

ISEC/21/81

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£387,737 FROM SOCIAL FUND FOR UK EMPLOYMENT SCHEMES

SECOND ALLOCATION FOR 1981

The European Commission has announced the second allocation of the 1981 Social Fund grants for the UK totalling £387,737. Money from the Fund is used to assist vocational training, retraining and resettlement schemes in the member states of the Community, with special emphasis on helping the unemployed.

Because the Fund has been oversubscribed this year, the Commission was unable in the first allocation to make decisions on applications for schemes to assist women and migrant workers. This second tranche of the year, therefore, is specifically concerned with a number of such schemes. A further allocation will be announced later in the year.

How the Social Fund works

In order to be eligible for assistance from the Social Fund, a training scheme must have financial support from a public authority. For schemes run by public authorities themselves, the Commission will meet up to half the cost of the project, while for schemes run by private organisations, the Commission may match public authority support.

Grants are made under Article 4 and 5 of the Social Fund.

Article 4

Under this Article, the Fund can assist with training or retraining of particular groups of workers: people leaving agriculture, leaving the textile industry, or acquiring new skills in that area; migrant workers moving between member states or from third countries; young people under 25 years of age looking for their first job; or women over the age of 25 who are unemployed or seeking a return to work after having a family.

Article 5

Under this Article, the Fund can help workers in regions of the Community where unemployment is particularly serious, such as Northern Ireland ('first priority regions'). For the UK, priority is also given to Scotland, Northern England and North-West England. Grants are also given for training or retraining required as a result of technical progress; to help workers who are the victims of changes in particular industries which lead to altered labour needs; and to rehabilitate and train the disabled to compete on the open labour market.

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In the UK, most application for assistance from the Fund are submitted by the Department of Employment which has received support for the Youth Opportunities Programme, the Training Opportunities Programme (TOPS) and various other projects to help the disabled, workers facing redundancy etc. Grants are also requested by other public bodies, such as the Industrial Training Boards and nationalised industries, and increasingly from private companies and voluntary bodies, involved in such schemes as training fishermen to cope with new equipment and safety requirements, and training print workers in the use of new technology in order to preserve jobs.

Details of individual grants in the latest allocation are listed below. These are for one year unless otherwise stated.

Women (Article 4)

A series of training schemes to encourage the employment of women over 25 years of age who are either returning to work after a long break or have lost their employment. The schemes include vocational training measures together with preparation for working life. The training is specifically designed for occupations in types of employment where women are under-represented.

1. A group of training courses for 80 women at a number of Skillcentres.
Manpower Services Commission, Training Services Division (TSD) £224,522
2. Training for skills in carpentry for 48 women.
Lambeth Women's Workshop, Park Hall Trading Estate,
London, SE21 £ 20,724
3. New opportunities for women courses, followed by accountancy
foundation courses for 20 women. Hatfield Polytechnic £ 51,000
4. Training for 36 women as light vehicle drivers.
Bradford College, Yorkshire £ 14,565
5. A six month pretraining course for 30 women.
Chelmer Institute of Higher Education, Chelmsford, Essex £ 2,826

Migrants (Article 4)

1. Training at the National Centre for Industrial Language Training,
Southall, Middlesex for 100 instructors in language training, to
assist the integration of migrant workers into their new social
and working environment. Manpower Services Commission (TSD) £ 46,500
2. A two year English language training scheme for 180 adult
Vietnamese refugees to enable them to find employment and to
integrate into their local community.
City of Bradford Metropolitan Council £ 21,000
3. English language 'in company' training for 30 migrant workers
threatened with redundancy.
City of Bradford Metropolitan Council £ 6,600

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