

Mclsaac C (Cathy)

From: INVALID.EMAIL@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
Sent: 05 January 2007 12:33
To: Structural Funds Consultation Mailbox
Subject: Consultation Response

 This email has been received from an external party and
 has been swept for the presence of computer viruses.

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

Name: Christina Allon
Organisation: Careers Scotland (SE)
Address: 5 Atlantic Quay 150 Broomielaw Glasgow
Postcode: G2 7LU
Email:
Telephone Number:
Responding as: on behalf of a group or organisation
Individual Permission:
Confidentiality:
Group or Organisation: Yes
Share Response Permission: Yes

Questions and Answers

The economic strengths and weaknesses outlined under, Employment and Employability, Workforce Skills and Lifelong Learning accurately reflect the situation in Scotland. Therefore they provide a good starting point from which to consider the shape of the Structural Funds Programme post 2006. The Careers Scotland Operating Plan for 2005-2008 focuses on many of the key challenges identified in the document; therefore we endorse the focus of the ESF programme in areas such as;

- Reducing the acute levels of worklessness in certain groups and areas.
- Improving employment rates in those groups which are the 'hardest-to-help'
- Increasing the ability of the low-waged and low-skilled

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?

to progress through the labour market. • Tackling the gender pay gap and occupational and sectoral representation • Increasing the skills levels of entrepreneurs • Increasing lifelong learning participation rates among the most disadvantaged groups. However, we do feel that there could be greater recognition of the rise the number of migrant workers in Scotland in the last 3 years. Migrant labour is not included as a socio-economic factor despite the fact that they are net contributors to the economy, and fill skills/labour gaps across Scotland. The migrant labour pool includes both highly educated and skilled individuals as well as those who, while very motivated to work, have no formal education. There are a number of issues around integrating these ethnically and culturally diverse workers into the workplace to optimise their impact on the economy, which do not appear to be recognised here. In particular the skills issues related to migrant workers should be clearly identified e.g. language barriers and recognition of qualifications

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?

Careers Scotland is aligned more closely with the ESF programme, however we welcome the alignment of the ERDF programme with the Lisbon Agenda which directly reflects the goals of Smart Successful Scotland. Careers Scotland supports and endorses the community regeneration priority within the ERDF programme and the intention to align this more closely with ESF priority 1. Community regeneration should be clearly linked to areas of economic opportunity. The document implicitly refers to the economic deficit of socially deprived areas rather than seeing these as areas of untapped potential and opportunity. Economic growth can be generated by increasing the numbers of economically active people; therefore, economic inclusion rather than social inclusion is a key element in long-term economic growth. Likewise, the solutions to entrepreneurship, as with employability, will not be found within the boundaries of disadvantaged areas, but through enabling them to link with the wider initiatives.

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

Careers Scotland is more closely aligned to the aims and objectives of the ESF programme and therefore we are not in a position to comment on the coherence and concentration of the ERDF programme.

Careers Scotland is satisfied that, overall, the content of the proposed priorities is appropriate, however specific issue are highlighted below. Priority 1 – Progressing into Employment Careers Scotland supports the proposed content of priority 1 which currently focuses on young people and adults not in employment. However, we would like to see this expanded to include aspects of priority 2 which refer to the work force of the future. Priority 1 would therefore be aimed at all those not currently in employment, including those still in education but at risk of becoming NEET (young people aged 16-19, not in education, employment or training)

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?

