



FIRST IMPLEMENTATION REPORT ON THE TALK TALK EGF PROGRAMME

prepared for

**EGF Managing Authority
Department of Education and Skills**

by the

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1 Introduction

This report is the first implementation report on the Talk Talk EGF Programme. It covers an 18 month period beginning on the 7th September - the date on which interventions commenced - and ending on the 28th February 2013. Following a brief description of the Programme in this introductory section, subsequent sections:

- provide information on the cohort of eligible workers (Section 2),
- examine the performance of the Programme in terms of the number of workers benefiting from the interventions supported by the Programme and their level of satisfaction with how the Programme is being implemented (Section 3);
- present an interim assessment of the outcomes being achieved by the Programme (Section 4);
- provide a profile of the beneficiaries of Programme interventions (Section 5); and,
- assess the outcomes being achieved by beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries (Section 6).

The final section draws out a number of conclusions regarding the implementation of the Talk Talk EGF Programme to date.

1.1 The Talk Talk EGF Programme

The Talk Talk EGF Programme provides for a range of active labour market interventions for 584 workers made redundant by Talk Talk and supplier companies during the four month reference period between the 8th October 2011 and the 8th February 2012. An outline chronology of the Talk Talk EGF Programme is presented in Table 1.

In summary, following consultation with representatives of the redundant workers and service providers during late 2011, the EGF Managing Authority in the Department of Education and Skills submitted an application on the 29th February 2012 for EU co-financing under the EGF to support the redundant workers. The application totalled €5.4 million with 50% to be provided by the EGF. Following its assessment and approval by the EU Commission a proposal for decision by the European Parliament and Council was prepared by the EU Commission on the 27th July 2012. Following approval by the EU Parliament and Council on the 25th October and the subsequent EU Financial Decision (13th November) financial support for the Talk Talk EGF Programme was received on 12th December 2012.

The Talk Talk EGF programme will run for 24 months, ending on the 28th February 2014.

Table 1
Outline Chronology of the Implementation of the Talk Talk EGF Programme

2011	
September	Talk Talk Issues Redundancy Notice (September 7 th) CCMA Organises Jobs Fair for Workers FÁS Employment Service Personnel Commence Meeting Workers on Individual and Group Basis
October	Talk Talk Workers Made Redundant (7 th October) Waterford Chamber Skillnet (WCS) and Contact Centre Management Association Skillnet (CCMAS) Commence Delivering Training Courses
November	Minister Cannon Hosts Meeting in Anticipation of Talk Talk EGF Application. Meeting attended by Service Providers and Talk Talk Workers Representatives (17 th November)
2012	
February	EGF Application Submitted to European Commission (29 th February) Tailored Career Development and Skills Enhancement Course Run by Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)
March	Notification of EGF Eligibility Letter Issued to Redundant Workers EGF Contact Unit Opened in Waterford
June	Accelerated BSc Course Commenced in WIT
July	EGF Application Approved by Commission (27 th July)
September	First Meeting of Talk Talk Consultative Forum
October	EU Parliament and Council Decision on EGF Application
December	EU Finance Committed to Talk Talk EGF Application (12 th December) Second Meeting of Talk Talk Consultative Forum
2013	
February	Information Day for Former Talk Talk Workers (5 th February)

The interventions being delivered to redundant workers under the Talk Talk EGF Programme include:

- employment services supports, guidance and career planning;
 - FÁS, Skillnets and VEC training courses;
 - EGF Training Grants for study in private colleges and training organisations;
 - Internships;
-

- enterprise supports through the County and City Enterprise Boards and,
- tailored and accelerated third level courses at WIT.

In addition, an EGF contribution scheme towards the expenses incurred in attending courses will assist eligible redundant workers in meeting some of the costs (e.g. travel, accommodation and course materials) in accessing guidance, training and education courses. This is the first time such a scheme has been developed and implemented in an EGF programme in Ireland.

The co-ordination of EGF services for the Talk Talk workers is being provided by the FÁS Co-ordination Unit which has worked previously on the EGF programmes for redundant Dell workers and construction workers.

