

# THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND



## Support to Education and Training: 2014-2018

GERMANY

### SUMMARY

ESF Thematic Objective 10 funding is used to support education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning. Almost 1.5 billion euro has been allocated to such operations in Germany, with 902 823 participations having taken place by the end of 2018. This factsheet summarises the main actions, outputs, results and lessons learned so far in the use of this funding in Germany.

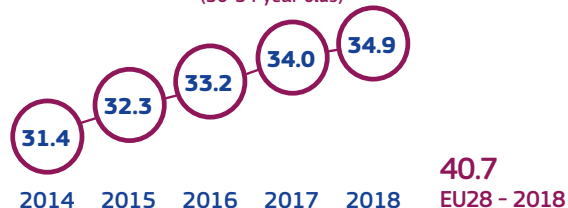
### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

Early school leaving (ESL) rate (%)



► The **rate of early school leaving** (ESL) in Germany has fallen overall since 2005, although it has remained at just over 10% since 2015. The ESL rate for men (11.5%) is higher than that for women (9.1%). There are also significant regional differences in the ESL rate.

Tertiary educational attainment rate (%)  
(30-34 year olds)



► The **tertiary educational attainment rate** is increasing slowly and reached 34.9% in 2018. Unlike in many EU Member States where the rate of tertiary attainment for women is much higher than for men, there is almost no difference in Germany. There are very significant regional differences in attainment rates in Germany, though, and the overall attainment rate is still below the EU average of 40.7%.

► The **rate of adult participation in education and training** remains below the EU average, at 8.2% in 2018, justifying the need for the government to increase support for continuing education and training.

► Government **expenditure on education** as a percentage of GDP has remained stable at just over 4% for the last five years. This is just below the EU28 average of 4.6%.

Participation rate in education and training by adults  
aged 25-64 (%) (last 4 weeks)



► Immigration into Germany has contributed to a stabilisation of population numbers. Therefore, the greatest challenge in terms of education and training is to ensure the **integration of migrants** into the school system, and subsequently into the labour market and society.

#### EXPLANATORY NOTES

ESF European Social Fund

TO10 Thematic Objective 10

OP Operational Programme

IP Investment Priority

\* Figures present the situation for ESF operations under Thematic Objective 10 and its four Investment Priorities (IPs) for the programming period 2014-2020 implemented up to the end of 2018, as reported on 1 October 2019. In many instances, operations are not yet complete at this stage, or have only recently started.

\* As one person could participate more than once in ESF operations over time, the number of participations is reported. These figures exclude Technical Assistance.

\* Where the breakdown of participants according to employment status, age, and level of education does not add up to 100%, it means that it was not possible to include characteristics of a number of participants in some OPs.

Support to Education and Training: 2014-2018

## ESF PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS IN GERMANY

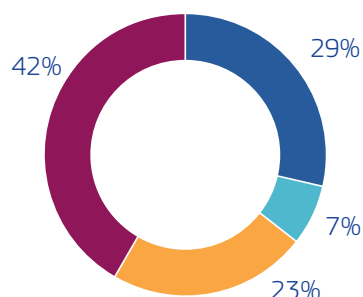
- ▶ There is **one** federal level Operational Programme (OP) for ESF in Germany and **16** regional OPs
- ▶ Between them, the OPs in Germany cover all four priorities relevant to Thematic Objective 10 (TO10):
  - ▶ **Reducing and preventing early school-leaving** and promoting equal access to education, including formal, non-formal and informal learning pathways for reintegrating into education and training;
  - ▶ Improving the **quality and efficiency of, and access to, tertiary and equivalent education** and training;
  - ▶ Enhancing equal access to **lifelong learning** for all age groups in formal, non-formal and informal settings; and
- ▶ Improving the **labour market relevance** of education and training systems.
- ▶ The **priorities of regional OPs in less developed and transition regions** include reducing and preventing early school leaving, investing in basic skills improvement for both adults and students, and increasing the link between the education system and the job market.

In Germany, 31% of total ESF funding<sup>1</sup>...

