

HUMAN CAPITAL INVESTMENT OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 2007-2013	
Priority:	UPSKILLING THE WORKFORCE
Theme/Dimension Code:	Measures to increase participation in education and training throughout the lifecycle, including through action to achieve a reduction in early school leaving, gender-based segregation of subjects and increased access to and quality of initial vocational and tertiary education and training.
Activity title:	<i>Undergraduate Skills</i>
Overall Objective:	To address identified shortages of skilled graduates in areas as highlighted by the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) and other reports in particular in the ICT/Engineering and Science disciplines
Certifying Authority:	ESF Certifying Authority
Managing Authority:	ESF Managing Authority
Intermediate Body:	Department of Education and Skills
Intended Beneficiaries:	Higher Education Authority
EU Co-financing Rate:	50%

1. CONTEXT/ PROBLEM/ NEED:

To address identified shortages of skilled graduates in areas as highlighted by the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) and other reports in particular in the ICT/Engineering and Science disciplines by increasing the number of additional students enrolled on courses in the ICT/Engineering and Science disciplines under this Measure,

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY:

To increase the number of graduates from these courses to meet labour market demands by increasing the number of additional students enrolled on courses supported under this area of activity

3. ESF FUNDED ELEMENT OF ACTIVITY:

ESF will fund the cost of the additional places created annually

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF INTERMEDIATE BODY:

Intermediate Bodies shall be responsible in particular for:

- Submitting eligible expenditure in the format required by the Certifying Authority to the Managing Authority in order for payment claims to be prepared for submission to the Certifying Authority
- In respect of ESF funds the Intermediate Bodies will, for the purpose of drawing down EU funds, report expenditure to the Managing Authority
- Ensuring that all payment claims for Structural Fund expenditure submitted by beneficiaries are supported with receipted invoices, audit documents and that a clear audit trail exists
- Ensuring that only eligible expenditure actually incurred, in respect of co-financed measures/projects, is submitted to the Managing Authority
- Certification of all expenditure incurred by beneficiaries.
- Ensuring that public support under this programme complies with the procedural and material State aid rules applicable at the point of time when the aid is granted
- Ensuring that public contracts awarded, concerning projects benefiting from the assistance of the European Social Fund, comply with the provisions of Directives 2004/17/EC, 2004/18/EC and the Treaty principles where applicable
- Collection and submission of statistical data in relation to co-financed activities, in particular in relation to the requirements of Annex XXIII of Implementing Regulation 1828 of 2006 (see extract attached below)

5. CONTRIBUTION TO HORIZONTAL THEMES	
A. Social Inclusion	<p>The social inclusion programme in higher education is aimed at increasing participating in all undergraduate programmes rather than specific disciplines. There is a focused programme of investment for social inclusion in higher education which is supported through ESF funding. Full-time undergraduate students on ICT and engineering courses are eligible to apply to the funds such as Millennium Partnership Fund, Fund for Students with disabilities and Student Assistance Fund and maintenance grant.</p> <p>The National Access Office identified groups who are under-represented in higher education and developed the National Access Plan 2008-2013 which aims to address the multi-dimensional causes and consequences of poverty and social exclusion and increase participation in all undergraduate disciplines in higher education.</p> <p>It outlined a number of targets and actions which will contribute to the wider national social inclusion goals such as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All socio-economic groups will have entry rates of at least 54 per cent by 2020 ('Non-manual' group at 27 per cent and 'Semi-skilled and unskilled manual' group at 33 per cent in 2004).
B. Gender Equality & Wider Equality Opportunities	<p>Gender Imbalance has been identified in that there is higher male than female participation in this measure. See proposed actions below.</p> <p>Actions to incorporate the Gender Equality Principle in the Measure:</p> <p>UNIVERSITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To prepare a position paper to identify positive actions occurring in the universities regarding gender mainstreaming of this measure. This paper will be presented to the Equality Unit of the Department of Education and Science with recommendations regarding further coordination with the appropriate line Sections in respect of possible further positive actions to help redress any identified gender imbalances currently feeding into this measure. <p>TECHNOLOGICAL SECTOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Third level institutes could develop a positive action programme to attract females onto undergraduate programmes. This could be done in conjunction with career guidance counsellors in female only and co-educational schools in urban and rural areas. <p>Wider Equality</p> <p>HEA funding for access has underpinned baseline infrastructure and programmes of action which support equity of access for under-represented groups to all undergraduate programmes. Funding is not course specific but it has allowed for providing core services to students.</p> <p>Many HEA institutions have developed links and outreach programmes with schools as well as with the adult community education sector through organising pre-entry activities which can encourage under-represented students participation in higher education. This work involves a range of activities including guidance, familiarisation and learning support which can contribute to increased enrolments in engineering and ICT along with other disciplines in higher education.</p> <p>Many access offices of higher-education institutions also coordinate post-entry supports for students which would include supporting students on ICT and engineering courses.</p>
C. Sustainable Development	<p>The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government was invited to become a member of the OP Monitoring Committee</p> <p>The MA will report on Sustainable Development as an element of the Annual Implementation Report</p> <p>A thematic presentation and discussion on sustainable development issues will be made to the Monitoring Committee on an annual basis</p> <p>Evaluation of the OP impact in relation to sustainable development was undertaken as an element of the mid term evaluation of the OP</p>

6. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:													
Annual Indicators													
OUTPUT													
	Region	Baseline (2006)			Mid Term Actual 2010			Target 2013			Cumulative Target 2013		
		M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1. The number of additional students enrolled on the key courses identified such as ITC, Engineering and Science	BMW	438	117	555	836	285	1121	920	314	1234			
	SAE	747	198	945	3155	1142	4297	3471	1256	4727			
	NAT	1185	315	1500	3991	1427	5418	4391	1570	5961	35939		
RESULT													
	Region	Baseline (2006)			Mid Term Target 2010			Target 2013			Cumulative Target 2013		
		M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
2. The number of additional graduates of key courses identified such as ITC, Engineering and Science	BMW	322	85	407	186	50	236	205	55	260			
	SAE	547	146	693	627	227	854	689	250	939			
	NAT	869	231	1100	813	277	1090	894	305	1199	7389		
IMPACT													
	Region	Baseline (2006)			Mid Term Target 2010			Target 2013			Cumulative Target 2013		
		T			T			T			T		
2. The number of additional graduates of key courses who progress into Employment or further education	BMW				176	44	220	184	50	234			
	SAE				559	201	760	621	224	845			
	NAT				735	245	980	805	274	1079			6539

See end of document for ANNEX XX111 from Implementing Regulation 1828 of 2006

7. FINANCIAL INPUT			
Budget (€/m.)	SAE €23.174m.	BMW €19.000m.	NAT €42.174m
EU Intervention Field Code	73		
ESF Contribution €m	€21.087m.		
Treatment of ESF	Treated as appropriations-in-aid by DES		
National Co-Financing Basis (Net/Gross)	Gross- i.e. the ESF contribution and matching Exchequer provision are provided for in the Vote and the ESF receipts are paid to the Department as appropriations-in-aid.		
Max. ESF Co-Financing %	50%		
Max. Total Public Support %	100%		
Exch. Vote& S/Head	DES Vote 26 TLE E6 & E7		
Description of Financial Flows	From: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> D/Finance to DES in respect of Exchequer D/ET&E to DES in respect of ESF From DES to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher Education Authority in respect of the Universities and Institutes of Technology 		
Agreed flat rate for indirect costs*	20%		

* Agreed by Managing Authority subject to Commission approval

8. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	
Certifying Authority	ESF Certifying Authority
Managing Authority	HCI-OP Managing Authority
Intermediate Body	Department of Education and Skills
Beneficiaries	Higher Education Authority
Nature of Support	Grant
Operation of Scheme	Multi-annual
Implementation Arrangements (Sub-Contracting?)	Department of Education and Skills, in conjunction with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher Education Authority in respect of the Universities and Institutes of Technology

9. PAYMENT ROLES				
Ex-Ante Expenditure Verification checks (Art.13) ¹ by:	Certified Claims Submitted by:	Submitted To:	Ex-Post Audit of Operations ² by:	System Audits ³ By:
HEA	HEA	NDP/SFU DES	ESF Financial Control Unit, DES	VEC Audit Function
NDP/SFU DES	NDP/SFU DES	Managing Authority DES	ESF Financial Control Unit, DES	Internal Audit Unit DES
EO/HEO Managing Authority DES	HEO/AP Managing Authority DES	Certifying Authority DES	ESF Financial Control Unit, DES	Internal Audit Unit DES
EO/HEO Certifying Authority DES	Head of Certifying Authority DES	European Commission	ESF Financial Control Unit, DES	Internal Audit Unit DES

¹ Article 13, Reg. 1828/2006

² Art. 62 (1)(b) Reg. 1083/2006

³ Art. 62 (1) (a) Reg. 1083/2006

10. PROJECT SELECTION

Project Selection Process	Courses are relevant to specific skills needs as identified by the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs
Project Selection Criteria	As above
Composition of Project Selection Committee	Based on the reports of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, the Higher Education Authority advises the Department of Education and Skills on courses for inclusion in the initiative following assessment of proposals received from institutions.

11. PUBLICITY/INFORMATION PLANS

Publicity/ Information Plans for the Activity	Applications, brochures, reports and promotional materials will equally publicise the appropriate funding source in line with national requirements and those of Implementing Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 regarding information and publicity measures to be carried out by the Member States concerning assistance from the Structural Funds
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12. FINANCIAL PLAN FOR THE ACTIVITY

Financial Tables relating to this area of activity are attached containing all ESF and National/Private funding broken down by each year of the programming period and detailing BMW, SAE and National Profiles.

13. IMPLEMENTATION CONTACT

Body: Department of Education and Skills	Contact Name:	Frances-Mary Long
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[Extract from Implementing Regulation 1828 of 2006]

Annex XXIII : Data on participants in ESF operations by priority

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS PER YEAR

(people entering, those leaving, carry-over from one year to the next)

BREAKDOWN OF PARTICIPANTS BY GENDER

BREAKDOWN OF PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO STATUS IN THE LABOUR MARKET

- employed (total number of employed, including self-employed)
- self-employed
- unemployed (total number of unemployed including long-term unemployed)
- long-term unemployed
- inactive persons (total number of inactive persons, including those in education, training or retirement, those having given up business, the permanently disabled, those fulfilling domestic tasks or other)
- inactive persons in education or training

BREAKDOWN OF PARTICIPANTS BY AGE

- young people (15-24 years)
- older workers (55-64 years)

BREAKDOWN OF PARTICIPANTS BY VULNERABLE GROUPS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATIONAL RULES

- minorities
- migrants
- disabled
- other disadvantaged people

BREAKDOWN OF PARTICIPANTS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

- Primary or lower secondary education (ISCED 1 and 2)
- Upper secondary education (ISCED 3)
- Post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED 4)
- Tertiary education (ISCED 5 and 6)