

Involvement of Welsh Further Education colleges and institutions in EU funding

An overview of the financial uptake

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FOREWORD



This report has been commissioned to identify how Further Education Institutions (FEIs) in Wales have accessed EU funding and the roles that they have played in the economic development promoted by EU funding. The aim is twofold; firstly, to enable FEIs to play a full role in the successful delivery of the current EU funding programmes, and secondly, to start preparing for “Brexit” when EU funding resources will not be available, at least in the current form. The report thus outlines what potential issues and barriers lie ahead and the financial gap in resources that this scenario could create.

Over the past 10 years, FEIs in Wales have been involved in the delivery of EU funded projects to a total value of almost £600m, both as project lead or project partner.

Over half of the funding has come from the Structural Funds programmes, especially from the European Social Fund (ESF) to support skills development policies. Another large part of the funding came from Welsh Government’s Work Based Learning programme, part funded by the ESF.

Finally, a small but significant share of the funding has come from the mobility funding programmes, which enable staff and learners to undertake work experience abroad in order to increase their skills and improve their employability. These funding programmes are vital to the sector as they provide a unique opportunity directly to learners, not necessarily targeted by the ESF programmes, which enable them to gain a different breadth of experiences and to be fully engaged in the European and worldwide economy.

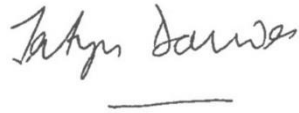
More importantly, the effectiveness of the delivery of FEIs is seen in the achievement of the targets and the results obtained. The nature of the projects the colleges have been involved in has mainly been about supporting and increasing the skills of the workforce and learners entering the labour market. These projects, involving colleges, target over 110,000 participants with over 70,000 of them achieving a qualification. Furthermore, the projects led by colleges show a higher percentage of success than those where colleges are project partners. Finally, the performance and the uptake of funding shows a positive increase between the past and the current programming period.

Two important projects have also been funded by ERDF to support the building of new campuses. These greatly increased the capacity of the FE sector for years to come, enabling colleges to better engage with learners, including improving the delivery of ESF projects.

Therefore, it is crucial that that the Further Education sector continues to be a fully involved stakeholder in the successful delivery of the ongoing projects and is at the forefront of the development of new projects. This will ensure that Wales makes the most of the remaining funding

available under the current round of EU programmes and that ultimately learners receive the best chance they can to participate fully in the labour market.

The report does however issue a warning. The potential gap in resources, both in terms of finance and of capacity, we face with the end of EU funding programmes will undoubtedly have a major impact on the Welsh economy, especially in the skills agenda. The role of the FE sector remains key to ensuring that the workforce in Wales continues to be supported and upskilled. It is therefore paramount that the sector has sufficient resources to fulfil the role that it has undertaken to date with such demonstrable success.



Iain Jones

1. Recommendations

A result of this report, ColegauCymru/CollegesWales makes the following recommendations.

1. Colleges should continue to work to ensure effective delivery of the current projects that they are leading under the 2014-2020 ESF programmes. **This should be complemented by a strategic working partnership approach with other delivery organisations.** WEFO, with its knowledge of the programme implementation, is best placed to facilitate the collaborative work needed to ensure that the full benefits of the projects are delivered to the Welsh economy whilst delivering against the programmes' targets.
2. Colleges should be at the forefront of any new projects developed under the current programmes to ensure the full delivery of the targets and achieving the results of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). **Welsh Government should proactively support and engage with colleges to ensure that new projects provide added value to the range of activities already implemented and to stimulate innovative approaches.**
3. **Funding from the current ESF programmes should be deployed to devise and test future strategic activities for skills and qualifications that respond to the demands of the Welsh economy for a qualified technical workforce.** An example could be a genuine equivalent of the "Mastercraftsperson" designation, which operates in other parts of Europe. ColegauCymru is willing to lead on this activity by engaging with relevant stakeholders in the public and private sectors and by building on its work carried out as the National Contact Point for Skills on behalf of the Welsh Government.
4. There is currently an untapped capacity and an appetite from colleges to engage with innovation activities. **Higher Education institutions - especially those leading on the ERDF Priority 1 innovation - should actively engage with Further Education colleges to complement and enhance the provision of the backbone projects.**
5. After the UK leaves the EU, funding for economic and regional development is likely to be available from national resources. This will support projects tailored to Wales' specific needs that can be designed without being limited by EU regulatory or geographical constraints. **The Welsh Government should provide financial support to co-ordinate the collective effort of the FE sector, utilising current ESF and ERDF resources to scope out and help devise such future programmes and activities.** In particular, the focus would be to develop future skills programmes and activities that address directly the needs and the priorities of the Welsh economy.
6. In order to maximise the experience and success accumulated so far on mobility programmes, **Welsh Government should support continued access to the Erasmus+ programme for staff and learners, especially involvement in Vocational Education Training (VET), up to and including NVQ Level 4.** ColegauCymru can lead on this activity by outlining how this can be done in an effective way.
7. Following the increasing success of Further Education colleges in Erasmus+ projects, **Welsh Government, in its negotiating capacity on Brexit, should actively pursue the objective of maintaining the access for Welsh organisations to similar EU programmes after the UK leaves the EU.**
8. Alternatively, **Welsh Government should consider setting up and support a similar mobility scheme for Further Education learners and staff in Wales so that they do not lose the opportunities availed by this type of activities.** This would also enable Wales to make the most of the existing networks and partnerships, which aligns with the Welsh Government priorities for EU transition. ColegauCymru is willing to lead on this activity, involving relevant stakeholders and high profile figures such as the EU funding ambassadors.

