



**European Union**  
**European Social Fund**  
Investing in jobs and skills

# European Social Fund at work

## Welcome to the September/October edition of ESF at work!

The WorldSkills London 2011 competition took place in early October. This major event attracted over 200,000 visitors - take a look at the event and how ESF got involved [here!](#)

Focusing on local projects, find out what a typical day is like at the Veterans Contact Point, which is based in Warwickshire and supports ex-service men and women who have come into contact with the criminal justice system.

Also, take a look at the recently launched ESF-Works case studies, which provide a fantastic showcase of high quality provision from across the UK.

So enjoy reading this edition, and don't forget to click on the 'Subscribe here' button to make sure you receive the next issue!



Benjamin Milby features in News in Brief



Hairdressing at WorldSkills

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[Take a look at the ESF website](#)



# News in brief

Read the latest ESF news from England and the European Union

## Rick Stein employee works with employment minister



Pictured: Benjamin Milby

A referral by Jobcentre Plus to a recruitment open day at Rick and Jill Stein's Seafood Restaurant in Padstow has led not only to a work placement for Benjamin Milby - but also to him gaining full time employment and the opportunity to share his experiences with DWP Minister for Employment Chris Grayling at Westminster. [Read more about Benjamin's story](#)

## NOMS ESF celebration event

Over 150 people attended a National Offender Management Service (NOMS) celebratory event in Chester on 22 September. Aimed primarily at prime providers, subcontractors and their employees, the event showcased the achievements and successes from NOMS ESF Round 1 and culminated in the presentation of five awards:

- **Sustainability Award:** Merseyside Probation Trust
- **Equality Award:** The Manchester College and Care First Ltd



Pictured: (from left to right) Andrew Petford (PPDG), Joanna Fernandes (NOMS), Vicki Sadler (NOMS) and Dell Watson (PPDG)

- **Innovative Project Award:** Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Trust
- **Good Practice Award:** Serco and Milton Keynes College
- **Partnership with Stakeholders Award:** Pertemps People Development Group (PPDG)

## Home Grown project reaps rewards for ex-offenders

Working on allotments is helping ex-offenders on the Yorkshire and the Humber Offender Partnership to develop work related skills. With ESF/ NOMS support, lead organisation SOVA (Supporting Others through Volunteer Action) has transformed two unkempt and overgrown pieces of land in Barnsley and Rotherham. Participants gain work experience and grow in confidence and self-esteem. [Read more about the SOVA project](#)

## New EU video - ESF Education

A new promotional video has been produced by the European Commission about ESF in Europe. The video explains the programme across the EU including its aims and strategies, and provides examples of how ESF benefits individuals and businesses. [View the video](#)

## New ESF booklet



A new **ESF booklet 'Improving people's lives'** has been published. The booklet reports on the progress of the 2007-2013 programme, features participant case studies from across England and looks forward to the second phase of the programme from 2011-2013. [Read the booklet](#)

## Structural and Cohesion Funds 2014-2020: Draft regulations

On 6 October the European Commission published a package of draft regulations governing the structural and cohesion funds in 2014-2020. These include a regulation on the European Social Fund. [Read the draft regulations](#)

## Make sure Publicity Works for you

As announced in our last issue, the ESF **'Publicity Works'** toolkit is now available on the [ESF website](#). Publicity Works is the essential guide for all ESF funded providers and sub-contractors on how to meet EU regulatory and CFO contractual publicity requirements (displaying logos and plaques correctly, for instance), and how to promote ESF activities to a wider audience using the full range of media resources that are available.

Organisations in receipt of ESF funding must meet core publicity requirements or their funding will be put at risk. Effective publicity will increase the reach and impact of your project and will contribute to its success. [Read about the guidance, support and resources on 'ESF Publicity Works'](#)

# WorldSkills London 2011 and ESF Mainstreaming Leader Awards

WorldSkills London 2011 (WSL), the world's largest international skills competition took place at ExCeL London between 5-8 October. The event saw 1,000 competitors under 25 years old from over 50 countries/regions competing in 46 separate skills competitions, which covered everything from graphic design to cookery to mobile robotics.



Pictured: WorldSkills exhibition stand

For the over 200,000 visitors who attended, the event offered a unique chance to Have a Go at dozens of new skills, meet employers, get independent advice and learn more about career opportunities.

