

BME Employment & Tackling Economic Inactivity
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This is an ESF funded project covering Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taff & Torfaen.

The aim of the project is to identify people of working age from BME communities and assist them to access employment or become more employable.

Since the project began in May 2009 the officers have been working closely with organisations that have access the minority communities across the six boroughs.

They have been networking with employers and organisations geared towards employment to set up referral systems, promote the project and identify opportunities to access job vacancies.

Several participants have received help so far with the following:

- CV Writing
- Completing Application Forms
- Job Search
- Interview Techniques

They are currently running free ESOL classes in Merthyr with free childcare attach to help remove barriers to access for parents. ESOL classes are oversubscribed in Merthyr so many individuals remain isolated until they can overcome language barriers. The ESOL classes have been running since August 2009 and have around 15 participants benefiting from this service. The Officers hope to duplicate this service in RCT then across the other boroughs in due course.

Other support the project provides includes:

- Help to set up a Social Enterprise
- Support to become Self Employed
- Support to convert overseas qualifications
- Help to gain new qualifications to access the labour market
- Support individuals into accessing training & vacancies within Social Care

Although the ultimate aim of the project is assist individuals to access employment the project envisages that participants will improve their social network, improve their confidence and motivation and become less isolated.