2. Scope and methodology

This report looks at the involvement in European funding of Welsh FEIs, referred to in the report as colleges. The report reviews the financial uptake of EU funding as well as outlining the impact and added value of EU funding to the activities of colleges.

This report uses information that is currently available in the public domain and spans the last nine years of EU funding, from 2007. For a meaningful and consistent analysis, the report separates the two main EU programming periods: the current one (2014-2020) and the previous one (2007-2013) – where spending ended in 2015. It has to be noted that for the current programming period, delivery started around spring 2015 and has gained momentum only from late 2015 onwards.

The analysis focuses on two main strands of EU funding programmes: the Structural Funds and the mobility funding programmes for education, as these two strands fund activities that support and complement the core activities of colleges. For the first strand the analysis looked at the four ERDF and ESF funded programmes in Wales, as well as the “Ireland Wales” Interreg IV A programme (funded by ERDF). For the second strand the analysis looked at the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) and Erasmus+ (E+) funding programmes which operated at European-wide level during the past and the current funding periods respectively.

Colleges have been involved in the Welsh Government programme, “Work Based Learning” (WBL), which has been part funded by ESF. However, due to different timings, funding mechanisms and delivery models, WBL has been analysed separately from the other ESF projects and included in the 2007-2013 programming period only.

The mobility funding programmes (LLP and Erasmus+) and “Interreg Ireland Wales” are paid in euros; the amounts in the analysis and in the report are converted to an exchange rate of 1.20. This reflects a general average considering the fluctuations over the years. It is also in line with Welsh Government’s approach to the exchange rate for the Structural Funds programmes that they manage as they are paid to them in euros.

It is important to highlight that EU funded projects receive different amounts of EU support, or EU grant, according to programmes priorities and objectives. Moreover, project partners, including colleges, often have to provide part of the project budget, the so-called “match funding”. Finally, colleges act in different capacities in different programmes and projects, e.g. as project lead, project partner, or as the delivery organisation. Where possible the report breaks down and take into consideration the different types of involvement as they reflect different levels of responsibilities and impact delivered.

3. Main findings

Over the two programming periods, colleges have participated in a number of EU funded projects and initiatives, the overall value of which is £594m. This includes projects that colleges have been involved with directly and indirectly and it accounts for both the EU grant and the “match funding” amounts where relevant.

The Structural Funds programmes constitute around 56% of the amount; of which ESF represents 44% and ERDF 12%. Another 42% of the total amount is represented by WBL (which is funded by ESF and is matched by Welsh Government). The remainder is constituted by mobility funding programmes (LLP and Erasmus+) and Interreg (ERDF funding).