WSL 2011 provides a unique opportunity to promote the 2007-2013 England ESF

programme to a wide audience - as part of a high profile, international and world class demonstration of excellence in skills and learning.

A Skills Funding Agency led ESF technical assistance project publicised ESF activities and achievements at the London event and at local WorldSkills skills festivals and events taking place this autumn across the country. Publicity activity is particularly targeted at young people aged 14-25, the general public, and education and skills practitioners. At the London event the main publicity measures included:

- 55 ESF exhibitors showcasing their activities and achievements to thousands of visitors with an ESF pavilion located in the "Make it Happen" exhibition zone, including around 50 ESF projects focusing on provision for disadvantaged young people.
- ensuring the ESF logo and messages were promoted at the opening and closing ceremonies at the O2 arena,

## Mainstreaming Leader Awards 2011

The ESF Mainstreaming Leader Awards give high profile recognition to those ESF providers and sub-contractors who "go the extra mile" in promoting equal opportunities and sustainable development. The 2011 winners are:

**ESF Equal Opportunities Mainstreaming Leader 2011 (Equal Opportunities Policy and Plan):**  
[Avanta Enterprise Ltd](#)

**ESF Sustainable Development Mainstreaming Leader 2011 (Sustainable Development Policy and Plan):** [Groundwork London](#)

**ESF Equal Opportunities Mainstreaming Leader 2011 (Equal Opportunities Specialist Project):** [Cornwall Works for Learning Disabilities](#)

**ESF Sustainable Development Mainstreaming Leader 2011 (Sustainable Development Specialist Project):** [Recycling Lives and Clear about Carbon](#) (joint winners)

**ESF Gender Equality Leader 2011:**  
[Women's Wisdom](#)

which each attracted an audience of around 7,000 people.

- training some of the WSL volunteers and publicising ESF on their uniforms.

In addition, two conference seminars on Friday 7 October helped showcase effective practice from the ESF programme. The first focused on young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). This comprised:

- an overview from the Young People's Learning Agency of how, since 2007, ESF employment and skills projects in England have helped young people NEET into further education and work.
- **Asphaleia**, a current ESF project based in West Sussex reporting on their activity, successes and lessons learned
- a broader perspective of young people and employment across Europe from

Dimtcho Tourdanov from the European Commission.

The second seminar focused on effective practice in the ESF cross-cutting themes of equal opportunities and sustainable development. This comprised:

- three of the national ESF Mainstreaming Leader award winners sharing how they effectively promote equality and sustainable development within their projects, the lessons they have learned and the outcomes they have achieved.
- presentation of the national Mainstreaming Leader award certificates to the six winners by Wendy Violentano from DWP and Dimtcho Tourdanov from the European Commission.

**More about [WorldSkills](#)**

**More about the [ESF Mainstreaming Leader Awards](#)**

# Offenders OnTrak in West Midlands

Employers in the West Midlands are being encouraged to make use of the region's hidden skills resource, by getting to know more about what offenders and people with a criminal record have to offer.

The OnTrak programme, funded by the European Social Fund and managed by The Manchester College, delivers a training programme for offenders in prisons and in the community.

With the backing of a number of local employers, the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) OnTrak programme has supported more than 5,000 offenders and ex-offenders in the region - both in and out of prison - to raise skills levels and support them on the road to finding employment.

The main purpose of helping offenders into employment is to reduce crime which, industry experts estimate, costs business around £12 billion each year. Offenders with training and a job are much less likely to reoffend.

David Pruden, for the OnTrak programme, said:

“While most employers in the region are open-minded about employing someone with a criminal record, others still need to be convinced.

“OnTrak is delivered by a number of partners including local probation trusts,

SOVA, the leading national voluntary organisation that provides support to socially-excluded people and JHP Training. Their experience and networks are essential in engaging and supporting employers with their decision.

“The OnTrak programme has been fundamental in providing those with a criminal record with employment opportunities. We often find that employers who work with offenders are pleasantly surprised about the skills and behaviours that many of them have to offer.”

For one successful waste electrical and electronic equipment recycling business in the Black Country, working with offenders is also proving to be a positive experience that is bringing benefits for the business and the individuals involved.