2 The Cohort of Eligible Workers in the Talk Talk EGF Programme

The total number of EGF eligible workers in the Talk Talk EGF Programme is 584. The demographic and educational composition of the cohort is shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Profile of Eligible Workers in Talk Talk EGF Programme

	N	%
Gender		
Men	318	54.5
Women	266	45.5
Total	584	100.0
Age		
Under 25 Years	94	16.1
25 to 54 Years	473	81.0
55 Years and Over	17	2.9
Total	584	100.0
Education		
At Most Level 3	64	11.0
Levels 4 and 5	181	31.0
Level 6	48	8.2
Level 7 and Higher	81	13.8
Not Known	210	36.0
Total	584	100.0

In summary, in the EGF eligible cohort there is a slightly higher proportion of men (54.5%) than women (45.5%), the vast majority (i.e. 81.0%) are aged between 25 to 54 years of age, and there is a low proportion (i.e. 11.0%) of persons with at most lower second level educational qualifications.

3 Programme Implementation - Performance Indicators

3.1 Number of Beneficiaries and Interventions

To date (28th February), an estimated 372 of the cohort of 584 EGF eligible redundant workers have engaged with or sought information about the interventions being provided with EGF support. Of these, 364 have actually accessed at least one intervention, corresponding to 62.3% of the cohort of EGF eligible workers.

Table 3
Number of Beneficiaries and Interventions to End February 2013

	Beneficiaries	Interventions
Guidance and Career Planning	114	118
FAS Training Programmes	77	85
Skillnets Training Courses ^a	156	246
VEC Training Programmes	20	20
EGF Training Grant (FETAC) ^b	84	125
EGF Training Grant (HETAC) ^b	13	14
EGF Training Grant (Reimbursement) ^b	12	15
Second Level Allowances (BTEA)	14	14
Internships (JobBridge)	14	14
Third Level Courses	106	159
Third Level Allowances (BTEA)	49	49
Course Expenses Claims	132	311
Enterprise Supports (CEB)	45	45
Total	364	1,215

^a *Skillnets* is a state funded, enterprise-led support body dedicated to the promotion and facilitation of training and upskilling to support Ireland's national competitiveness. A Skillnets network (a 'Skillnet') is a group of companies that come together to carry out cross-organisational training and related activities which may not be possible on their own. Companies jointly address their training needs, collaborate with other enterprises, and engage experts, trainers, certifying bodies, industry bodies and others to work with them to achieve their goals. The two Skillnets involved in delivering training to Talk Talk redundant workers are the Waterford Chamber Skillnet (WCS) and the Contact Centre Management Association Skillnet (CCMAS). WCS focuses on the critical skills required to improve the performance of member companies. The aim of the network is to identify common training needs, deliver training locally using the highest calibre trainers, and dramatically reduce training costs through collaboration. The CCMAS aims to promote and give

recognition to the contact centre management profession; to actively promote continuous professional development of contact centre professionals; to provide a forum for knowledge sharing and networking across the industry. CCMAS offers a range of educational and development programmes for members.

^b EGF Training Grants pay fees for approved courses in private education and training companies. Approved courses lead to recognised qualifications that are relevant to pursuing employment in sectors where there are reasonable chances of getting a job or evidence of skills shortages. There are two types of approved courses: courses recognised and accredited by the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC); and, courses recognised and accredited by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC). The maximum EGF Training Grant in the case of courses accredited by FETAC is €3,000. In the case of courses accredited by HETAC the maximum grant is €5,000. In all cases the grant is made payable to the institute, college, or company providing the training course. EGF Training Grants may also be paid on a reimbursement basis where an eligible worker had attended an approved course prior to making an application for an EGF Training Grant.

Table 3 shows the number of workers accessing each of the interventions provided. Between September 7th 2011 and 28th February 2013 a total of 364 eligible workers accessed 1,215 discrete interventions. As EGF eligible workers can access more than one category of intervention and, also, can access more than one intervention within each category of intervention, the sum of EGF eligible workers over the 13 interventions does not equal 364. The figures provided for interventions are the actual number of interventions accessed by the 364 EGF eligible workers that accessed at least one intervention.