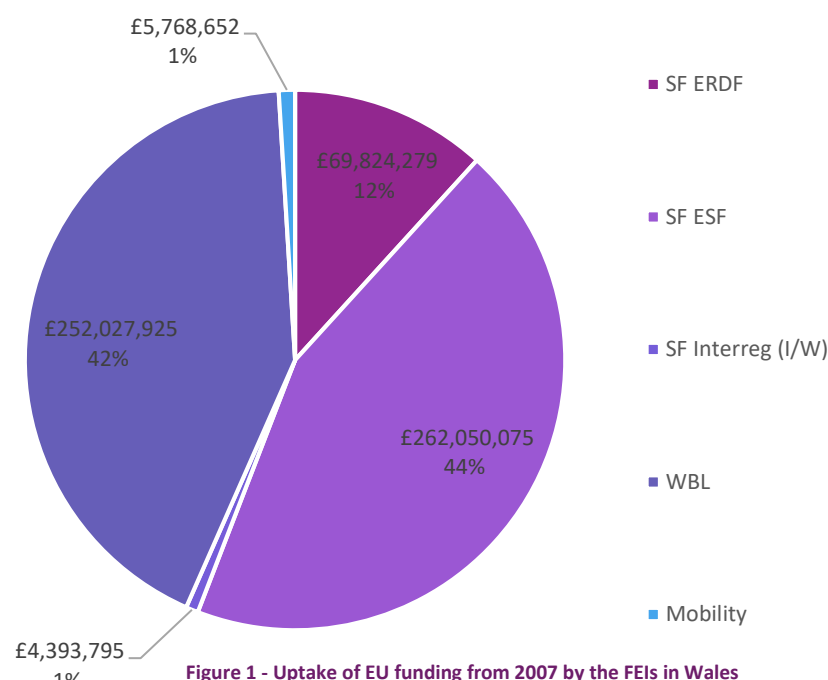


Figure 1 - Uptake of EU funding from 2007 by the FEIs in Wales

The ERDF and WBL funding were accessed only during the previous programming period (2007-2013). See, Table 3, and Table 4 at the end of this chapter detailing the above.

The figure of £594m does not include the large ESF apprenticeship projects led by Welsh Government in the current period, which are worth around £373m. Although it is likely that colleges are going to be involved in delivering these projects it is not possible to include them yet in the financial analysis for two main reasons. Firstly, the projects (although approved) have not yet started delivering and spending the allocated funding. Secondly, the involvement of the colleges as delivery organisations is still not clearly identifiable, nor quantifiable. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise the impact that such projects will have on the Welsh economy and the role colleges play in their implementation and delivery. Therefore, these large projects should be included where possible in the considerations of this report and, when possible, the actual involvement of colleges should be identified in future analyses.

An initial comparison of the involvement between the two programming periods shows that there is proportional increase of colleges taking part in both ESF and mobility funding programmes. At the end of 2016, the third year of the 7-year programming period, the funding already committed for these two strands is at around 86% of the total funding accessed and spent for the previous programming period. As the funding programmes are still open for applications and colleges are developing new projects, it is likely that the total amount of funding accessed in the current period will be higher than over the previous period. Finally, a large part of the mobility funding of Erasmus+ has already been spent and claimed, not just committed, which means that a lot of the outputs and benefits have been delivered already.

Looking only at the financial amounts of the projects however, does not provide a fully rounded picture of the involvement of colleges nor of the impact of the funding deployed. Therefore, it is important to look at the overall impact that colleges are able to achieve with the different funding programmes and to recognise the specific roles that they play in the project implementation.

A comparative analysis of the targets between the two periods on the performance of the ESF projects led by colleges also demonstrates an increase of almost 60% in the targets of participants, demonstrating that colleges are becoming more important players in the delivery of the main skills projects in Wales. Furthermore, an analysis of the targets and performance of ESF projects involving colleges as lead or joint sponsor shows that projects led by colleges contributed to around 18% of the total participants and around 25% of total participants gaining a qualification (See Table 9 - 2007-2013 ESF projects involving colleges on page 15).

Table 1 - ESF projects led by colleges (07-13 and 14-20) - performance and values

ESF projects led by colleges	Participants (Target)	Participants gaining qualifications (Target)	Total project value (EU grant + match funding)
2007-2013	16,081	12,907	£23,426,360
2014-2020	25,687	20,091	£54,540,000
Difference	9,606	7,184	£31,113,640
% difference	59.74%	55.66%	

The programmes differ in their nature, objectives and delivery mechanisms and therefore colleges play different roles in the delivery of the projects according to the funding programme rules. On the one hand colleges involved in the large ESF projects may be able to target large number of participants, but have less control over the delivery and selection of outputs of the activities. Moreover, colleges have to provide the match fund (financial or staff) for the Structural Funds projects so that extra resources are needed to deliver those projects increasing the need of careful management of resources. On the other hand, the mobility funding programmes are accessed directly by the colleges enabling them to have direct control over the projects albeit targeting a smaller number of participants. Furthermore, mobility funds do not need match funding - although the internal resources used to access the funding are not paid for by the programmes. This means ultimately that the benefits of the mobility projects are immediately available to the colleges for their staff and learners.

Both in the large ESF projects and the smaller mobility projects colleges play an important role and are relevant to their activities. These projects, in fact, focus on skills-oriented priorities and activities enabling colleges to access the funding to improve and add value to their core mission whilst having a direct impact in the economy.

The majority of the projects, across all the programmes, are delivered through partnership arrangements; the degree of co-operation among colleges and with other organisations has increased from the previous to the current period. This highlights the ability of colleges to supplement and add value to the delivery of economic development objectives in Wales by engaging with wide reaching and complex operations, enabling an adaptable and responsive delivery.

