



European Social Funding (ESF) Exit Strategy Provider Question and Answer Log

	Question	Answer
1	Why are you closing ESF provision down when unemployment is increasing and more people need help?	ESF contracts were for a specified period with the majority ending in June/July 2011. We wrote last November and told providers to expect no extensions to contracts. Help for unemployed people from European funding continues to be provided via the Work Programme and newly tendered and refocused ESF contracted provision that will start later this year.
2	The current contracts finish in June/July 2011 and the new provision is not due to start until late 2011. Why is there a gap in ESF provision?	ESF contracts were for a specific period with the majority ending in June/July 2011. New ESF provision introduced through the Work Programme to help Incapacity Benefit and Income Support customers will be in place when the new Work Programme contracts go live around June 2011. The focus of the rest of the 2011-2013 provision will be different from the focus of the current contracts. To ensure the rest of 2011-2013 ESF provision supports and fits with the Government's overarching Welfare Reform policies, meets ESF objectives and complements other activity taking place in localities, it has been necessary to consult widely with a range of stakeholders. This means the help and support available to people in disadvantaged workless households will now start at the end of 2011.

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3	Why are you not extending the current ESF contracts to cover the gap like you did for the transitional period for the Work Programme?	Most of our current ESF contracts deliver provision to a broad range of customers including JSA, IB, IS and non-claimant groups which will be subsumed within the Work Programme.
4	What will happen to customers still on provision when the current ESF contracts come to an end?	Current ESF providers have agreed last referral and start dates for customers to go on their provision and have been told that all customers must finish their provision by the end of the contract. The small numbers of customers who may still be on ESF provision would finish with the provider and where appropriate maintain their normal activity with Jobcentre Plus to meet their obligations for receipt of benefit.
5	Will customers be able to transfer to other provision when they finish their ESF provision?	There will be no transfer of customers on to other provision at the end of these contracts. Normal eligibility rules will apply for customers to be referred to any further appropriate help and support through the normal course of business.
6	We will have customers who finish provision at the end of June who will move into the 6 week tracking period. Is there an option to claim these as part of our tracking process?	We expect all your customers will have left the provision by the contract end date. From the contract end date you will have the 6 week tracking period and a further 30 days to submit your final claims to DWP payment teams.
7	What is the timeline for the return of ESF10s?	It is important to ensure that you and your sub-contractors complete the necessary ESF paperwork and submit it to Jobcentre Plus in the usual way. The last date for making a job outcome claim from the contract closure date is the tracking period plus 30 days. Last batches of ESF10s will be negotiated locally with individual providers.
8	How does DWP want to be informed of data storage once contracts have closed down?	You will have received a letter detailing requirements for retaining documents (and those of your sub-contractors). This letter also sought your written assurance that you have robust systems and

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		controls in place to meet these requirements. We will be monitoring your arrangements later in the year; and will continue to seek assurance about your document retention arrangements on an annual basis.
9	Will there be any new ESF provision?	<p>Yes, Ministers have agreed the new ESF strategy for the next round of ESF funding will be twofold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to fund voluntary access to the Work Programme for Income Support and Incapacity Benefit recipients; and • to fund intensive employment related support to help disadvantaged workless families and households.
10	When will this start?	The provision to support Incapacity Benefit and Income Support customers within the Work Programme will commence in line with the start of those contracts, potentially from June 2011 in some areas. Our current assumption is that the competition for the families provision will commence late Spring 2011, with the intention of having contracts in place from late 2011.
11	Why has there been a delay in starting the new ESF provision?	There has been wide ranging consultation with a broad group of stakeholders to ensure that any new ESF funded provision supported and fitted in with the Government's overarching Welfare Reform policies and complements other activity taking place in localities.
12	Who is eligible to go on the provision?	<p>Eligibility for the Work Programme ESF element is for those customers who are in receipt of Incapacity Benefit and Income Support and who would otherwise be ineligible for the Work Programme.</p> <p>The detailed definition of eligibility for ESF provision available to support disadvantaged families and households is still being developed.</p>

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13	Why have you split the ESF funding and only put 25% into the Work Programme?	Splitting the ESF funding in this way, with 25% being allocated to providing additional support within the Work Programme to Incapacity Benefit and Income Support customers; and 75% to support disadvantaged workless families and households, should ensure the most effective way of delivering the key ESF employment priorities for England.
14	What will the other 75% of the ESF funding being used for?	75% of ESF funding will provide provision to support families with multiple problems towards employment. Working jointly with local partners our providers will help move the families further down the road to work or into a position where the further support provided by the Work Programme can get them into employment
15	Will there be a new ESF competition to deliver the Families with Multiple Problems provision, if so when will this start?	Yes. Suppliers who are currently on the DWP Framework Agreement will be asked to submit bids for the families with multiple problems provision. The Invitation to Tender is expected to be issued in late Spring 2011 and contracts starting late 2011. The ESF provision for delivery of support to customers who are in receipt of Incapacity Benefit and Income Support was included in the Work Programme competition.
16	As 25% of ESF funding has been put into the Work Programme contracts, will staff who are currently delivering ESF provision be able to TUPE across to the Work Programme providers?	Advice is being sought on TUPE.
17	Will there be an option to transfer customers or will a customer have to officially leave this provision and start on new (if eligible)?	There will be no transfer of customers on to the new ESF provision.
18	What are the timelines for the bidding process for the next round?	We will publish the Invitation to Tender in late Spring, with contracts expected to start towards the end of 2011. Provision will be targeted at workless families and households. The DWP website

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		will contain further updates on the timetable when it has been finalised with Ministers and other stakeholders.
19	Will the award of a new contract allow for sharing of data - or will a customer have to start all over again with a new provider (if outgoing provider is not successful)?	There will be no transfers of existing ESF customers to the new programme; customers currently on provision are required to exit at the end of the contracts, so no data sharing will be required.