Based in Lye, near Dudley, Overton Recycling employs about 100 full time workers, including a number of agency workers. When offered the opportunity to employ ex-offenders as agency workers, for a 13-week period initially, with a view to offering them permanent employment if things work out, managing director, Dean Overton, couldn't see a reason not to give it a try. He said:

**“The OnTrak programme has been fundamental in providing those with a criminal record with employment opportunities. We often find that employers who work with offenders are pleasantly surprised about the skills and behaviours that many of them have to offer.”**

“Having a criminal record is not in itself a good reason to deny someone a job. Life is not straightforward for many people - it's easy to make mistakes but in most cases people deserve a chance to put things right.



Pictured: Celebrating the opening of the Veterans Contact Point

“Working with ex-offenders has been a really positive experience for the business. We have five on the payroll at the moment, as agency workers, and all are doing well.

“The reason it works well for us is that we don't view employees as a commodity, we believe that if we invest in them by giving them a second chance or providing opportunities to train and gain new skills, they will reward the business with their loyalty and hard work. We have not been disappointed.”

OnTrak has also supported the establishment of a drop-in centre - the **Veterans Contact Point** for veterans of the Armed Forces living and working in Coventry and Warwickshire. It was officially opened in July at a formal ceremony attended by the Mayor of Nuneaton & Bedworth and the Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire.

For more information about the NOMS OnTrak programme in the West Midlands, contact [david.pruden@themanchestercollege.ac.uk](mailto:david.pruden@themanchestercollege.ac.uk)

# ESF Evaluation Reports



The Cohort Study of ESF Participants: Wave 3 report was published in September.

The **ESF Cohort Study** is a large scale longitudinal quantitative survey looking at the impact of the training and advice provided through ESF. The study involves three waves of interviews with ESF participants. The reports of the first and second waves of the Cohort Study were published in 2010.

The third wave of interviews between January and March 2010 followed up 2,740 participants about 18 months after they had left their ESF provision. The study, carried out by the National Centre for Social Research, aims to provide information on the longer term outcomes of provision and whether the outcomes identified in earlier waves have been sustained.

The third wave of interviewing found that participants in ESF provision reported improved employment prospects, evidence of progression within the workplace among those already in employment and the development of higher level skills and qualification acquisition.

More specifically, from the information gathered in these interviews, the study presents evidence to show ESF training has been successful in:

- helping unemployed participants into jobs, despite the economic downturn
- supporting continuity of employment from the previous wave to Wave 3
- improving participants job security (40%)
- moving participants into higher skilled work (20%)
- helping participants take on responsibility for managing people (15%).

Generally, participants were satisfied with the training they had received. The majority of participants also felt that their course had helped them to improve the practical skills needed for work, as well as softer skills, such as communication and self-confidence.

## More about the ESF Cohort Study of Participants reports 1 - 3

### Synthesis report

The findings of the Cohort Study and other ESF evaluations and management information have been drawn together in a synthesis report of evidence from the first half of the programme.

### More about the Synthesis report

# London Open Day Europe 2020- Delivering Smart Urban Growth



Pictured: Panellists at the London 'Open Day' event

On Friday 23 September, the Greater London Authority (GLA) and London Councils hosted a joint conference on the future of Structural Funds post 2013. The event was part of the Europe-wide 'Open Days' organised by the European Union's (EU) Committee of Regions (CoR) every Autumn.

The Open Days are an opportunity for politicians, officials, academics, private sector and experts from around Europe to meet to discuss EU cohesion policy. The event is organised in partnership with regions and cities across Europe. Although the majority of events take place in Brussels in one week in October, the CoR encourages cities and regions to organise local events either side of the Brussels' week.

The GLA, an ESF Intermediate Body in London, has organised a local conference

for the past three years. These are popular, well attended events. This year's conference provided an opportunity to kick start the debate on how Structural Funds will look like in Europe from 2014. The conference had two objectives:

- to hear the views from European Commission and UK Government officials on the 2020 European strategy and how these objectives will translate into regional policies; and
- to encourage a debate about the importance of regional policies and how the Structural Funds can be best structured and delivered to meet the opportunities and challenges in London.

The event was chaired by Tony Travers, from the London School of Economics, and speakers and panellists included senior representatives from the European Commission, the Chair of the London ESF Committee, European Social Fund and European Regional Development Fund Managing Authorities and the European Investment Bank.

For more information on the current London programme and the future of the Structural Funds, go to [www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk) and click on the EU flag.