Table 3 shows that, based on the number of beneficiaries, the main categories of interventions that have been accessed are training courses provided by Skillnets (156) and third level courses (106).

WCS and CCMAS provided a range of courses during 2011 and 2012 that were accessed by 156 former Talk Talk workers. The later figure corresponds to 26.6% of the cohort of EGF eligible workers. Among the main courses provided by these organisations are:

- Building Your Business Brain/Start Your Own Business
 - Conflict Resolution / Management
 - Consultative Selling
 - Developing Effective Sales Processes
 - Marketing, Logistics and Social Media
 - MS Project 2003 Core / Intermediate
 - MS Excel 2003 - Intermediate
 - Sales & Client Relationship Management
 - Six Sigma - Green Belt
 - Supervisory Management eLearning Level 6
 - Train the Trainer.
-

A total of 106 EGF eligible workers have either completed or are undertaking a course in a third level institution (mainly in Waterford Institute of Technology). This corresponds to almost one in five (18.0%) of the cohort of EGF eligible workers and indicates the high level of interest in securing third level qualifications to enhance career prospects in current labour market circumstances. A wide variety of third level courses have been accessed but among the more popular of the courses are the following:

- Certificate in Career Development and Skills Enhancement
- Certificate in Oenology and Licensed Trade Beverages
- Bachelor of Science in Pharmaceutical Science and GMP
- Higher Diploma in Science in Computing.

Two of the above (i.e. the Certificate in Career Development and Skills Enhancement, the Bachelor of Science in Pharmaceutical Science and GMP) were developed specifically in response to the retraining needs of the redundant workers.

The number of EGF eligible workers that have accessed an EGF Training Grant for a FETAC accredited course is 84. This figure corresponds to 14.3% of the cohort of EGF eligible workers. Reflecting the flexibility of the EGF Training Grant the range of courses - at over 100 - that have been taken or are being completed by the 84 eligible workers is very broad. Smaller numbers of EGF eligible workers accessed either an EGF Training Grant (HETAC) or a Reimbursement Grant (13 and 12 respectively).

A total of 77 EGF eligible workers participated in FÁS provided courses and 20 participated in courses provided by the VEC. The former figure corresponds to 13.1% of the cohort of EGF eligible workers with the latter corresponding to 3.4%.

A total of 45 EGF eligible workers engaged with the Waterford City Enterprise Board. This proportion corresponds to 7.7% of the cohort of EGF eligible workers. To date, 12 of these have progressed to accessing supports in respect of establishing businesses / becoming self-employed.

All of the above interventions relate to actual individual participation in education or training courses. The other categories of intervention reported in Table 3 concern Guidance, Allowances, Internships and Course Expenses Claims. As presented, just under one in five (19.5%) of EGF eligible workers accessed guidance and career planning provided by FÁS Employment Services Personnel (now working in the DSP and who have been assigned responsibility for same). Just over one in ten (10.8%) EGF eligible workers were in receipt of either the

second or third level Back to Education Allowance administered by the DSP and 132 individuals made a total of 311 claims in respect of costs associated with their participation in education or training courses (e.g. computer equipment, software, course materials, travel and subsistence). At the end of February 2013, 14 EGF Eligible workers were on Internships provided under the JobBridge Programme being implemented by the DSP.

