

European Social Fund 2007-2013

Equal Opportunity Funding Policy International conference June 23, 2009

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The role of ESF

- The European Social Fund is the European Union's main financial instrument for investing in people.
- It supports employment and helps people fulfil their potential by giving them better skill and better job prospects.
- ESF contributes to the reduction of differences in prosperity and living standards across EU Member States and regions, and therefore promotes economic and social cohesion

3 Pillars of EU Social Policy underpinned by support from ESF

Social inclusion policy

Employment policy

Social inclusion policy

Under the ESF Regulation 1081/2006

Article 6

requires the Member States to ensure that all ESF co-funded Operational Programmes include a description of how gender equality and equal opportunities are promoted during all stages of the implementation phase

This Article also requires the Member States to promote a balanced participation of women and men in the management and implementation of such programmes at local, regional and national level

Under the General Structural Funds/Cohesion Regulation 1081/2006

Article 16

reaffirms the provisions of Article 6 of the ESF Regulation 1080/2006 in promoting gender equality and equal opportunities.

This Article also requires the Member States and the Commission to take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, age or sexual orientation during each stage of the implementation of the structural and cohesion funds (including the ESF)

Accessibility for disabled persons is also one of the key criteria to be addressed when defining operations/projects co-financed by the Structural and Cohesion Funds

Also under the General and ESF Regulations

- Article 10 of the General Regulation calls on Member States to work in close co-operation with both the Commission and 'the most representative partners at national, regional and local level in the economic, social, environmental and other spheres'.

- Articles 3 and 5 of the ESF Regulation require Member States to promote partnership as a direct means of underpinning the 'Convergence' and 'Regional Competitiveness and Employment' objectives (Art. 3), as well as a broad and essential feature of good governance (Art. 5).

ESF support for partnerships

- Promote the networking of stakeholders, including social partners and NGOs, at EU, national, regional and local levels in the field of employment and labour market inclusiveness;
- Encourage the inclusion of social partners and NGOs in ESF projects, notably where these concern social inclusion, gender equality and equal opportunities

ESF in support of non-discrimination in recruitment and employment:

- Create 'pathways' to re-entry and reintegration into employment for groups suffering discrimination;
- Build acceptance of diversity in the workplace to combat discrimination and raise awareness;
- Encourage support for active ageing and the reintegration of older workers;
- Increase the participation of migrants in employment and thereby strengthen their social integration.

ESF support in promoting social inclusion:

- Counselling and training adapted to the specific needs of disadvantaged and disabled people;
- Providing pathways for integration and entry into employment, and job creation for disadvantaged and disabled people in the social economy;
- Support for the entrepreneurship of disadvantaged and disabled people;
- Awareness campaigns to fight discrimination, change attitudes and promote diversity in the workplace.

European Social Fund

- Thank you for your attention!
- http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf/index_en.htm