adult unemployed and the future workforce. We would also like to see more specific reference to career planning support at the pre-employment stage both pre and post school as good career planning support is vital for those seeking to enter the labour market. Gender imbalance is currently included in priority 2, however in our experience the greatest impact on non-traditional career choice will be made with those still in school education, the workforce of the future. We would therefore like to see gender imbalance reflected in the content of priority 1. We welcome the inclusion of activity to support employers who recruit from the target groups for priority 1. Given the intention to introduce a minimum project size, along with spatial targeting in priority 1 we feel that the suggestions outlined above would allow a broad package of support to be offered in a local area to tackle all client groups not in employment. This will help ensure the scale of project required as well as supporting the partnership approach at a local level. Priority 2 – Progressing through Employment Careers Scotland support the continuum between priority 1 – Progressing into Employment and priority 2 – Progressing through Employment, however the proposed content of priority 2 includes the following which we feel would sit more comfortably with priority 1. • initiatives to reform vocational routes for, and encourage the development of vocational skills among young people; • initiatives to help raise awareness of the world of work, enterprise and entrepreneurship among young people, including work experience placements; • activities to engage young people not in education, employment or training, tackle their barriers to learning, and help them access to programmes such as Entry to Employment; We would like to see more emphasis on the importance of those still in school education who will be the workforce of the future. They need to engage positively with the world of work if Scotland is to achieve sustained economic growth. We also feel that there is not enough emphasis on the importance of enterprise and developing an enterprising culture, both of which are mentioned in both the Lisbon agenda and ‘Smart Successful Scotland’. More emphasis on enterprise and activities that support the development of an enterprising culture is required across all ages, including school age children. We would like to see an increased emphasis on higher level skills development. Priority 3 – Access to lifelong learning Careers Scotland supports the aim of this priority as we recognise the need to look at new ways of engaging many of our client groups, such as 16-19 not in education, employment and training or adult returners. We would, however, like to see Careers Scotland included as a target group for this priority. As the all age careers guidance service for Scotland, Careers Scotland works with young people and adults to encourage a culture of lifelong learning that starts at school and continues into adulthood. This

	<p>covers a broad spectrum of activity, from signposting suitable learning opportunities to motivating groups least likely to access lifelong learning but who have most to gain from doing so. We are concerned that the introduction of a minimum project size and duration may limit the range of activity able to receive funding under this objective. Development projects are more likely to require shorter periods of funding (annual rather than multi-annual) and are less likely to require a budget of the proposed minimum size. Also, by significantly reducing the application rounds for the new programme it will significantly reduce the flexibility of the programme to support ongoing innovation in lifelong learning. We recommend that P3 should not be subject to minimum project size or duration and that there should be more frequent application rounds for P3, or an alternative mechanism should be put in place to allow more flexibility. General Comments The document proposes support for low skilled/low paid and 'older' workers, but no further definition has been proposed on the age range. Age discrimination legislation and recent findings from FSS indicates that those most at risk of lack of skills investment are aged 44-65. The list of eligible activity provided, however, does not seem to support this as it mainly focuses on VQ achievement with a heavy emphasis on youth programmes. Whilst Careers Scotland endorses specific reference to older workers we recognise that Scotland's future economic sustainability depends on having a pipeline of potential entrepreneurs and a future workforce which fully understands the requirements of the world of work.</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>Careers Scotland would like to see a clearer distinction between the focus of priority 1 and priority 2. Priority 1 should focus anyone not yet in employment whether at school (the workforce of the future) or a young person or adult not in employment and priority 2 should focus on those in the workforce. This would provide a clear continuum and demonstrate a clear differentiation between the two priorities (see response to Q4).</p>
<p><i>Question 6: What are your views on the proposed balance of funding between priorities for the future ERDF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?</i></p>	<p>Careers Scotland is more closely aligned to the aims and objectives of the ESF programme and therefore we are not in a position to comment on the balance of funding for the future ERDF programme.</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 seems reasonable and rightly places the majority of funding on direct delivery through priority 1 and priority 2. The balance between priority 1 and priority 2 may require to be reviewed if there is further distinction between the content of priorities 1 and 2 (see comments for Q4).</p>
	<p>Careers Scotland is satisfied that the proposed content of the ESF Programme focuses on emerging national strategies, such as the Workforce Plus (Employability Framework), Closing the Opportunity Gap and More Choices More Chances, the NEET (Not in Employment</p>

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

Education or Training) Strategy as well as Smart Successful Scotland and FEDS. However, we are concerned that the approach to the delivery of priority 1 may limit the impact of the objective. Spatial targeting of this priority is likely to result in more money being available in areas which are already receiving significant amounts of funding through national strategies such as Workforce Plus. While this may ensure availability of match funding at a local level it makes it difficult to adopt a national strategy across thematic groups such as NEET and may result in fragmentation of provision and loss of impact at a national level. We are also concerned that the introduction of a minimum project size, coupled with spatial targeting could lead to large and complex partnerships at a local level, purely to ensure that the required level of match funding is available.