3.2 Satisfaction Levels with EGF Programme Implementation

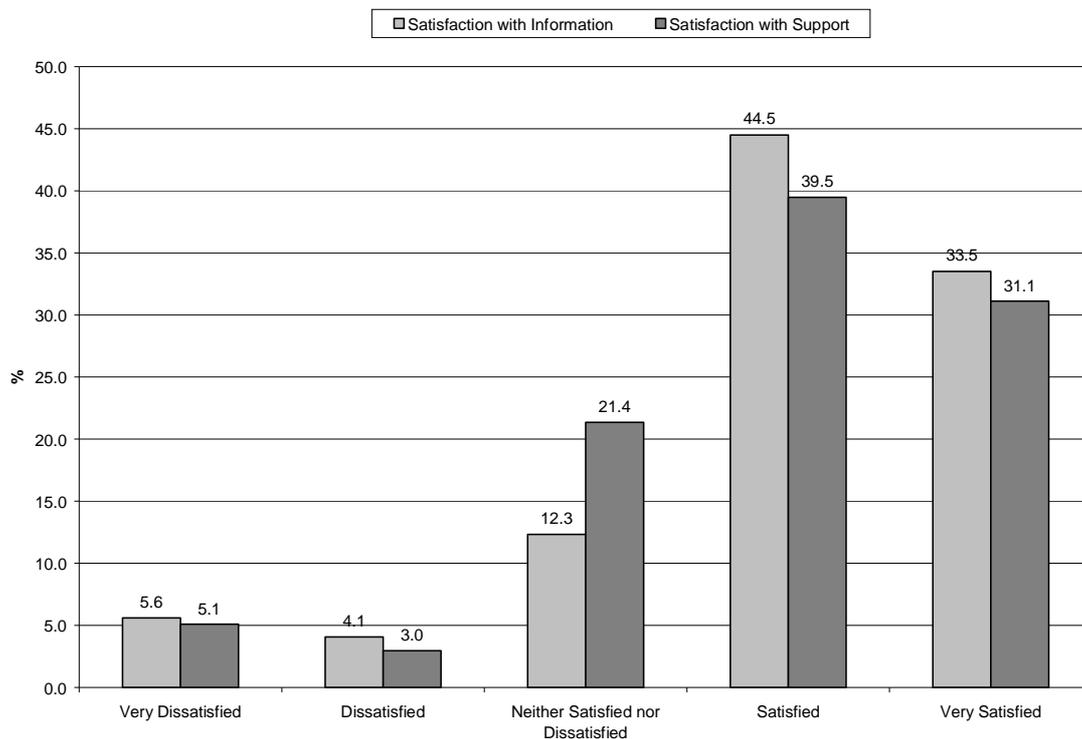


Figure 1 Levels of Satisfaction with the Information Provided about EGF Supports and with the Actual Level of Support Provided

Data on levels of satisfaction with programme implementation are provided by a survey of all 584 EGF eligible workers undertaken between the last week of January 2013 and the second week of February 2013. A total of 182 (31.2% of total surveyed) persons responded to the survey. The survey included two questions on satisfaction levels:

- *How satisfied are you with the information provided to you about supports from the EGF?*

- Overall, how satisfied are you with the support you received from the EGF to date?

The results of the survey are shown in Figure 1. They show that the majority are either satisfied or very satisfied with the information and support they received from the organisations implementing the EGF. Less than one in ten expressed some level of dissatisfaction. From the open-ended responses provided by some respondents the sources of dissatisfaction were related to aspects of the process of implementing the programme (e.g. completion of forms, time taken to process queries) rather than the content of the programme itself.

4 Indicators of Outcomes Being Achieved

On the 17th February 2012 - following the end of the four month reference period for the Talk Talk EGF Programme - 380 EGF eligible workers had an active claim with the DSP. Approximately one year later, on the 18th January 2013, this number had fallen to 277, corresponding to a decrease of 27.1%.