The ERDF-funded projects involving colleges have been fewer, in comparison to the ESF ones, and concentrated on capital investment in facilities, enabling the physical improvement of premises and the increasing of capacity. This has been the case with two colleges in South Wales in the previous programming period. However, the impact and legacy from these projects carries on well after the end of the programming period.

Table 2 - Programmes for 2007-2013 and 2014-2020	Amounts
Lifelong Learning Programme and Erasmus+ (mobility) (*) (Leonardo, Grundtvig, Transversal; KA1 learners and staff)	£5,768,652
Structural Funds (ERDF+ESF) (lead and joint sponsor)	£336,268,149
(EU grant)	(£175,332,576)
(Matchfunding)	(£160,935,573)
Work Based Learning (WBL) (**)	£252,027,925
Total of projects amounts	£ 594,064,727

(*) Programmes are paid in Euros, the exchange rate used is £1=€1.20, an estimated average across the years

Table 3 - Programmes and funding streams 2007-2013	Amounts
Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) (*)	£3,080,321
Leonardo da Vinci	£2,845,146
Grundtvig	£216,144
Transversal	£19,031
Structural Funds (ERDF+ESF) (lead, and joint sponsor)	£214,938,132
(EU grant)	(£96,237,613)
(Matchfunding)	(£118,700,510)
ERDF	£69,824,279
(EU grant)	(£14,038,764)
(Matchfunding)	(£55,785,515)
ESF	£140,720,049
(EU grant)	(£78,985,693)
(Matchfunding)	(£61,734,355)
Interreg (Ireland/Wales) (ERDF) (*)	£4,393,795
(EU grant)	(£3,213,156)
(Matchfunding)	(£1,180,639)
Work based learning (WBL) (**)	£252,027,925
Total of projects amounts	£470,046,369

(**) Refers to the rounds from August 2011 to July 2016

Table 4 - Programmes and funding streams 2014-2020	Amounts
Erasmus+ (*)	£2,688,331
Structural funds (lead, and joint sponsor)	£121,330,026
ESF	
(EU grant)	(£79,094,963)
(Matchfunding)	(£42,235,063)
Grand total of project amounts	£ 124,018,357

2014-2020 PROGRAMMING PERIOD

4. Structural Funds

In the current programming period FEIs are involved in ESF projects both as lead and as joint beneficiary. This is in line with the role played by colleges in the Structural funds, as the sector strengths is the delivery of projects focussing on improving the skills of the workforce.

At the time of finalising the report (January 2017), colleges are not involved in any ERDF project, either on the main programmes or on Interreg Ireland Wales.

4.1. European Social Fund (ESF)

All colleges are involved with the EFSF programmes, either as lead or joint beneficiary, with the focus on the “Skills” priority (P2). One college is involved in a the “tackling poverty priority” (P1).

Colleges as lead beneficiary (ESF)

As of January 2017 **five colleges** are involved as lead beneficiary (i.e. project lead) in ESF funded activities: Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, Coleg Cambria, Gower College Swansea, Coleg y Cymoedd, and Coleg Gwent.

They are leading respectively **four ESF projects**: “North Wales Business Academy” (NWBA); “Skills for employers and employees”; “Skills for industry 2”; and “Upskilling@work”. The projects cover **both programming areas**: West Wales and the Valleys (WWV) and East Wales (EW), except “Skills for industry 2” which covers only WWV.

They all address **Priority 2 “Skills for growth”** of the ESF programmes. The NWBA project addresses only Specific Objective 2 (SO2) of that priority (*to increase the number of people in the workforce with technical and job specific skills at an intermediate and higher level*). The other three projects address also SO1 (*to increase the skills levels including work relevant skills for those in the workforce with no or low skills*).

As the projects cover different areas and priorities they are split into 12 individual operations for a **total value of £56.4m** of which **ESF** (EU grant) is **£35.8m** (63% co-finance rate) and the match funding is £20.6m.

The **total value** of the projects in **WWV** is **£39.6m**, with a total **ESF** funding of **£27.6m** and the £11.9m remaining is match funding, which includes own resources from colleges as well as private sector co-investment). The average intervention rate is 70%. The **total value** of the project in **EW** is **£16.7m**, with a total **ESF** funding of **£8.1m**, and the remaining match funding of £8.6m. The average intervention rate is 48.4%.

The four projects specifically **target** people in employment, including the self-employed, the total target is just above **25k participants**, of which 70% in WWV and 30% in EW. The projects are addressed mainly (84%) to participants with qualifications up to Level 2; the remaining 15% are targeting participants that do not have any qualifications.

The projects’ main **objectives** are to enable **at least 20k participants to gain a qualification**, either at level 2 or level 3, which represents around **80% of the total participants**. The aim is to support the upskilling of the workforce in Wales, especially for those already in work, to help increasing productivity.

