

ESF/YEI AND THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL PROTECTION

Information Notice 1/2015 for Implementing Bodies on the Tús Initiative and ESF/YEI

1. Purpose of this Information note

This information note is being issued to set out the main requirements for the Tús scheme at scheme level for claiming both the ESF and YEI funded interventions and the role and responsibilities of Implementing Bodies with immediate effect. This is a follow up to Information notice 8/2014 issued to Tús Implementing bodies in December 2014. From **1st May, 2015**, payments to **under 25s** who commence on Tús will now be eligible expenditure to be submitted for ESF co-financing

2. Background

The European Social Fund (ESF) with additional dedicated funding provided under the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) aims to assist Member States in their efforts to put their Youth Guarantee implementation plans in practice. The YEI is specifically aimed at tackling unemployment for those **under 25** and classified as not in education, training or employment. Expenditure relating to the under 25s on the Tús initiative will be re-claimed from both the ESF and YEI on a tripartite basis; for every €300 of eligible expenditure, €100 ESF and €100 YEI (i.e. $\frac{2}{3}$) will be refunded by the European Commission with the balance being funded by the Irish Exchequer. The Department will reclaim these funds from the European Commission through the Department of Education and Skills (DES) as the designated Management Authority as part of the 2014-2020 ESF Operational Programme (OP).

All original (or equivalent) supporting documentation for eligible expenditure submitted for ESF co-financing must be retained after the final report is submitted to the Commission. Therefore all bodies in the ESF cascade should not dispose of supporting documents without prior agreement of the Managing Authority. Verification checks and audits are required by each level of the cascade including the operational units. These visits are designed to provide assurances that the administrative, financial, technical and physical aspects of operations are compliant with national rules and ESF requirements at every level.

3. ESF/YEI and the Role of Implementing Bodies delivering Tús

Tús payments to **under 25s** clients paid through Pobal will now be eligible expenditure to be submitted for ESF co-financing in 2015 from 1/5/2015. Tús Implementing Bodies should ensure that they ;

- (a) Abide by the conditions and rules for Tús.
- (b) Collect and retain data for Tús clients.
- (c) Retain documentation setting out the rate the client receives per week/month and how it was calculated.
- (d) Retain contracts with the clients.
- (e) Maintain signed attendance records.
- (f) Ensure ESF/YEI publicity/communications guidelines are followed.

- (g) Notify the DSP of any issues that may lead to YEI/ESF not being claimed.
- (h) A procedure should be introduced to provide for the handling of records in the event of closure of an IB.

All supporting Tús documentation for eligible expenditure submitted for ESF co-financing must be available for a minimum of two years from the 31st December after the final accounts is submitted to the Commission. This means that the documentation above must be available for inspection for at least three years after the client finishes on the scheme. This period may be extended by legal proceedings or a justified request by the Commission.

4. Immediate action Points for Implementing bodies from 1st May, 2015

(a) From **1st May 2015**, all Tús correspondence and communication issued to participants commencing Tús who are under 25 years of age on the Tús commencement date should include the ESF/YEI publicity logos and a statement informing the client of the ESF/YEI funding for Tús (this statement is included in the contract of employment) . The forms to include this are the following ;

- Contract of employment
- Tús 1
- Tús 4
- Tus 5

An updated version of each of the above Tús forms that includes the publicity logos will be sent to each CEO today.

(b) The staff in the IB administering the Tús initiative should be aware of the ESF/YEI programme guidelines and the IBs requirements for Financial Management, Control systems and document retention for this ESF co-financed project. This includes completing and retaining time sheets and attendance records.

(c) Notify the Tús unit of any issues that may lead to YEI/ESF not being claimed for under25s on Tús.

The Department has an EU Funding Compliance Unit based in Goldsmith House, Pearse Street, Dublin 2, Tel : (01) 7043000 which will co-ordinate this ESF and YEI funded intervention.

If you have any further questions, feel free to contact me at 071 9672530 or shane.reynolds@welfare.ie

Shane Reynolds,
Tús Unit
Department of Social Protection
29 April 2015