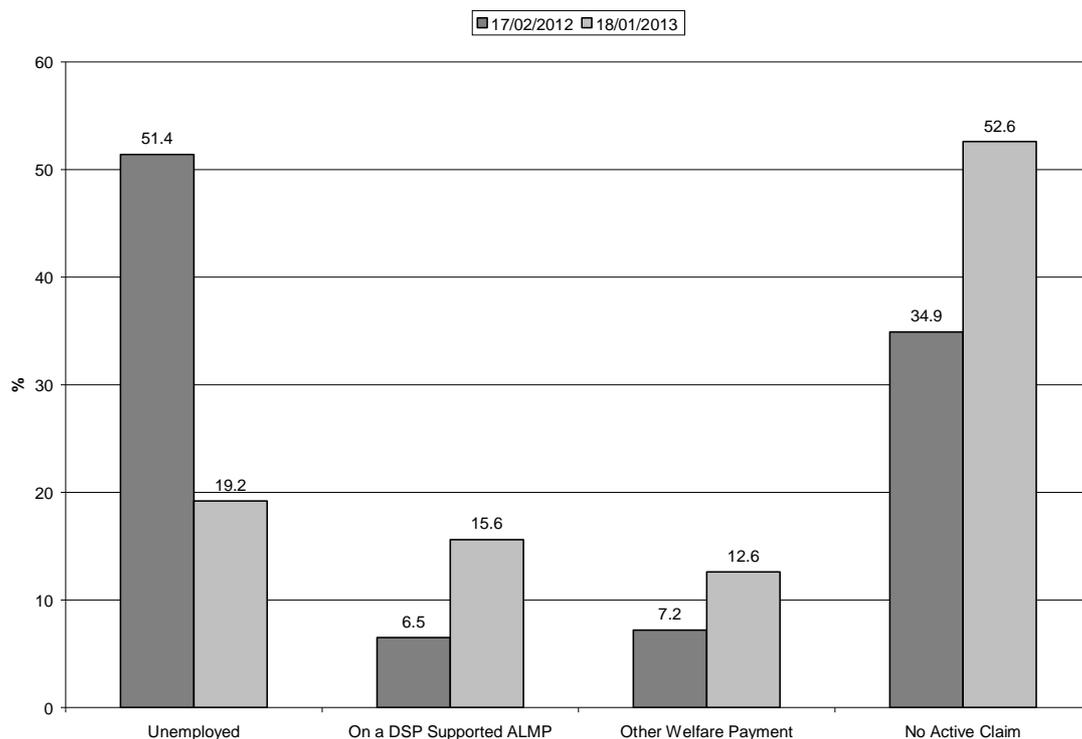


Figure 2 Change in the Welfare Status of the Cohort of EGF Eligible Workers between the 17th February 2012 and the 18th January 2013

Figure 1 summarises the overall changes in the welfare status of the cohort of EGF eligible workers. It shows that between the two selected dates the proportion in receipt of an unemployment related welfare payment (JA / JB) decreased from 51.4% to 19.2%. This decrease in the proportion in receipt of an unemployment related payment was accompanied by an increase in the proportion on a DSP supported active labour market programme (from 6.5% to 15.6%), an increase in the proportion receiving other welfare payments and credits (from 7.2% to 12.6%), and an increase in the proportion with no active welfare claim (from 34.9% to 52.6%).

Table 4
Welfare Status of EGF Eligible Workers on the 17th February 2012 and 18th January 2013

DSP Status 18-01-2013					
DSP Status 17-02-2012	Un-employed	On DSP Supported ALMP	Other	No Active Claim	Total
Unemployed	88	62	43	107	300
On DSP Supported ALMP	6	15	6	11	38
Other	3	7	16	16	42
No Active Claim	15	7	9	173	204
Total	112	91	74	307	584
%	19.2%	15.6%	12.6%	52.6%	100.0

A more detailed analysis of the welfare status of EGF eligible workers is presented in Table 4. It shows that, between the two dates examined, the number of EGF eligible workers in receipt of an unemployment related payment decreased from 300 to 112, corresponding to a decrease of 62.7%. Over the same period the number of EGF eligible workers participating in a DSP supported active labour market programme increased from 38 to 91, corresponding to an increase of 58.2%. The number of EGF eligible workers who had no active welfare claim increased from 206 on 17th February 2012 to 307 on 18th January 2013, corresponding to an increase of 49.0%. While the number of EGF eligible workers with no active welfare claim cannot be taken as corresponding to people actually being in employment, it does provide a basis for

estimating employment as 60% to 70% of such persons are likely to be in employment.¹

One further notable figure from Table 1 is that just 88 EGF eligible workers were in receipt of an unemployment related payment (JA / JB) on both dates. This corresponds to 15.1% of the EGF eligible cohort.