Table 5 - Targets and indicators ESF 2014-2020 projects led by colleges

	East Wales		West Wales & Valleys		Total	
	Participants	%	Participants	%	Participants	% of total
U	1,029	25.44%	3,016	74.56%	4,045	15.75%
Q	6,761	31.24%	14,881	68.76%	21,642	84.25%
Total	7,790	30.33%	17,897	69.67%	25,687	
U G	681	23.81%	2,179	76.19%	2,860	14.24%
Q G	5,611	32.56%	11,620	67.44%	17,231	85.76%
Total	6,292	31.32%	13,799	68.68%	20,091	78.21%

Data from WEFO, July 2016

U: Participants without qualification

Q: Participants with qualification

U G: Participants without formal qualification gaining a formal qualification on leaving the programme

Q G: Participants with qualification gaining a formal qualification on leaving the programme

Colleges as joint beneficiary (ESF)

There are **three** other ESF projects relevant to colleges that are led by local authorities and involve **11 colleges** as “**joint beneficiaries**” (i.e. project partner) having partial responsibility in the implementation and delivery of the projects. The projects are:

- Cynnydd, led by Pembrokeshire and Powys councils in West and East Wales respectively. The five colleges involved are Pembrokeshire College, Coleg Sir Gâr, Coleg Ceredigion, Gower College Swansea, NPTC Group.

- Inspire2Achieve, led by Blaenau Gwent and Newport councils in West and East Wales respectively. The four colleges involved are Coleg Gwent, Cardiff and the Vale College, The College Merthyr Tydfil, and Coleg y Cymoedd.

- Trac 11-24, which operates in East and West Wales area and is led by Denbighshire council with the involvement of Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and Coleg Cambria.

The **total value** of these projects is **£64.8m** of which **ESF** is **£43.3m** and the remaining match funding of £21.5m. The average intervention rate is 61.4%.

The **total value** of the projects in **WWV** is **£55.1m**, with a total **ESF** funding of **£38.8m** and the £16.3m remaining is match funding. The average intervention rate is 70% approx.

The **total value** of the project in **EW** is **£9.7m**, with a total **ESF** funding of **£4.4m**, and the remaining match funding of £5.3m. The average intervention rate is 46% approx.

Colleges as delivery organisation (ESF)

So far only Pembrokeshire college has been involved as “approved beneficiary delivery organisation”, a sort of contracting approach, on the WCVA led project “Active Inclusion”, which addresses Priority 1 “Tackling poverty through sustainable employment”. The college has two operations ongoing: “Get going” and “Stepping out”, for a total of £49k.

There are a number of other ESF operations relevant to colleges that are led by the Welsh Government ¹ where colleges could be involved as “**delivery organisations**” which is similar to a

¹ From Welsh Government webpages on apprenticeship: “As apprenticeships are work-based training programmes, most of the training is ‘on the job’ at the employer’s premises. However, the rest will be provided by the employer’s training partner, whether they are a local college or a specialist learning provider.” <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/apprenticeships/providers/?lang=en>

contractor role, i.e. funded only for the outputs delivered. The projects, that operate across WWV and EW, are: “Apprenticeships”, “Apprenticeships Skills Enhancement Programme I”, and “Traineeships”. The **total funding** for these projects is in excess of **£370m**, of which **ESF** is over **£140m**. The detailed information on the level of involvement of colleges and other delivery organisations is not yet available, therefore the project values are not included in the overall financial analysis of this report.

Pipeline of ESF projects under development

Colleges are still developing new projects to be delivered in this programming period. One of them is “Trac 16-24 NEET”, being developed by Grŵp Llandrillo Menai. The project is a multi-agency partnership to support engagement of 16-24 year old NEETs. The estimated amount of the project is unknown yet.

5. Erasmus+

A total of **six colleges** have participated directly in Erasmus+, Key Action 1 for learners: Coleg Cambria, Coleg Gwent, Coleg Sir Gâr, Gower College Swansea, Grŵp Llandrillo-Menai, and The College Merthyr Tydfil. The **total amount** of funding accessed is €2,451,552.50 (approximately **£2m**).

ColegauCymru (CC) has also facilitated the participation of colleges in Erasmus+ coordinating **five consortium applications involving 12 colleges** in total. Since the launch of the programme in 2014 CC has been able to access a total of € 774,445.00 (approx. **£600k**); this includes **three** staff mobility projects under Key Action 1 which involved **55** members of **staff** and **two** mobility projects for **learners** that involved **307 participants**.