**€1 498 658 380**

...is allocated to the following TO10 investment priorities: **reducing and preventing early school leaving (29%)**, **improving quality and access to tertiary and equivalent education (7%)**, **enhancing access to lifelong learning (23%)** and **improving labour market relevance of education and training systems (42%)**.<sup>2</sup>

Allocation of ESF TO10 funds



- Reducing and preventing early school leaving - IP10.i
- Improving quality and access to tertiary education - IP10.ii
- Enhancing access to lifelong learning - IP10.iii
- Improving the labour market relevance of education and training - IP10.iv

## STATE OF PLAY

82% of planned resources under TO10 had been allocated in 2018, with 40% spent.

Number of overall participations in TO10 operations by the end of 2018:

**902 823**

- ▶ **326 473** participations in operations to reduce and prevent early school leaving
- ▶ **4 836** participations in operations to improve the access to, and quality of, tertiary and equivalent education
- ▶ **154 379** participations in operations to enhance access to lifelong learning
- ▶ **417 135** participations in operations to improve the labour market relevance of education and training

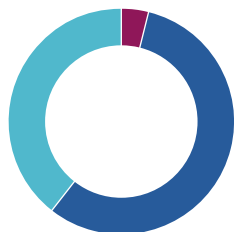
<sup>1</sup> This includes EU-only funding and co-financing from the Member State.

<sup>2</sup> The total does not add up to 100% due to rounding.

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## PARTICIPANT PROFILES WHEN RECEIVING SUPPORT

Employment status



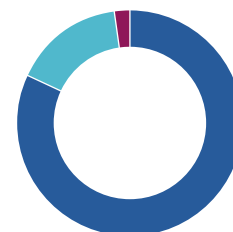
**4% (39 253)** Unemployed  
**56% (504 098)** Inactive<sup>3</sup>  
**39% (355 567)** Employed

Sex

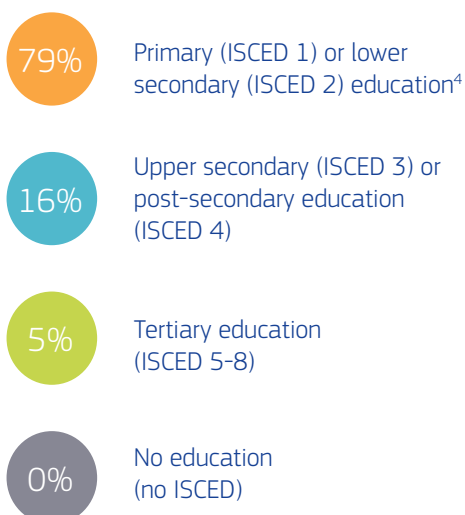
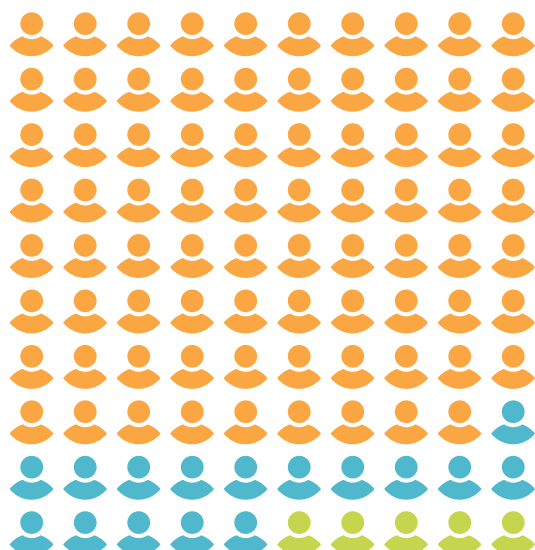


**51%** Women  
**49%** Men

Age



**82% (740 254)** <25 years  
**16% (144 325)** 25-54 years  
**2% (14 340)** >54 years



**229 769**  
Migrants

**38 450**  
Other disadvantaged

**14 640**  
Participants with disabilities

**6 787**  
Homeless

**Key achievements to date** of ESF T010 activities in Germany include<sup>5</sup>:

- ▶ **518 824** successful results have been achieved to date following participation in an activity funded by ESF T010, of which:
  - ▶ **12 112** inactive participants went on to engage in job searching
  - ▶ **82 653** participants went into education or training
  - ▶ **396 306** participants gained a qualification
  - ▶ **27 753** participants moved into employment upon leaving
- ▶ The largest sub-group supported by T010 operations in Germany were young people under 25 years of age (740 254), responding well to the focus on early school leaving and the transition from school to vocational education.
- ▶ Two of the nine operations at federal level report the large majority of participations under T010: the Career entry support (IP10.iv) with 128 000 participations, and the Continuing education grant (IP10.iii), with 47 000 reported participations.

