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From: eproudf@langside.ac.uk
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Future European Structural Funds Programmes in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland 2007-2013**RESPONDENT INFORMATION DETAILS**

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Questions and Answers

Question 1: Are there any additional socio-economic factors to be considered – and which Structural Funds can address – in assessing the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?

· Given the reduced funds for the new programme, more store should have been placed on the reported output of the 2000-06 programme & the impact that this information might have had on the new priorities & their related activities in the new programme · The OP has only partial coverage of the priority issues in the Scottish economy that would have been relevant to the new programme · A more fulsome focus on competitiveness & the means to enhance the Scottish dimension of this, at the level of the individual furthest from the job market, would have been worthwhile for both ESF & ERDF · ERDF is to address productivity in the Scottish economy but the means by which the 3

	<p>priorities will achieve this are unclear. The absence of ICT (currently a major deficit in SW Scotland) & its evidenced role in enhancing productivity & in the advancement of knowledge economy is a major concern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · ESF is to target employability but the OP gives scant mention of the role of IT skills development. For the hardest to reach groups targeted, e skills development has a vital role in achieving job readiness and also enhancing productivity
<p>Question 2: Do the proposed priorities for the 2007-2013 ERDF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland address the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of the region?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · In so far as the answer is limited by the scope of the socio-economic analysis, the priorities are addressed. · Exclusion of ICT skills & technologies & e business & their links to competitiveness, employability & productivity is a concern
<p>Question 3: Do the proposed priorities for the 2007-2013 ERDF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland show appropriate coherence and concentration?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Priorities 1 and 2 display elements of complementarity and coherence · Priority 3's undue focus on 'rurality' will marginalise more deserving urban, semi-urban areas. Special targeting for the West/South NUTS area is vital & should be prioritised to the exclusion of more prosperous areas · Designation of Sustainability as a discrete Priority is proposed · Greater focus on enterprise formation and survival is required to address their poor history in SW Scotland · Consideration should be given to project sponsors in addition to Scottish Enterprise · Support Priority 2's concentration on community regeneration with ESF support to tackle low skills and lack of qualifications in the population. This should include support for community based business start-ups and SME activity to encourage wealth creation in deprived areas.
<p>Question 4: Do the proposed priorities for the 2007-2013 ESF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland address the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of the region?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · ESF programme concentrates on the employment side of the Scottish economy, and completely omits the issue of productivity of the workforce, which is of fundamental importance in programming for the HRD situation of the entire region. Competitiveness is the main thrust of the programme but its links to employment & productivity should be much more explicit. As a direct result no clear guidelines are provided with regard to balance of resources for provision & delivery of training for the hardest to reach and for skills acquisition to address skills gaps or indeed if one is prioritised over the other. · The well recognised problems of SMEs engagement & training needs requires further consideration as does the role of social partners in solving low skills & CPD problems
<p>Question 5: Do the proposed priorities for the 2007-2013 ESF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland</p>	<p>The ESF Priorities present coherence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Priority 1 shows focused concentration of resources on an exhaustive list of target groups lacking qualifications. The continuing presence of these marginalised groups in large numbers & in areas of multiple deprivation recognises the continuing need for specific resources in W Scotland however, given the cocktail of funding that will be available for these target groups, there is a need to ensure that targeting is not so focussed as to be counterproductive & exclusive with a corresponding