The table below provides a summary of the number of participants and project values of the consortium bids led by ColegauCymru. It includes information on LLP of the previous programming period, for an easy comparison.²

Table 6 - ColegauCymru mobility programmes consortium applications

	Number of participants			Project values (€)		
	Erasmus +	LLP	Totals	E+	LLP	Total
Learners						
2011		30			€ 93,230.00	
2012		63			€ 216,595.60	
2013		47			€ 155,814.46	
2015	92			€ 221,574.00		
2016	215			€ 481,056.00		
Learners Total	307	140	447	€ 702,630.00	€ 465,640.06	€ 1,168,270.06
Staff						
2014	18			€ 23,850.00		
2015	15			€ 18,375.00		
2016	22			€ 29,590.00		
Staff Total	55			€ 71,815.00		
Grand Total	362	140	502	€ 774,445.00	€ 465,640.06	€ 1,240,085.06

² ColegauCymru applied for Erasmus+ funding for learners in 2014 it was but not awarded due to interpretation of eligibility issues at UK level that have affected a number of applications that year.

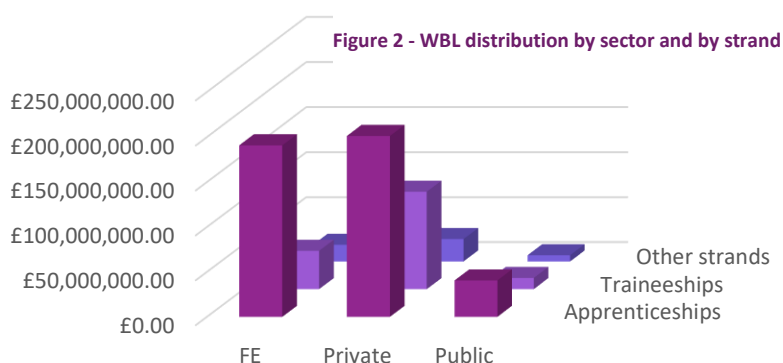
2007-2013 PROGRAMMING PERIOD

6. Work Based Learning programme (WBL) (2011-2015)

Welsh Government sponsored the **WBL**³ programme, during the previous period. The data available enables a comparative analysis of the rounds operating between August 2011 and April 2016⁴. Some elements of WBL received **ESF** funding, the match funding was provided by Welsh Government.

The WBL programme that ran from August 2011 to April 2016 had five yearly rounds, normally from August to July of the next year. Each round had four strands, the two main ones that were always funded were “Apprenticeships” and “Traineeships”. The other strands changed over the years and included “Bespoke training”, “Steps to employment”, “Work ready” and “Essential skills in the community”.

Over the five rounds considered the **total amount of WBL** funding distributed was **£646.5m**, of which **colleges** accessed just over **£252m**. There were 27 delivery organisations in total, 15 from the private sector, 9 colleges and 3 from local government. The implementation was done through consortia as well as through individual organisations.



Colleges have accessed almost **39% of the total WBL** funding, considering they constitute a third of the contractors it represents a proportionally slightly higher amount than the proportion of delivery organisations.

With their WBL funding allocation, colleges have delivered around 76%, (i.e. approx. £190m) of apprenticeships and 17% (£42m) of traineeships. They were respectively the highest and the second highest share per sector.

Table 7 - WBL: Amounts	Apprenticeship	Traineeship	Other strands	Total
FE	£190,816,199.20	£42,720,488.53	£18,491,237.53	£252,027,925.26
Private	£201,222,538.66	£108,479,156.87	£24,936,410.84	£334,638,106.37
Public	£40,535,954.53	£12,418,634.87	£6,933,003.20	£59,887,592.60
Total	£432,574,692.39	£163,618,280.27	£50,360,651.57	£646,553,624.23
Table 8 - WBL: Percentages				Share of WBL
FE	75.71%	16.95%	7.34%	38.98%
Private	60.13%	32.42%	7.45%	51.76%
Public	67.69%	20.74%	11.58%	9.26%
Total	66.90%	25.31%	7.79%	

³ From the Learning and Skills Observatory (LSO) for Wales: “Work-based learning - Learning delivered by a university, college or other training provider in the workplace, normally under the supervision of a person from the same company as well as a professional teacher from outside the company.” <http://www.learningobservatory.com/imi-gloss-i-z/#imi-w>

⁴ In the previous WBL Programme (2007-11), the Welsh Government held contracts with 64 providers, with a minimum contract value of £99,000 (Source: “Evaluation of Work-Based Learning Programme 2011-14: Apprenticeships” WG social research number: 30/2016)

7. Structural Funds⁵

The **total amount** of Structural Funds the colleges have accessed is **£214.9m**, which includes ESF and ERDF funding under both West Wales and the Valleys and East Wales programmes, as well as the “Ireland Wales” programme (Interreg 4A). This amount however does not include the ESF elements of the WBL programmes. The majority of the Structural Funds (67%) was accessed under the ESF programmes.