<sup>3</sup> The inactive population can include pre-school children, school children, students, pensioners and housewives or -men, for example, provided that they are not working and not available or looking for work.

<sup>4</sup> ISCED is the UN reference classification for organising education programmes and related qualifications by education levels and fields.

<sup>5</sup> Participants' data are collected when starting an operation. Data on results are collected at the end of an operation or even later. Because of this time lag the two sets of data (participations and results) should not be directly compared.

## LESSONS LEARNED SO FAR

### ► Established structures and participating bodies

One of the key success factors for ESF T010 implementation at federal level in Germany is that the programmes are mostly a continuation from previous years, meaning that the structures and bodies are well established. Many operations were either already co-financed through the ESF in the former programming period 2007-2013 or were financed through national funding in previous years.

### ► Bureaucracy and communications challenges

The slow uptake of some schemes, such as the Continuing education grant, can be explained by factors such as the bureaucratic requirements for the implementing bodies and the difficulty of communicating changes in the eligibility criteria to the target groups.

### ► Relevant and targeted measures

ESF T010 initiatives in Germany are on the whole highly relevant to the challenges faced by the country, with funds targeted to the needs of specific groups, particularly those from a migrant background, those facing socio-economic disadvantage and those with low levels of skills and qualifications.

### ► Impact varies according to region

Different regions in Germany face different types of challenges, for example, higher proportions of people from a migrant background or from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. In these regions, therefore, targeted ESF measures are having a relatively high impact in terms of meeting these challenges. In the Saarland, for example, in addition to the main OP priorities, the region is implementing a number of additional initiatives that actively promote the integration of female immigrants and support employees with functional illiteracy.

### ► Wide range of target groups

The operations funded under the federal level OP support a large range of different target groups. One of the main objectives is the support of (disadvantaged) young people, addressed in particular through the operations for career entry support and promoting vocational education for sustainable development.

### ► Challenges in monitoring not been addressed

There are issues with data collection for monitoring purposes in some regions, where access to data is being refused or data is not being supplied, due to data security and privacy concerns and the burden of data collection. Possible solutions include simplifying the data to be collected and moving to online data collection only.

## PROJECT EXAMPLES

### ► Voluntary 10th grade class for school students

The voluntary class is offered to selected schools in the region of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern to help students to obtain a vocational school leaving certificate (Berufsmatura) and to reduce the number of students leaving school without a leaving certificate. It offers extra classes to students who have completed their ninth school year. It is targeted specifically at those with special educational needs and with learning difficulties. Only students who show potential in the areas of German, maths and sciences are transferred onto the scheme.

### ► Career entry support counselling

This federal level operation aims to improve the transition from school to vocational education for young people, with a particular focus on low-achieving and disadvantaged pupils. Young people are counselled by career start mentors with continuous, individual support from school through to the vocational training stage. Measures commence in the penultimate year of general education in schools and continue for up to six months into the vocational training.

### ► Continuing education grant

This federal level operation supports people with a low income, enabling them to participate in (job-related) continuing vocational education and training activities by providing a financial incentive. It targets employees and self-employed people with a taxable annual income of up to EUR 20 000 working at least 15 hours per week. Half of the fees for continuing education programmes are paid, up to a maximum amount of EUR 500 per award.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Mecklenburg-Vorpommern evaluation of ESF funding to foster and improve inclusive education, December 2019:  
<https://www.europa-mv.de/serviceassistent/download?id=1621407>

European Commission, Study supporting the evaluation of ESF support to education and training (Thematic Objective 10)

The ESF in Germany: <https://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=375&langId=en>

Website of the ESF in Germany: <https://www.esf.de/portal/EN/Services/ESF-Points-of-Contact/content.html>