Table 5
Estimates of the Labour Market Status of EGF Eligible Talk Talk Workers
Based on Survey Data

	Survey Data February 2013	
	N	%
Employed	209	35.8
Unemployed	171	29.3
On an Active Labour Market Programme	158	27.1
Other	16	2.7
No Response	30	5.1
Total	584	100.0

Table 5 presents an estimate of the labour market status of the cohort of EGF eligible workers based on the January - February 2013 survey results. The proportion in employment is estimated to be 35.8%. The proportion unemployed is estimated to be 29.3%. The proportion participating in an active labour market programme is estimated to be 27.1% and 2.7% are not in the labour force (at home, not able to work due to illness).

To assess the accuracy of the survey estimates a number of checks against other data sources were made. First, in respect of the number estimated to be unemployed (i.e. 171): this figure is somewhat below the sum of the DSP figures for persons in receipt of an unemployment related welfare claim (i.e. 112) and persons in receipt of other welfare payments or credits (i.e. 74), that is 186. Second, based on the finish dates for persons on a training course or attending a third level college, it is estimated that approximately 140 were actually participating in training or education at the time of the survey. That figure, plus the 14 people known to be on internships at the time of the survey, sums to 154 - a figure very similar to the survey estimate of the number on active labour market

¹ Checks on two random samples of workers in the DELL and SR Technics EGF Programmes using both DSP data and Revenue data showed that in both cases 66.7% of cases with no active welfare claim were found to be in employment based on Revenue data.

programmes (i.e. 158). Third, the number estimated to be in employment (i.e. 209) is 68.1% of the total with no active welfare claim in the DSP figures. This is in line with estimates of the proportion of persons with no active welfare claim who are likely to be in employment as noted in footnote 1.

5 Profile of Beneficiaries and Non-Beneficiaries

At the end of February 2013 the total number of EGF eligible workers that either had been on or were currently beneficiaries of one of the interventions being supported by the Talk Talk EGF Programme is 364. Table 6 presents a profile of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

Table 6
Profile of Beneficiaries and Non-Beneficiaries

	Non-Beneficiaries		Beneficiaries	
	N	%	N	%
Gender				
Men	125	56.8	193	53.0
Women	95	43.2	171	47.0
Total	220	100.0	364	100.0
Age				
Under 25 Years	30	13.6	64	17.6
25 to 54 Years	182	82.7	291	79.9
55 Years and Over	8	3.6	9	2.5
Total	220	100.0	364	100.0
Education				
At Most Level 3	21	9.5	43	11.8
Levels 4 and 5	62	28.2	119	32.7
Level 6	14	6.4	34	9.3
Level 7 and Higher	16	7.3	65	17.9
Not Known	107	48.6	103	28.3
Total	220	100.0	364	100.0

Overall, the gender and age profile of beneficiaries is similar to that of non-beneficiaries. The most notable difference between the two groups is the higher proportion of beneficiaries than non-beneficiaries with at least degree level qualifications (17.9% and 7.3% respectively). This difference remains (i.e. 24.9%

and 14.2% respectively) when the calculations exclude persons whose educational qualifications are not known.

6 Outcomes among Beneficiaries and Non-Beneficiaries

Two indicators of labour market outcomes are available to assess the impact of the interventions being supported by the Talk Talk EGF Programme. The first is based on the welfare status of the EGF eligible cohort on the 18th January 2013. The data for this indicator were provided by the DSP. The second is a survey based estimate of the labour market status of the EGF eligible cohort at mid-February 2013. Data for the latter were provided by a survey of all EGF eligible workers undertaken during the last week of January and the first two weeks of February 2013. A total of 182 persons responded to the survey corresponding to a response rate of 31.2%.

Table 7
Indicators of Labour Market Outcomes among Beneficiaries and Non-Beneficiaries

	Non-Beneficiaries		Beneficiaries	
	N	%	N	%
Not Listed (No Active Welfare Claim)	146	66.4	161	44.2
On a DSP Supported ALMP	2	0.9	89	24.5
Unemployed	41	18.6	71	19.5
Other	31	14.1	43	11.8
Total	220	100.0	364	100.0
Employed (Survey Estimate)	86	39.1	123	33.8
Unemployed (Survey Estimate)	86	39.1	85	23.4
On an ALMP (Survey Estimate)	25	11.3	133	36.5
Not in Labour Force (Survey Estimate)	16	7.3	0	0.0
No Response / Not Known	7	3.2	23	6.3
Total	220	100.0	364	100.0

