

1957 – 2017

60 Years of Investing in people

2017	Every year, the ESF helps more than 10 million people improve their lives by learning new skills and finding jobs.
2014	Alignment to Europe 2020 strategy, better focus on results and simplification. Minimum share for ESF funding and at least 20% of the Fund goes to social inclusion. Start of the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI).
2004	ESF programmes start to support new Member States
1999	Reform of EU's Structural Funds as a whole - includes combating all forms of discrimination and inequalities in the labour market. ESF focuses on five priority areas
1997	European Employment Strategy introduced as reaction to high unemployment of 1990s
1994	ESF opens to all groups and sectors
1992	Maastricht Treaty modernises ESF with the aim of facilitating workers' adaptation to industrial change and to changes in production systems, in particular through vocational training and retraining
1988	More resources are targeted on poorer regions and more focus on longer-term planning
1983	Minimum of 75% of funding goes to those under 25 years
1982	Young people account for nearly half of ESF beneficiaries
1977	Focus on poorer regions and specific social groups
1972	ESF opens up to agriculture and textile sectors
1971	Specific sectors and categories of people are targeted
1957	Creation of the European Social Fund to improve employment opportunities for workers. The aim is to raise the standard of living as well as to increase geographical and occupational mobility within the Community

