

European Social Fund Programme for Mainland Finland

The ESF operational programme for Mainland Finland for 2007–2013 is nationwide and covers the whole country. The ESF Operational Programme is divided into national and regional sections.

Objectives

The ESF programme supports the achievement of the Community's social inclusion objectives laid down in the Lisbon strategy and the European Employment Strategy as well as the implementation of the relevant National Reform Programmes. The target of the programme is to concentrate on the most important challenges of the labour, education and industrial policies, so that ESF measures will complement and bring genuine added value to the national activities.

Priorities

The ESF Operational Programme encompasses four priorities. The priorities are based on the Finnish Structural Fund strategy 2007-2013 and the ESF strategy, and they will be implemented both under the national and the regional sections. These priorities are:

- Priority 1: Development of work organisations, the workforce and enterprises, and promoting entrepreneurship
- Priority 2: Promoting access to employment and sustainable inclusion in the labour market and preventing social exclusion
- Priority 3: Development of skills, innovation and services systems that promote the functioning of the labour market
- Priority 4: Transnational and inter-regional ESF actions

Financing

A total of 1.4 billion euros will be available for the 2007–2013 programming period, of which the ESF's share will amount to 615 million euros. In addition to the ESF, funds will be contributed by central and local government and the private sector. Some 799 million euros of national public funding have been allocated for the programme. These funds will be distributed over seven years and across several authorities.

The ESF programme will be financed by Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, state provincial offices, regional councils, the National Board of Education, the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The funding bodies will launch calls for proposals for ESF projects across Finland, notifying applicants of the nature of projects sought during each round. The application process is designed to identify the most innovative ideas and project plans, which can deliver permanent outcomes and lead to the successful implementation of ESF activities and development objectives.

Applications

Bodies which can apply for ESF funding include municipalities, local government economic organisations, businesses, educational institutions, development organisations, societies, foundations and other organisations with a legal capacity. Further information on the ESF programme and the application process can be found in structural funds portals on the web, regional Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, state provincial offices and regional councils, the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

<http://www.tem.fi/?l=en&s=2194>