



European Social Fund 2007-2013

ESF support to combat poverty and social exclusion in rural areas

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Combating poverty and social exclusion in rural areas
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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 skills 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



The role of ESF

- A key area of action:
 - reinforcing social inclusion by combating discrimination and facilitating access to the labour market for disadvantaged people
 - 14% of total ESF funding earmarked for enhancing social inclusion (10,5 bn Euro)
 - In addition, ESF often targets people who are most vulnerable to unemployment and social exclusion through education or labour market schemes



ESF supports rural population



ESF interventions to ensure sustainable employment for the population in rural areas:

- **Supporting access to quality (primary and secondary) education**
- **Developing skilled and adaptable workforce**
- **Facilitating access to key services**
- **Integrated programmes of training, employment and other supporting measures – tailored to individual needs and taking into consideration rural barriers**
- **Promoting occupational and geographical mobility of the rural labour force**
- **Encouraging business start-ups**



Examples of ESF interventions in Member States

■ Poland

- Human Capital OP 2007-2013 promotes the reduction of discrepancies between regions, including disparities between rural and urban areas
- Objectives:
 - Labour market open for all: target to reach out to 50% of all unemployed in rural areas;
 - Promoting education and competences in regions: level out inequalities in education between rural and urban areas;
 - Promoting social inclusion: up-grading social services and supporting social economy in lagging (rural) areas;

Examples of ESF interventions in Member States

■ UK

- ESF in the South West of England
 - tries to tackle the barriers rurality creates to training and skills development
 - e.g. absence of labour pool places a premium on work-place training;
 - distance suggests focus on e-learning and flexible training
 - supports entirely rurally focussed projects.
- ESF in North-West Wales (Concergence Region):
 - Increasing Employment and Tackling Economic Inactivity
 - Labour Market intermediary project
 - focus on most deprived rural communities to get inactive people into a job

Examples of ESF interventions in Member States – complex programmes

■ Romania

- 'Promoting long term sustainability of rural areas in terms of human resource development and employment'
- Integrated programmes of training, employment and other support measures for people in rural areas;
- Support to measures to promote occupational and geographical mobility of the rural labour force
- Improving health and environmental conditions, encourage business start-ups in non agricultural activities
- Providing assistance to dependent family members.

Examples of ESF interventions in Member States – complex programmes

■ Slovakia

- 2007-2013 - indicative amount 200 m Euro for complex projects exclusively for marginalised Roma communities (drawing both from ESF and ERDF)
- Aim: strengthen cooperation and increase efficiency of coordination of activities and financial resources.
 - 4 priority areas: education, employment, health care, housing
 - 3 inter-related topics: poverty, discrimination, gender equality
- Comprehensive approach - linking several activities and projects
- Target area – mostly rural locations



Conclusions

- ESF can help: more than pure labour market measures
- MS have used ESF to address rural development and poverty (IRL, UK, German Länder ...)
- but not always targeted exclusion and poverty
- With enlargement, the rural dimension of ESF became more important (Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, ..)
- and is reflected in many ESF programmes which aim at targeting disadvantaged regions, including people in rural areas
- We should see some results soon.

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Thank you for your attention!

More information:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf/index_en.htm



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