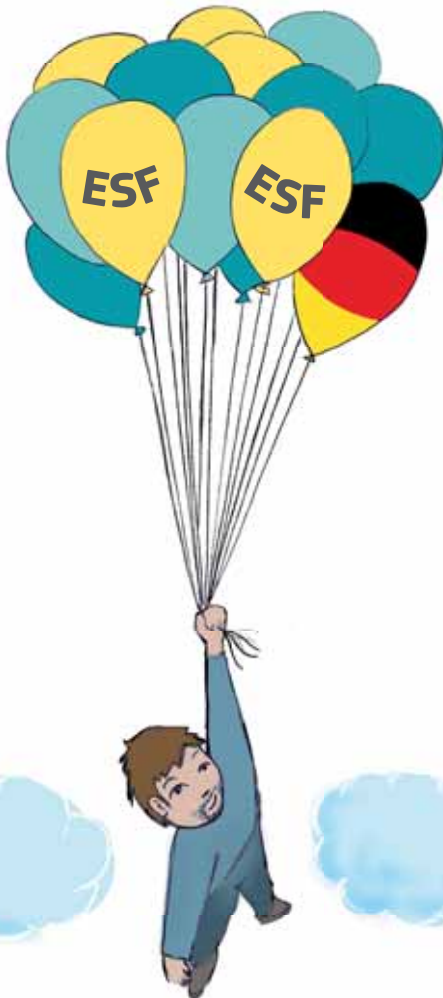




European
Commission



GERMANY

AND THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

With ESF support, Germany is dedicating close to EUR 16 billion to proactive measures to meet the challenge of its ageing workforce and ensure continued growth. At federal level, ESF programmes focus on getting more people into work through supporting job creation and entrepreneurship, while in the *Länder*, young people, skills and education are priorities. Together, these activities are nurturing the highly skilled workers Germany needs for growth, today and for the future.

Social
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INVESTING IN PEOPLE AND JOBS: THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR GERMANY

Germany is putting a major effort into expanding its workforce and creating jobs. This is because of the dramatically worsening age structure of its population – already it has the highest proportion of older people and the lowest proportion of young people in its population in the EU. And with above-average employment levels, Germany is seeking workers from among those unemployed people who usually find it more difficult to get a job – for example, immigrants, people with low qualifications and women with childcare responsibilities. These groups now have new opportunities: for training, for acquiring new skills, for flexible working, and for help in overcoming the particular obstacles each of them faces in getting a job.

Germany is modernising its education system, too – it needs more well-qualified school and university graduates to take the highly skilled jobs the country's technologically advanced industries require, as well as filling new job opportunities in the growing finance, technology and service sectors.

*“New opportunities
for training”*

Deploying ESF funding both at the federal level and in the *Länder* should also help achieve Germany's goal of having 77% of its working-age population in a job by 2020. As part of this, it aims to find work for 330 000 citizens classified as long-term unemployed – which will mean fewer people living in households at risk of poverty.

ESF spending in Germany

For 2007-2013, Germany is receiving EUR 9.4 billion in ESF funding. With national co-funding, this brings the total ESF spending on jobs to EUR 15.7 billion. The federal government is using 37% of the ESF budget while the *Länder* are allocating the remaining 63% to respond to their own priorities. In general, the federal programme is focusing on the adaptability of workers and enterprises and giving disadvantaged groups better access to jobs. In the *Länder*, the emphasis is on improving education and skills. There is also funding for transnational projects to support cross-border training and share best practice with other Member States.



GERMANY'S ESF PRIORITIES

Better workers and enterprises

With ESF support, Germany is aiming to help 290 000 aspiring entrepreneurs start and run their own businesses. For example, the 'EXIST' programmes support entrepreneurship among universities and students – helping transfer new ideas and technologies into hi-tech start-ups. Likewise, the 'New Quality of Work' programme aims to develop more productive jobs and the workers to fill them, particularly among SMEs. And 'Founder coaching', which is a professional development programme for new business owners to help them get their companies through the difficult first years and ensure they can grow and create jobs more quickly. In addition, the ESF is contributing EUR 60 million to the German Microcredit Fund which makes loans available to self-employed entrepreneurs who cannot easily access financing from other sources – such as the recently unemployed, immigrant entrepreneurs and women who are starting their own businesses.

More jobs for more people

The focus is on more job opportunities for women, immigrants, older workers and disabled people, among many others. The 'XENOS' programme, for example, fights against exclusion and discrimination in the labour market and promotes job prospects and integration for immigrant groups: from simple language training, to the nationwide 'Schools without racism – schools with courage' programme

*“Fighting
discrimination,
embracing diversity”*

linking over 1 000 schools and 750 000 pupils and teachers in activities to embrace diversity. Similarly, the annual 'Girls Day' event sees hi-tech companies and R&D organisations open their doors to over 100 000 teenage schoolgirl visitors – encouraging their interest in highly skilled technical careers. For mothers and carers, ESF funding has created 70 000 extra childcare places, enabling parents to get back to a job and better balance their work and family life obligations.

Education: skills for the future

ESF projects are promoting school qualifications, apprenticeships for the young, lifelong learning for all, and improved school environments and teaching. For example, there are over 280 projects to encourage more apprenticeships – with more than 50 000 places created so far. And the 'Learning on Location' programme is helping districts and cities develop frameworks for lifelong learning, promoting it as a source of new skills and better job prospects. While for over 400 000 young people from disadvantaged groups, the ESF in Germany is offering training opportunities to improve their chances of employment.

THE ESF IN GERMANY: SOME EXAMPLES

A helping hand

The 'We need you' project in the Rhineland-Palatinate helped school students from migrant or disadvantaged backgrounds improve their career chances by providing a mentor during their last year in school. Through focused activities, the personal mentor helped develop the students' social, emotional and cognitive skills – with the aim of smoothing their transition into vocational training. The results speak for themselves – over half of the 821 participants went on into further training (up from 10% previously) and 30% chose to stay in further education in school.

Training without borders

To help SMEs compete across borders and increase participation in transnational apprenticeships, the federal ESF programme 'Training without borders' is run in co-operation with the Chambers of Skilled Crafts and the Chambers of Industry and Commerce. The programme is supporting SMEs through mobility coaches who organise work placements and visits in other countries for the apprentices. They also advise on vocational training opportunities and the legal and institutional issues involved. Almost 90% of participating companies find the experience to be very positive and beneficial for the company and apprentice alike. And over half intend to continue sending their trainees abroad as part of their regular vocational training schemes.



Do you want to...?

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- ...understand better how the ESF works?
- ...see video clips on projects from across the EU?

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TRAINING
NEW JOBS
INNOVATION
SKILLS