

ESF SESSION

Participant Guidance



An updated version of the Participant Guidance was published on the ESIF website in April 2018

- Participant Guidance - key document for Lead Partners to refer to in conjunction with the Commission's *Monitoring & Evaluation Guidance*
- Employability FAQ - additional resource regularly updated to share questions raised by Lead Partners. Lead Partner should note that an updated version of this document is scheduled to be published on the ESIF website in the next few months
- Common sense approach should be applied by Lead Partners

Overview of Changes

- Clearer and easier to use
- Definition of 'Supported/Unsupported' Participants
- Highlight importance of Project Worker Assessments
- Inclusion of new Barriers / Disadvantages
- Additional instances of self-certification
- Social Inclusion & Poverty target groups definitions
- Identifying 'Common Indicators'
- Inclusion of Annex A

Supported / Unsupported Participants

- Simple Definition:
 - Supported Participants** – count towards Outputs & Results reported by the Managing Authority to the Commission
 - Unsupported Participants** – do not count towards Outputs & Results reported by the Managing Authority to the Commission
- Concept of '**Grand Total**': includes those participants whose basic data relating to the Common Output Indicators either could not be collected or is incomplete. *Monitoring & Evaluation Guidance* (page 10)
Monitoring & Evaluation Guidance: Annex D (page 15)

Barrier / Disadvantages

Three new barriers have been added to the Participant Guidance

- 'At risk of becoming NEET'
- Material Deprivation
- Low Income (social inclusion & poverty)

Project Worker Assessments

- Extremely important that these assessments are undertaken during the Registration process - particularly in instances where self-certification by the Participant has been deemed acceptable.
- The assessments should confirm that the Project Worker has clarified that the information being provided by the Participant is accurate and that the correct definitions (e.g. for Employment Status, Barriers etc) is being applied.
- In addition, assessments must clearly outline the link between the needs / barriers of the Participant and the positive outcome that it is anticipated ESF assistance will generate.
- Project Worker notes should continue to keep and retain notes about the Participant's progress throughout their ESF intervention

DWP Referral / Data Collection Form

- DWP (in consultation with the Managing Authority and Lead Partners) has drafted a template Referral / Data Collection Form that can be used by Lead Partners to evidence various aspects of Participant eligibility by receiving data directly from DWP.
- The form contain the follow key areas
 - Name
 - Address
 - National Insurance Number
 - Employment Status
 - Length of Employment Status
 - Details of any benefits being claimed
- Provided the form is certified correctly by DWP (or received from a DWP dedicated email address) - this is an easier and more straight-forward method of evidencing participant eligibility

Common Errors - General

- Format of evidence: documents not being correctly labelled in line with the naming conventions provided by the Managing Authority
- Evidence not being provided in line with Managing Authority timescales - Lead Partners should note that where items are not made available at verification, they may be rejected from the claim

Common Errors - Costs

- Description of cost on EUMIS -
- BACs - does not provide a clear link between the cost and the bank statement
- Costs being apportioned by the Lead Partner without prior agreement with the Managing Authority

Common Errors - Achievements

- incorrect interpretation of definitions relating to a participant's employment status or barriers to employment e.g.

'Registered Unemployed' versus 'Economically Inactive'

On a number of registration forms, the individuals has been recorded as 'Registered Unemployed' - however, on closer inspection of the form it has become apparent that these individuals should have an employment status of 'Economically Inactive' as they are not in receipt of JSA or ESA (Work Related Activity Group).

'Underemployed'

On a number of registration forms, the barrier of 'Underemployed' has been selected - however these individuals are also recorded as 'Registered Unemployed'. The definition of 'Underemployed' within the Participant Guidance clearly states that this barrier relates to 'Employed' participants only as it relates to 'an employment situation that is insufficient in some important way for the worker'.

Common Errors - Achievements

- Referral Forms (that are being relied upon to provided evidence e.g. DWP Referral Form evidencing Employment Status) not being correctly certified
- Disclosure Forms being submitted as evidence
- No Project Worker Assessment provided to support elements of self-certification by the Participant
- Identification Documents (e.g. passports) not current and valid.
- Barriers selected inconsistent with other information recorded e.g. Employment Status, other Barriers etc

Common Errors - Achievements

- Registration Forms not signed by Participant and / or Case Worker
- No or incorrect logos used
- No Action Plans provided
- EUMIS - information recorded on EUMIS does not match the information recorded on Registration Forms.

Correction of Errors

Where errors are identified on a Participant's Registration Forms, the Lead Partner must take steps to rectify this

- The Lead Partner should identify whether the Participant is still engaging with the intervention
- If the Participant is still engaging - the Lead Partner should ask the Participant to correct the errors and initial / date these revisions to the form. In addition, a file note should be added to the Participant Record documenting the error and the steps taken to rectify the error
- If the Participant had exited the intervention - the Lead Partner should not attempt to alter the form. A file note should be added outlining the error and confirming the correct information
- In all cases, the Lead Partner's MIS and EUMIS must be updated to reflect the correct information