# A day in the life of the Veterans Contact Point



Pictured: Len Hardy (left) with Om Churung

The Veterans Contact Point (VCP) is managed by Warwickshire Probation Trust and is supported by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) ESF OnTrak project and its peer mentor programme through the ESF Innovation Transnationality and Mainstreaming AIM Partnership.

The VCP opened its doors on 4 July 2011 and quickly established itself as an important resource for the veteran community in Coventry and Warwickshire.

The initiative is funded through the NOMS ESF Co-financing programme and has been developed through the work of Len Hardy who is a project co-ordinator working on the OnTrak project.

**“The Royal British Legion helped me – now it’s my turn to help others.”**

Len, an ex-serviceman himself, has developed an expertise in supporting those ex-service men and women who have come into contact with the criminal justice system. ‘Many of the ex-service men I see have not had the best of times since leaving the military and most say that they have not looked for help until they have got themselves into trouble.’

The VCP has volunteer peer mentors who provide vital support to one another and to the veterans who visit. The following describes an average day in the life of the VCP.

## Morning

The day starts with a meeting to plan future work with a volunteer Welfare Caseworker from the Royal British Legion. At 10:00am the doors are open for business and the duty staff prepare for whatever the day may bring.

Jason is a volunteer peer support worker, a former soldier who saw service in

Bosnia. Jason’s empathy is borne out of his own experiences and treatment for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). He greets their first customer of the day and completes an enquiry form before passing him over to Len, Warwickshire Probation Trust’s Veterans Champion, for a more detailed assessment of need and military service checks.



Pictured: Paddy – ‘The Royal British Legion helped me – now it’s my turn to help others’

The day continues with numerous visitors, including a visit from Om Churung, head of the Warwickshire Branch of The British Gurkha Veterans Welfare Association. After discussions with Len, a cooperation agreement is reached and a Gurkha welfare service is included at the VCP.

## Afternoon

The rest of the day is taken up with telephone calls and marketing with leaflet drops and personal visits by the volunteer peer mentors, Jason and Paddy.

Paddy is an ex Royal Navy seaman who joined the Royal Navy in 1975. Paddy was helped to access support to improve his employability and qualifications. Paddy, like Jason has been diagnosed with PTSD. He says “until I showed up in the court system I didn’t get any kind of help.”

At the end of the day the VCP closes its doors. It’s been a day of questions, queries and interviews; telephone calls of support and marketing and a new partnership with the Gurkha community. What will tomorrow bring?

Read more about the [Veterans Contact Point and an ESF-Works case study.](#)



# Cornwall Works for the over 50s

Cornwall Works, which is supported by the ESF Innovation Transnationality and Mainstreaming strand, runs a range of projects testing new delivery models and piloting new ways into work.



Pictured: Truro Mayor Rob Nolan presents certificates to the Active Plus participants

One of these, Cornwall Works 50+, is targeted at overcoming barriers to employment for workless people aged 50+. Another project, Cornwall Works 50+ cares, is building the skills and capacity of the care workforce and of people aged 50+ to meet the challenges of demographic change. It promotes care as a career to all ages and encourages inter-generational activity.

Active Plus is a groundbreaking new ESF Convergence initiative where combat veterans are training vulnerable people aged over 50 in problem solving, team building and communication activities. It motivates and encourages participants and volunteer course leaders to get back into work and help their community.

One person who has benefited from Active Plus is Jon, a former military intelligence officer who suffers from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. To begin with he was withdrawn, unsettled and wouldn't remove his sunglasses. Since helping with Active Plus he has shown leadership qualities, shared personal experiences, and is even thinking about setting up his own course teaching survival skills.

[More about Cornwall Works 50 + and 50+ Cares](#)

[More about Cornwall Works Active Plus](#)

# ESF-Works launches detailed case studies

ESF Works, the site for policy and practice lessons from the England ESF programme, has launched the first set of its long awaited in-depth case studies of high quality, lesson rich provision across the country.

Well known for its project and provision profiles, the new case studies take the level of analysis and accessibility to a new level. Key aspects of the project's work are brought to life through filmed interviews with key staff, partners, and particularly revealingly, with participants – many offering moving insights into the difference ESF has made for them.

A wealth of detailed background information shows how provision works, its rationale and ingredients for success. In a break from what can often be static presentation of project examples, ESF-Works will be returning to case study provision periodically, to show how things have moved on, hopes have been realised and challenges overcome.

