

Mclsaac C (Cathy)

From: alseggie@pkc.gov.uk
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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?

The socio-economic analysis is very comprehensive, however, because it covers all of Lowlands & Uplands Scotland it provides a very “generalised picture of the economy. It does not truly reflect the huge differences in economies across the programme area. For example, it suggests that rural areas in general are losing population; however, many rural areas closer to cities are in fact gaining population. It also fails to mention the growing issue of rising numbers of Migrant labour which is a particular issue in a number of areas, including Perth and Kinross.

The priorities do to an extent address the SWOT analysis outlined in the programme; however, there are

<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>	<p>some anomalies, specifically when some issues are targeted at a geographic level and others “thematically”. For example, there is a specific priority for rural areas, and one for urban areas through the community regeneration priority, which is then complemented by the thematic priority of Enterprise Development.</p>
<p>Question 3: Do the proposed priorities for the 2007-2013 ERDF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland show appropriate coherence and concentration?</p>	<p>The ERDF priorities are coherent; however the eligible activities for example under Priority 3 are very specific and prescriptive and are focussed on activities which would give preference to applications from certain areas. Some sectors appear to be priorities, for example textiles and tourism, while others equally as important for rural areas, such as food and drink and forestry appear not to have any priority. It is also unclear how Priority 1 Enterprise Development will relate to Priority 3 rural development. There needs to be greater clarity as to what will be classified as “rural”, definitions require to specific. We would argue that the definition should include rural settlements of up to 10,000 people; this would support the vital role of rural towns in the rural economy.</p>
<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>	<p>The Council are concerned that no recognition is made regarding the growing issue of migrant labour within the labour market.</p>
<p>Question 5: Do the proposed priorities for the 2007-2013 ESF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland show appropriate coherence and concentration?</p>	<p>The priorities for the ESF programme appear both coherent and concentrated.</p>
<p>Question 6: What are your views on the proposed balance of funding between priorities for the future ERDF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?</p>	<p>The split appears reasonable; however, we would wish an assurance that the Enterprise Development priority will fully support enterprise development in both rural and urban areas.</p>
<p>Question 7: What are your views on the proposed balance of funding between priorities for the future ESF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?</p>	<p>The proposed balance of funding between the priorities appears reasonable.</p>
<p>Question 8: Do the proposed priorities outlined in the draft Operational Programmes focus sufficiently on the right priorities in Scottish domestic policy?</p>	<p>These are the first EU programmes to be implemented under a “devolved” Scotland, and there is an excellent “fit” with the appropriate domestic Scottish policies. However, additionality will have to be clearly demonstrated.</p>
<p>Question 9: What are your views on how the principle of environmental sustainability has been integrated into the Operational Programmes?</p>	<p>The principal of environmental sustainability has been well integrated into the new Programmes. Existing and previous programmes have a good track record in this area, and this looks like it will continue.</p>
<p>Question 10: What are your views on how the principle of equal opportunities has been integrated into the Operational Programmes</p>	<p>Similarly the principal of equal opportunities has been well integrated into the new programme, building on its presence as a “horizontal” theme in previous programmes.</p>
	<p>There is a need for stronger clarity as to what activities will be funded through ERDF Priority 3, compared to potential activities supported through the new Scottish</p>

<p>Question 11: What are your views on how the Operational Programmes will ensure complementarity between Structural Funds and other EU funding streams?</p>	<p>Rural Development Programme (RDP), which is still being developed by SEERAD. The existing complementarity between the main Structural Funds programmes and the LEADER+ programme is likely to be very much weakened with LEADER being subsumed into the RDP. There is an assumption that enough funding will be available under the RDP to support specific activities, which will then not be eligible under the ERDF programme. There is a significant risk that such activities will not be supported at all. The development of local underpinning rural strategies (with full Community involvement) would help to ensure greater coordination of activities funded through the RDP and the ERDF programme.</p>
<p><i>Question 12: How can the challenge-fund approach be improved to make it more effective in delivering outcomes and more efficient in operation?</i></p>	<p>A more strategic approach will be required to ensure the overall objectives of the programmes are met, specifically through the various “challenge fund” elements. It will be very important to provide good quality guidance for project applicants to ensure that project submissions fit the priorities of the programme.</p>
<p>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?</p>	<p>The Council believe that where possible local delivery mechanisms should be used to deliver outputs from the programme spend and activities. Community Planning Partnerships have an excellent knowledge of local issues and current delivery models, and could be used as the building blocks for partnership projects, and local delivery.</p>
<p><i>Question 14: What are your views on spatial targeting for community regeneration under ERDF Priority 2 and ESF Priority 1?</i></p>	<p>Spatial targeting would ensure funding is targeted at areas of “greatest need”; however, careful consideration will need to be given as to what criteria are used to determine eligibility, to ensure smaller or more rural pockets of need are not disadvantaged. It will also be important to link areas of need with areas of opportunity.</p>
<p>Question 15: What are your views on spatial targeting for rural development under ERDF Priority 3?</p>	<p>The Council are concerned about the priority focus given to the South of Scotland, there is no rationale outlined for its specific allocation.</p>
<p><i>Question 16: Do you have any additional comments on the draft Structural Funds Operational Programmes for Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?</i></p>	<p>In general, the Council has concerns that the Programme has not been drawn up in an open and transparent manner, with a number of important decisions being taken without full consultation with interested organisations.</p>

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