being the final opportunity to claim expenditure from the EC.

Performance Indicators

Delivery - Co-Financing Organisations (CFOs) and Direct Bids

- All CFO final claims have been submitted by the agreed deadline. His Majesty's Probation and Prison Service (HMPPS) have the option to submit an additional claim should further funds become available
- All Direct Bid final claims have been successfully submitted into the Managing Authority. We continue to work with our Grant Recipients to ensure payment of claims runs smoothly in this final claim period, with a view to bring as many projects to successful closure by the end of April 2024.

Participants *(position as of March 2024)*



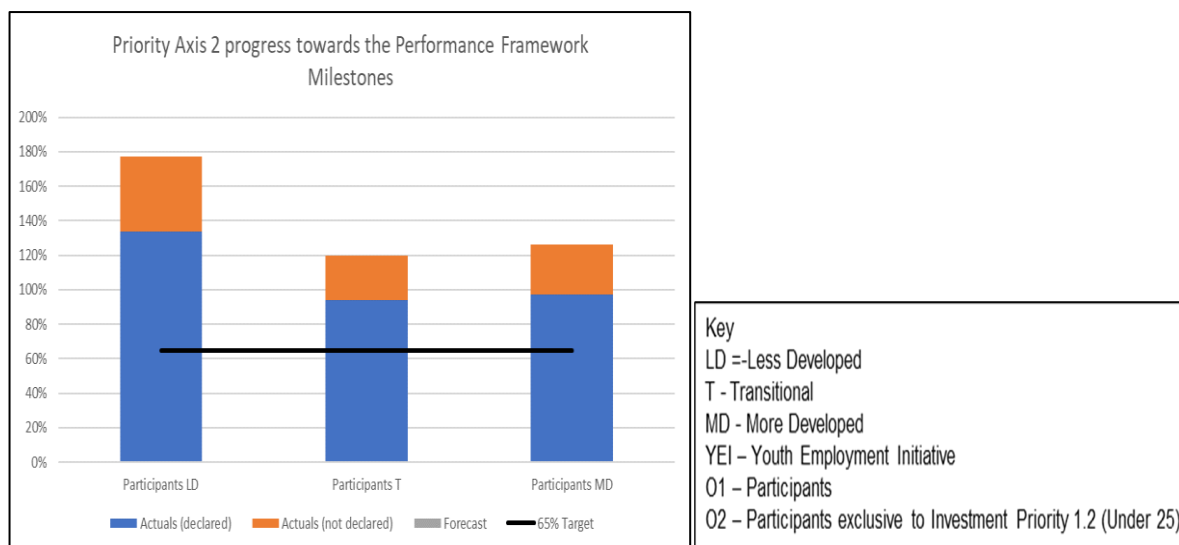


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The European Commission have provided clarification on acceptable achievement levels.

In summary:

- Achieving lower than 65% is considered a 'serious failure'
- Above 65% is considered acceptable performance
- Furthermore, a 'serious failure' (less than 65%) does not automatically lead to financial correction.

For financial correction to take place, a cumulation of 'administrative conditions' is required. They are listed in CPR Article 22(7).

Group Actuals Performance:

The table on page 5 illustrates 'actual performance' for sub-group by CoR and members are asked to note that this now includes Participant data until the end of Q4 2023.



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Sub-Group Actuals Performance by Category of Region:

This table illustrates the performance picture by sub-group and CoR and shows total committed to date against the end of Programme target.



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Outputs

ESF-CO01 - Unemployed, including long term unemployed	CoR	Whole Programme Target	Committed	% achieved of overall target	Committed to Q4 23	Actual to Q4 23	% achieved to Q4 23
M		620,749	879,501	144.6%	879,501	897,684	102%
T		177,364	229,055	170.1%	229,055	301,754	132%
L		16,643	18,515	93.3%	18,515	15,534	84%
Total		814,756	1,127,071	149.1%	1,127,071	1,214,972	108%

ESF-CO15 - Participants from ethnic minorities	CoR	Whole Programme Target	Committed	% achieved of overall target	Committed to Q4 23	Actual to Q4 23	% achieved to Q4 23
M		267,636	573,659	207.2%	573,659	554,504	97%
T		38,429	69,972	175.3%	69,972	67,350	96%
L		710	2,432	250.5%	2,432	1,780	73%
Total		306,776	646,063	203.3%	646,063	623,634	97%

ESF-CO03 - Inactive	CoR	Whole Programme Target	Committed	% achieved of overall target	Committed to Q4 23	Actual to Q4 23	% achieved to Q4 23
M		399,778	447,687	89.3%	447,687	357,051	80%
T		123,716	141,116	99.5%	141,116	123,124	87%
L		16,202	17,592	96.6%	17,592	15,659	89%
Total		539,697	606,395	91.9%	606,395	495,834	82%

O6 - Participants without basic skills	CoR	Whole Programme Target	Committed	% achieved of overall target	Committed to Q4 23	Actual to Q4 23	% achieved to Q4 23
M		185,202	296,020	165.0%	296,020	305,547	103%
T		62,764	92,783	151.6%	92,783	95,174	103%
L		6,423	7,647	94.7%	7,647	6,081	80%
Total		254,388	396,450	159.9%	396,450	406,802	103%

O4 - Participants over 50 years of age	CoR	Whole Programme Target	Committed	% achieved of overall target	Committed to Q4 23	Actual to Q4 23	% achieved to Q4 23
M		207,107	303,949	154.2%	303,949	319,379	105%
T		75,013	93,678	143.8%	93,678	107,875	115%
L		7,930	11,647	152.8%	11,647	12,116	104%
Total		290,049	409,274	151.5%	409,274	439,370	107%

ESF-CO16 - Participants with disabilities	CoR	Whole Programme Target	Committed	% achieved of overall target	Committed to Q4 23	Actual to Q4 23	% achieved to Q4 23
M		257,640	372,479	148.9%	372,479	383,607	103%
T		87,403	117,952	170.2%	117,952	148,752	126%
L		10,347	14,231	134.6%	14,231	13,924	98%
Total		355,390	504,662	153.7%	504,662	546,283	108%

YEI-O12 - Participants with disabilities	CoR	Whole Programme Target	Committed	% achieved of overall target	Committed to Q4 23	Actual to Q4 23	% achieved to Q4 23
M			14,798		14,798	14,776	100%
T			12,024		12,024	12,597	105%
L							
Total		23,301	26,822	117.5%	26,822	27,373	102%

YEI-O9 - Unemployed participants (YEI)	CoR	Whole Programme Target	Committed	% achieved of overall target	Committed to Q4 23	Actual to Q4 23	% achieved to Q4 23
M			49,932		49,932	42,255	85%
T			46,326		46,326	44,725	97%
L							
Total		80,670	96,258	107.8%	96,258	86,980	90%

YEI-O10 - Long-term unemployed participants (YEI)	CoR	Whole Programme Target	Committed	% achieved of overall target	Committed to Q4 23	Actual to Q4 23	% achieved to Q4 23
M			16,013		16,013	15,586	97%
T			19,371		19,371	17,411	90%
L							
Total		28,487	35,384	115.8%	35,384	32,997	93%

YEI-O11 - Inactive participants not in education or training (YEI)	CoR	Whole Programme Target	Committed	% achieved of overall target	Committed to Q4 23	Actual to Q4 23	% achieved to Q4 23
M			36,001		36,001	33,436	93%
T			17,949		17,949	15,744	88%
L							
Total		28,487	53,950	172.6%	53,950	49,180	0%



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