

Mclsaac C (Cathy)

From: anne.doherty@slc.ac.uk
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To: Structural Funds Consultation Mailbox
Subject: Consultation Response

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Future European Structural Funds Programmes in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland 2007-2013**RESPONDENT INFORMATION DETAILS**

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Individual Permission:
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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?

It would have been clearer if a socio-economic context had been provided across the whole Programme to cover ERDF and ESF as a whole, therefore highlighting more synergy between both SF strands. More emphasis on urban deprivation (spatial or individual based) could have been provided. There seems to be an over-emphasis on entrepreneurship and rural areas, despite recognising that these are areas also needing support.

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?

Question 3: Do the proposed priorities for the 2007-2013 ERDF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland show appropriate coherence and concentration?

Rural targeting in Priority 3 does not seem to sit coherently with the other 2 priorities. Emphasis to rural area is all the more puzzling as it is not specifically defined despite attracting significant funds. A more transparent spatial targeting (including urban) would be welcome. Especially one that would take cognisance of the significant needs in Western Scotland. This should be all the more important as funds will be dramatically reduced in the new programme.

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?

A finer definition of target groups would have been welcome. The present programme gives the impression that every category of individuals are covered under ESF priorities. This is especially of concern with the reduction in Structural Funds.

Question 5: Do the proposed priorities for the 2007-2013 ESF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland show appropriate coherence and concentration?

Priority 1 There are still significant skills shortages/gaps in pocket of deprivation in the West of Scotland. Greater emphasis on disadvantaged groups from the most needy areas would be welcome (going beyond worst SIMD areas). However, there should be recognition at the same time that over-concentration of funds in areas of needs and stringent post code targeting have lead to difficulties in recruitment and retention.

Question 6: What are your views on the proposed balance of funding between priorities for the future ERDF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?

Considering the significant needs that are still prevailing in urban areas in the West of Scotland, it appears that rural development is carving a sizeable share of the funds. Looking at the socio-economic picture provided within the draft document, it would have seemed that funds could have been evened up between community regeneration and rural development.

Question 7: What are your views on the proposed balance of funding between priorities for the future ESF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?

Over the years, it has been apparent that small businesses have not embraced training opportunities to levels anticipated under previous programmes. It would seem therefore that looking at evidence of needs for emerging workforce development, a fairer split of funds need to be apportioned to Priority 1 and Priority 3 which is most welcome to engage with those least likely to take up training opportunities.

Question 8: Do the proposed priorities outlined in the draft Operational Programmes focus sufficiently on the right priorities in Scottish domestic policy?

Question 9: What are your views on how the principle of environmental sustainability has been integrated into the Operational Programmes?

Question 10: What are your views on how the principle of equal opportunities has been integrated into the Operational Programmes

Question 11: What are your views on how the Operational Programmes will ensure complementarity between Structural Funds and other EU funding streams?

Question 12: How can the challenge-fund approach be improved to make it more effective in delivering outcomes and more efficient in operation?

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?

Question 14: What are your views on spatial targeting for community regeneration under ERDF Priority 2 and ESF Priority 1?

It is clear from the socio-economic data provided in the draft Operational Programme that urban areas of deprivation should be targeted, in particular in Western Scotland. However, post-code targeting applied in past Programmes should be made more flexible to encourage interaction between population experiencing difficulties in getting back into employment - whether from worst SIMD areas or not.

Question 15: What are your views on spatial targeting for rural development under ERDF Priority 3?

Concerned that the draft Operational Programme recognises rural area targeting, while socio-economic data highlights a real need for urban areas in Western Scotland.

Question 16: Do you have any additional comments on the draft Structural Funds Operational Programmes for Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?

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