show appropriate coherence and concentration?	reduction in impact. · The role of the project sponsor in maximising output & good value is critical · Priority 2 is of necessity less concentrated to the extent that specific priorities must be supplied. The need to increase basic & intermediate skills to raise productivity & enhance employment prospects for the most disadvantaged is a priority · Priority 3 provides a comprehensive and inclusive approach to target groups.
Question 6: What are your views on the proposed balance of funding between priorities for the future ERDF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?	· The absence of a detailed rationale for the distribution of the allocations is the OP presents difficulties however, in the absence of this, Langside College supports WOSCOP's recommendations & the thinking behind their suggested allocations to include a new priority for Sustainability and Environmental Protection distributed across all areas. We also support additional allocations to support community generation & wealth creation, enhanced amenity & skills development therein. We support WOSCOP's proposed allocations is as follows o Enterprise Growth 35% o Community Regeneration 35% o Sustainability and Environmental Protection 30% · If inclusion of a new priority is not possible then we support WOSCOP's revised distribution under existing priorities: o Enterprise Growth 43% o Community Regeneration 42% o Rural Development 15%
Question 7: What are your views on the proposed balance of funding between priorities for the future ESF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?	· Langside College supports the allocations recommended by WoSCoP as follows: o Priority 1 Progressing into Employment 43% o Priority 2 Progressing through Employment 32% o Priority 3 Access to Lifelong Learning 25% · We strongly support additional resourcing of Access to Lifelong Learning with its complementarity to Priorities 1& 2 and also to P1, ERDF as well as the previously expressed need to include social partners.
Question 8: Do the proposed priorities outlined in the draft Operational Programmes focus sufficiently on the right priorities in Scottish domestic policy?	· Agree that there is appropriate correspondence between focus in the OP & Scottish domestic policy in the context of devolved government with the major thrust to improve competitiveness. · Reduced budget for the programmes remains an issue as does the source of match funding
Question 9: What are your views on how the principle of environmental sustainability has been integrated into the Operational Programmes?	· Langside College views the importance of environmental sustainability as being significant enough to merit a dedicated (ERDF) Priority covering the entire LUPs area rather than the proposed continuation, as stated in the O.P, of the issue as a horizontal theme. The need to embed sustainability in the economy is paramount for Scotland's future, given the content of the STERNE report. Such an approach would enable environmental skills development to be included in ESF priorities thus affording further synergy between the two programmes
Question 10: What are your views on how the principle of equal opportunities has been integrated into the Operational Programmes	AS PER WOSCOP RESPONSE

Question 11: What are your views on how the Operational Programmes will ensure complementarity between Structural Funds and other EU funding streams?	AS PER WOSCOP RESPONSE
Question 12: How can the challenge-fund approach be improved to make it more effective in delivering outcomes and more efficient in operation?	For the ESF programme there should be · Opportunity for more frequent application rounds · Shortening of the gap between application & approval & subsequent release of funds · Clearer definition of the respective roles of the IAB and the Managing Authority in the claims process · Greater efficiency in the claims processing and distribution · Standardised reporting For the ERDF programme there should be · Separate timetables for capital and the revenue ERDF projects with revenue projects processed as proposed (in 12) above for ESF projects
Question 13: What would be the most effective approach to using Community Planning Partnerships and other local partnerships for the delivery of elements of the programmes?	· Each CPP needs to work in partnership with the Managing Authority, the IAB, and other relevant local partnerships produce a clear strategy for the effective deployment of Structural Funds and indicate the opportunities to be derived from a matching relationship between Structural with Community Regeneration Funds
Question 14: What are your views on spatial targeting for community regeneration under ERDF Priority 2 and ESF Priority 1?	AS PER WOSCOP RESPONSE
Question 15: What are your views on spatial targeting for rural development under ERDF Priority 3?	AS PER WOSCOP RESPONSE
Question 16: Do you have any additional comments on the draft Structural Funds Operational Programmes for Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?	· Concerned by the fact that the Operational Programme documents have not been informed by evaluation of Structural Funds programme of 2000/7 or by consultation with those with most recent involvement & future interest in economic regeneration. The absence of this partnered approach to development to the new OPs (which have emphasis on the benefit of partnership working) and which involve a substantial reduction in total funds available seems to be a major oversight. · Concerned that consultation may not result in changes to the current OPs & resultant allocation of resources to inappropriate activity (e.g. proposed unrealistic allocation to rural areas) and subsequent failure to deliver & utilise the full funding allocation · Absence of Priority status to environmental sustainability & to importance of social partners in success of programme · The decision to award IDB status solely to Scottish Enterprise in ERDF Priority 1 raises concern. Inclusion of additional organisations would have been beneficial & might have created opportunities for more innovative practice · CPPs already have major challenges to progress their core agenda. The additional burden of a key role in Structural Funds (of which they have no experience at this level) might be inappropriate. CPPs working in partnership with partners with SF experience would have been a more beneficial approach

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