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

The experience gained within the 2000 – 2006 Programme has clearly informed the development of the new Programme and it is important that the range of tools, good practice and expertise that currently exist should be retained and developed in the new programmes.

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

Careers Scotland welcomes the integration of Equal Opportunities into the Operational Programmes. However it is vital that there is clear guidance and support available to ensure that organisations are aware of their responsibilities with regard to Equal Opportunities legislation, including the recent Age Discrimination legislation, and the impact this might have on project development and delivery. This is particularly important given the increased focus on partnership delivery for the new programmes

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

N/A

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

Careers Scotland welcomes a reduction in the administration burden at all levels of programme implementation and as such we support the move to one IAB for the LUPs area. The concept of a challenge fund, in which partners participate, has worked well in the current programme and we welcome the retention of this approach across the majority of the ESF programme. We would like to see the element of challenge fund in ESF priority 1 continue for the duration of the programme. We feel this is essential if we are to maximise the impact of the structural funds on key issues such as a reduction in the numbers of 16-19 not in employment, education and training. We support the proposed two stage application process, particularly given the increased focus of the IABs on support and advice. We have concerns about the proposed significant reduction in the applications rounds for this programme. This would only be acceptable if there was

	an annual review of progress and a mechanism to reallocate unused funds. We would recommend that alternative arrangements be considered for P3 (see comments Q4)
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?	Careers Scotland is committed to developing and extending existing partnerships at a local level to increase impact and extend reach; therefore in principle this approach is acceptable. However, at this stage CPPs are at very different stages of development and therefore delivering national strategy consistently would be very difficult. The proposed delivery model for ESF priority 1 combines challenge fund and a pilot with 1 or 2 CPPs for the first half of the programme. We support the move to pilot this approach in priority 1, but would be very concerned if in the future there was no challenge fund available and the only way to access funds was through selected CPPs.
Question 14: What are your views on spatial targeting for community regeneration under ERDF Priority 2 and ESF Priority 1?	As stated previously Careers Scotland is concerned about the proposed spatial targeting of ESF priority 1. The key programme challenges identified in the consultation document confirm that we need to address worklessness in certain groups, including 16-19 not in education, employment or training, those on incapacity benefits and adult returners. Whilst we recognise that there are geographic areas where there are significantly higher proportions of individuals in such groups, it remains a national issue. By creating artificial geographic barriers many individuals and communities will be disadvantaged. We therefore suggest that a certain percentage of activity be eligible out with the spatially targeted areas to encompass these groups and ensure that we are able to address a national issue at a national level.
Question 15: What are your views on spatial targeting for rural development under ERDF Priority 3?	N/A
Question 16: Do you have any additional comments on the draft Structural Funds Operational Programmes for Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?	None

The original of this email was scanned for viruses by Government Secure Intranet (GSI) virus scanning service supplied exclusively by Cable & Wireless in partnership with MessageLabs.

On leaving the GSI this email was certified virus free.

The MessageLabs Anti Virus Service is the first managed service to achieve the CSIA Claims Tested Mark (CCTM Certificate Number 2006/04/0007), the UK Government quality mark initiative for information security products and services. For more information about this please visit www.cctmark.gov.uk

PLEASE NOTE: THE ABOVE MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED FROM THE INTERNET.

On entering the GSI, this email was scanned for viruses by the Government Secure Intranet (GSI) virus scanning service supplied exclusively by Cable & Wireless in partnership with MessageLabs.

In case of problems, please call your organisational IT Helpdesk.

The MessageLabs Anti Virus Service is the first managed service to achieve the CSIA Claims Tested Mark (CCTM Certificate Number 2006/04/0007), the UK Government quality mark initiative for information security products and services. For more information about this please visit www.cctmark.gov.uk

This e-mail (and any files or other attachments transmitted with it) is intended solely for the attention of the addressee(s). Unauthorised use, disclosure, storage,

copying or distribution of any part of this e-mail is not permitted. If you are not the intended recipient please destroy the email, remove any copies from your system and inform the sender immediately by return. Communications with the Scottish Executive may be monitored or recorded in order to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes. The views or opinions contained within this e-mail may not necessarily reflect those of the Scottish Executive.