PDF downloads complete the package, offering even greater depth and insight. With twenty one case studies now published and a further nineteen to come before the end of the year, this promises to be an unrivalled resource for those looking to understand not just what ESF does, but how it does it. Highlights from the first batch include:

- [Social Enterprise East Midlands work in Northamptonshire](#) to bring localism to tackling soaring redundancy

- the [West Midlands Veterans Partnership](#), supported by the National Offender Management Service Co-financing Organisation, to tackle the critical problems of ex-service personnel in the criminal justice system
- the London based [Five Borough Single Point of Access project](#), reaching workless parents in some of the most deprived – and volatile – parts of the capital.

[View the case studies](#)

[More about ESF-Works](#)



[ESF-Works](#) is the showcase and forum for policy and practice lessons from the 2007-2013 ESF programme in England.

# Local round-up...

## Cornwall

The ESF programme strand for Higher Education in Cornwall includes a project to embed Enterprise and Entrepreneurship in the teaching workforce through the Innovation, Creativity & Enterprise (“ICE House”) programme. ICE House brings entrepreneurship into teacher training through problem-solving based methods that support learners in becoming more creative, innovative and enterprising. The project has been put forward for a Regiostars award. [View a video about the project.](#)

## Nottingham



Pictured: Gemma Tyson (left) and Anthony Foster (centre) with Jessica Grice (right)

After referral from his local Jobcentre, 18 year old Anthony Foster enrolled on the ignite project. Funded by ESF-ignite is available to anyone aged between 14-18, who is unemployed, or out of education and training in Nottingham and Derby. With help from Jessica and Gemma from ignite Anthony attended employability workshops where he received one-to-one help in CV writing, interview techniques and job search. His applications were so successful that he received two job offers, is about to start work and has plans to enrol on a Business and Administration Apprenticeship. [More about Anthony and the ignite project.](#)

## London - Help to receive environmental certification



If you are an organisation delivering ESF in London, you may be interested in benefiting from a new ESF technical assistance project delivered by Greater London Enterprise (GLE), which will support organisations to achieve the Green Mark certification. Green Mark is an environmental certification scheme, which lets organisations demonstrate environmental responsibility to customers and other stakeholders, through a simple tailored management system. It focuses on raising awareness and integrating environmental measures within an organisation’s operations.

The support is available until December 2013 and will assist 105 organisations in receipt of ESF to achieve a Level 1 Green Mark certificate. Since July, eleven organisations have signed up for this support.

For more information please contact Rosie Maguire at GLE: [Rosemary.M@gle.co.uk](mailto:Rosemary.M@gle.co.uk) 020 7940 1562.

## London - 5 Borough project

Debra Knight had not been in work for 19 years, but when her eldest child had grown up, she decided it was time to get back into work. Supported by the London 5 Borough Single Point of Access project, which has a special focus on helping long term workless parents, Debra successfully completed an administration related course and a work experience placement, before finding employment with a local authority. [Find out more about Debra and the 5 Borough project.](#)

# Looking forward

## A look into what’s coming up in ESF.

### Adult Learners’ Week 2012

The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) is planning to launch the 2012 Adult Learners’ Week awards in October. More details about the ESF and other awards will follow on the [Adult Learners’ Week](#) website soon.

### European Week of Regions and Cities



The 9th European Week of Regions and Cities takes place from 9 – 13 October 2011. There will be events during this week but also later in October and early November. The events centre on a series of open days, seminars and workshops at European Commission and other EU venues in Brussels, but there are other events across Europe to tie in with these. Details of forthcoming events across Europe, including events in Manchester, Liverpool and Ipswich, can be found [here](#).

### Funding opportunities update

The latest information about ESF funding opportunities can be found on the [ESF website](#).

This includes details of the fourth round of London Councils ESF funding, focusing on extending employment opportunities and creating a skilled and adaptable workforce.

Fifteen London boroughs have provided funding to be matched with ESF to create a £11.3 million programme. The deadline for applications is noon on 31 October 2011.

More details are available on the [London Councils website](#).

### London ESF and ERDF Awards 2011

Nominations for the London ESF and ERDF Awards 2011 have now closed. The awards ceremony will take place at City Hall on 14 November 2011 and we will feature the event and winners in the next edition of the e-zine.



London ERDF & ESF Awards 2011

### Helpful links

[National ESF website](#)

[ESF-Works](#)

[Europa ESF website](#)

[TAEN](#) (The Age and Employment Network)

[Convergence](#)