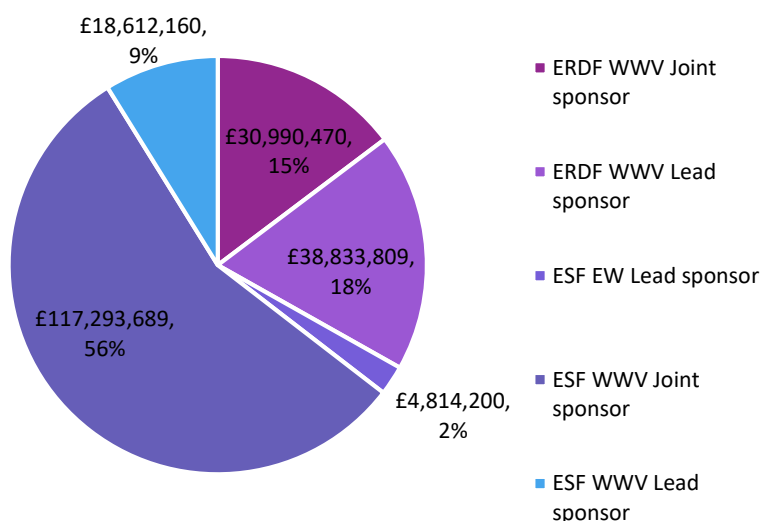


Figure 3 - Structural Funds 2007-2013, uptake by programme

7.1. European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

There have been two main ERDF projects involving colleges that have led to the building of two new campuses. The combined amount of the two project is of the projects is around £69m, with an EU grant of around £14m, which demonstrates how ERDF capital building had a much lower intervention rate than generally ESF projects had.

The project led by the then Coleg Morgannwg (now part of Coleg y Cymoedd) was the capital investment for a new college building in Nantgarw which has created capacity for around 2.5k students. The **total amount** was **£38.7m**, of which the **ERDF (WWV)** amount was **£6.7m** (intervention rate 17.38%) and the **match funding** was **£32m**.

The “Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone” project delivered the construction of the new college building with capacity for over 2k students. The project was led by Blaenau Gwent Council and Gwent College was the joint and main beneficiary. The **total amount** was **£30.9m** of which the **ERDF** amount was **£7.2m** (25.4%) and the **match funding** of **£23.7m**.

Pembrokeshire College was also involved as joint sponsor in the “Low Carbon Research Institute (LCRI)”, led by Cardiff University. But as the college involvement was around only 1% of the approx. £30m of the total project value, it is not included in this statistic.

7.2. European Social Fund (ESF)

Colleges have been very active on ESF **leading four projects** and being **joint sponsor in 11** other projects, for a combined **project value of over £120m** of which around **£93m of EU grant**. Colleges have also participated in projects led by other colleges, the financial information is included in the analysis. Finally, colleges have been involved as delivery organisations on a number of projects that

⁵ Source WEFO database (<http://gov.wales/funding/eu-funds/previous/searchprojects1/?lang=en>)

have tendered for the delivery, such as Essential Skills in the Workplace; however, it has not been possible to include the detail of the financial involvement as it is not available at this point.

Colleges as lead sponsor (ESF)

Four colleges have led **four ESF** projects for a total of **£23.4m**, of which the **ESF** amount was **£13.2m** (56% average intervention rate) and the remaining **match funding was £10.2m**.

Three projects were in **WWV**: “Y dyfodol”, “Skills for Industry”, and “Energy Sector Skills”. They were led respectively by Coleg Llandrillo Cymru, Gower College Swansea, and Pembrokeshire College. The **total amount** was **£18.6m** of which the **ESF** amount was **£11.2m** (60% intervention rate on average) with the remaining £7.3m of match funding.

One project was in **EW**: “Skills for the Workforce”, led by Deeside College (now Cambria). The **total amount** was **£4.8m** of which the **ESF** amount was **£1.9m** (39.9%) with a total **match funding of £2.8m**.

In terms of performance these projects targeted over 16k participants and overachieved at 113%, attracting over 18k participants. The projects aimed at ensuring that 12.9k participants gained a qualification. Again the performance was very good as 12.6k participants (98%) did finish with a qualification.

Colleges as joint sponsor (ESF)

There were **11 projects** led by local authorities and other organisations, in which colleges were a “joint sponsor” (i.e. project partner). These covered only **WWV** and the total amount was **£117.2m**, of which EU funding was **£65.7m** and the **match funding £51.5m**.

In terms of priorities, **five** projects addressed **P1** (young people and skills): “Amlwch Skills 16 plus”, “Building the future together”, “Engage”, “Potensial”, and “Regional SEN”. **One** project, “Bridges into Work”, addressed **P2** (employment and economic inactivity). **Three** projects addressed **P3** (skills): “Foundation Degrees”, “Regional Essential Skills”, and “Working skills for adults”. **Two** projects addressed **P4** (modernising the public sector): “Gwynedd and Anglesey Learning Partnership”, “Regional Learning Partnership, South West Wales”.