Based on their welfare status, a higher proportion of beneficiaries (24.5%) than non-beneficiaries (0.9%) are on an active labour market programme (ALMP) supported by the DSP. The majority of these beneficiaries are on the Back to Education Allowance (Third Level Option). The presence of a small number of non-beneficiaries who are on a DSP supported ALMP is due to a small number of people participating in programmes, such as the Part-Time Education Option,

that are not within the package of interventions supported by the EGF. The other main difference between the outcomes observed among beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries based on the welfare data is that, at 66.4%, the proportion of non-beneficiaries who do not have an active welfare claim is considerably higher than that among beneficiaries (i.e. 44.2%). As noted above, it is reasonable to assume that the majority of such persons are actually in employment. On that basis, a higher proportion of non-beneficiaries than beneficiaries are estimated to be in employment.

From the survey data it is clear that the proportion of non-beneficiaries in employment, at 39.1%, is slightly higher than that found among beneficiaries (i.e. 33.8%). As would be expected the proportion of beneficiaries who are on an active labour market programme is considerably higher among beneficiaries than non-beneficiaries (36.5% and 11.3% respectively).

Using the survey based indicator of labour market status the proportion of non-beneficiaries who are unemployed, at 39.1%, is almost double that found among beneficiaries (i.e. 23.4%). The former figure is considerably higher than that based on welfare data and is likely to reflect the loss of entitlement among a proportion of non-beneficiaries and consequently their being identified as not having an active welfare claim in the DSP database.

Taken together, the findings indicate that the main differences between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries are the higher proportion of the former on ALMPs and the higher proportion of the latter in the labour market (both employed and unemployed).

7 Conclusions

The data presented in this report cover the period to the end of February 2013 which is just past the midway point in the implementation of the Talk Talk EGF Programme. The Programme ends on the 28th February 2014.

The data on programme performance show that an estimated 372 of the cohort of 584 EGF eligible redundant workers have engaged with or sought information about the interventions being provided with EGF support. Of these, 364 have actually accessed at least one intervention, corresponding to 62.3% of the cohort of EGF eligible workers. These 364 EGF eligible workers have accessed a total of 1,215 discrete interventions.

The analysis of the interventions accessed shows the predominance of training and education programmes with a very substantial proportion (18.1%) of the EGF

eligible cohort having completed or are currently completing third level courses mainly provided by Waterford Institute of Technology. The data also show that the availability of EGF Training Grants has enabled EGF eligible workers to access a very wide range of courses that have been individually chosen.

Reflecting the level of participation in EGF supported interventions, levels of satisfaction with programme implementation are high. Conversely, fewer than one in ten expressed dissatisfaction with programme implementation.

At this point it is not possible to assess the full labour market impact of the EGF supported interventions. However, data from the DSP and survey data indicate that there has been a substantial decrease in the number of persons in receipt of a welfare payment over the course of Talk Talk EGF Programme to date. For example, on the 17th February 2012 - following the end of the four month reference period for the Talk Talk EGF Programme - 380 EGF eligible workers had an active claim with the DSP. Approximately one year later, on the 18th January 2013, this number had fallen to 277, corresponding to a decrease of 27.1%. Also, between the two dates examined, the number of EGF eligible workers in receipt of an unemployment related payment (JA or JB) decreased from 300 to 112, corresponding to a decrease of 62.7%. Based on the survey results, the proportion in employment is estimated to be 35.8%. The proportion unemployed is estimated to be 29.3%. The proportion participating in an active labour market programme is estimated to be 27.1% and 2.7% are not in the labour force (at home, not able to work due to illness).

With the exception of the higher proportion of beneficiaries (17.9%) than non-beneficiaries (7.3%) who have third level qualifications, the demographic profile of beneficiaries is similar to that of non-beneficiaries. Overall, the main difference in the labour market status of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries is the higher proportion of the former on active labour market programmes and the higher proportion of the latter in the labour market (both employed and unemployed).