In terms of targets and achievements the projects targeted over 93k participants, of which 16k were targeted by projects led by colleges. All the 11 projects exceed this target. The projects led by colleges had the ambitious target of 75% of participants gaining a qualification and achieved a 93% of that target. The project led by other organisations aimed at around half of their participants gaining a qualification, and achieved just 101% of the target. This demonstrates how the FE led projects had more realistic and ambitious targets and were able to deliver well on them.

Table 9 - 2007-2013 ESF projects involving colleges

College role	Participants (Target)	Participants (Achieved)	% difference	P. gaining qualifications (Target)	P. gaining qualifications (Achieved)	% difference
Joint sponsor	77,903	79,472	102.0%	38,440	38,934	101.29%
Lead sponsor	16,081	18,238	113.4%	12,907	12,636	97.90%
% as lead	17.11%	18.67%		25.14%	24.50%	
Total	93,984	97,710	103.9%	51,347	51,570	100.43%

8. Ireland Wales 2007-2013

This is the cross-border programme (Interreg 4A Cross border programme*) that covered West Wales and the Valleys and parts of the southern and eastern regions of the Republic of Ireland. **Three colleges** (Coleg Menai, Gower College Swansea, and Pembrokeshire college) have been involved in **three projects**: Vision, mCommunity, and Rising tide.

Pembrokeshire College participated in “Rising Tide” and led mCommunity, in which Gower College Swansea participated as well. Coleg Menai led “Vision”. The total number of partners was 8, including Pembrokeshire participating in two projects.

The three projects were about: **innovation** (3D design), **NEET** engagement, and **vocational training programmes** for marginalised members of the community.

The **total funding** for the three projects was **€5.2m** (£4.3m approx.) with a total amount of **ERDF of €3.8m** (£3.2m approx.), of which the **college share was €2.4m** (£2m approx.). Their own resources (match funding) were at €659k, which drew down **€1.7m of ERDF** (£1.4m approx.), i.e. an intervention rate of 73%, which is in line with programme’s rates. The programme operated in euros, the indicative exchange rate used is of £1=€1.2.

9. Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP)

ColegauCymru and almost all colleges have participated in the LLP (2007 to 2013), covering three of the five main strands. The **total** amount of funding accessed over the various strands was **over £3.6m** with **87 projects** in total. The majority of the funding, **£3m**, were accessed under the “**Leonardo da Vinci**” strand with **53 projects**. The “**Grundtvig**” strand was over £240k with 3 projects. The **transversal** study visits strand was around **£20k** with 7 projects.

ColegauCymru co-ordinated and managed **3 projects for learners** and one preparatory visit. The projects involved 447 students. The project value was just over £500k.

For further information see “Table 6 - ColegauCymru mobility programmes consortium applications” on page 12.

Table 10 - LLP summary by strand

Strand and action	Grant awarded	Number of projects
Grundtvig		
Grundtvig IST	€ 5,973	3
Grundtvig Partnerships	€ 251,000	13
Grundtvig Preparatory Visits	€ 2,400	2
Grundtvig Total	€ 259,373	18
Leonardo		
Leonardo Mobility - IVT	€ 2,769,129	31
Leonardo Mobility - VETPRO	€ 17,500	1
Leonardo Partnerships	€ 324,000	15
Leonardo Preparatory Visits	€ 4,962	5
Leonardo Transfer of Innovation	€ 298,584	1
Leonardo Total	€ 3,414,175	53
Transversal		
Transversal Study Visits (Host)	€ 2,000	1
Transversal Study Visits (Participants)	€ 20,837	15
Transversal Total	€ 22,837	16
Grand Total	€ 3,696,385	87

GLOSSARY

Erasmus+	Mobility programme for 2014-2020 (E+)
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds. Equivalent to the Structural Funds but in 2014-2020 terminology. They include also the Rural Development Plan, the European Fishery Fund and the Cohesion Fund.
EW	East Wales programming area for the Structural Funds and ESIF
FEIs	Further Education Institutions
Interreg	Generic name for the European Territorial Cooperation programmes funded by ERDF
Ireland Wales	Interreg cross border programme that covers West Wales and part of the republic of Ireland, which operated in both programming periods
LLP	Lifelong Learning Programme. The EU mobility programme for 2007-2013
SF	Structural Funds, ERDF and ESF especially 2007-2013 terminology
WBL	Work Based Learning
WWV	West Wales and the Valley programming area for the Structural Funds and ESIF

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