Cross Cutting Themes Guidance

European Social Fund (ESF) West Wales & Valleys and East Wales

Priority Axis 5: Public Services Reform and Regional Working
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1. Key to the ESF programmes is the Welsh Government emphasis on social, economic and environmental well-being for people and communities; fairness and social justice; and how decisions we make now affect the lives of future as well as current generations.

2. This Priority Axis is focussed around Thematic Objective (11) – Institutional Capacity Building).¹

- Assessing organisational capacity and capability, and developing and delivering workforce development plans.

- Supporting the reconfiguration of regional governance arrangements to ensure representative and inclusive planning and decision making functions.

Background Context

3. The Equality Act 2010² provides protection against discrimination for individuals and groups who share ‘protected characteristics’, while the Public Sector Equality Duty³ requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their functions.

4. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (establishes several well-being goals for public bodies in Wales, for example, a more prosperous Wales, a healthier Wales and a more equal Wales. ⁴ As these well-being goals seek to encapsulate the Welsh Government’s ambition for a future Wales, they are necessarily aspirational. They do not establish specific targets for public policy but instead require public authorities to determine well-being objectives for local service delivery that will maximise their contribution to achieving the well-being goals.


5. The Welsh Government wants Wales to be a truly bilingual nation and has made a commitment in ‘Cymraeg 2050 – A million Welsh speakers’, the National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales and its Welsh Language Scheme to mainstream the Welsh Language across policy areas.

6. The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, establish a framework for Public Sector bodies, some private companies and third sector organizations to comply with standards, and gives the Commissioner the power to require a company or an organisation to comply with a standard. In the context of ESF Priority 5 which is directed primarily at public sector delivery, to whom the Welsh Language Measures apply, specific attention should be given to supporting a bilingual workforce.

7. Detailed information about how public organisations and crown bodies, private companies and third sector bodies can comply with the standards and a list of the types of private companies and third sector organisations that come under the Measure and can be found on the Welsh Language Commissioners Website. 5

8. All interventions will be expected to demonstrate alignment with the goals and with the related five ways of working. As a starting point to developing a proposal, the potential for activity to contribute to the Wellbeing goals should be explored, consulted upon (as part of a wider Impact Assessment which should include but is not limited to: equality, environmental assessment, children and young people and a Welsh language assessment) and articulated into deliverable activity.

9. The Equality and Human Rights Commission in Wales (EHRC) published its state of the nation report on equality and human rights ‘Is Wales Fairer’ in 2018. The report brings together evidence to assess levels of inequality in Wales and progress made since the last report in 2015. It identifies a wide range of recommendations to address the key equality and human rights challenges and calls on all bodies to play their part in improving the experiences and opportunities of people living and working in Wales. Interventions will be expected, where appropriate, to contribute to addressing the key inequalities which are identified in ‘Is Wales Fairer’ 2018. 6

Cross Cutting Themes

10. Included in the Guiding Principles for selection of operations is that the interventions should seek to integrate economic, social and environmental outcomes, consistent with the Welsh Governments central organising principle of sustainable development and contributing to the outcomes of the cross cutting themes (CCTs).


11. The aim of the CCTs is to improve the quality and the legacy from each operation supported by the Structural Funds and to add value to the programmes as a whole. They will require action in multiple fields and will be embedded within the design and delivery of all operations. There are three CCTs:

- Equal Opportunities, Gender Mainstreaming (the Welsh language is included in Wales)
- Sustainable Development; and
- Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion.

12. The first two of these CCTs are mandatory under EU Regulations. Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion has been included as an additional CCT in line with the key commitments of the Welsh Government set out within its Tackling Poverty Action Plan. The full CCT guidance can be found at [https://gweddill.gov.wales/funding/eu-funds/2014-2020/wefo-guidance/cross-cutting-guidance/?lang=en](https://gweddill.gov.wales/funding/eu-funds/2014-2020/wefo-guidance/cross-cutting-guidance/?lang=en)

**Sustainable Development**

13. As part of the development of the ESF Programmes in Wales, a Strategic Environmental Assessment screening exercise was undertaken by external evaluators. The report concluded that through indirect measures, at an individual or organisational level, and through ensuring operations adopt appropriate Sustainable Development practices and principles in the delivery of ESF activity, investments will be able to support the overall Welsh Government Sustainable Development principles and objectives. Actions appropriate for this priority could include:

- Encouraging sustainable transport solutions
- Promoting resource efficiency, including energy efficiency and waste management (including recycling) in the delivery and implementation of operations
- Supporting the sharing of resources and use of local supply chains

**Equal Opportunities and Gender Mainstreaming**

14. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)\(^7\) which accompanies this programme, provides a robust assessment of the needs of those who may be at risk of exclusion, disadvantage or discrimination as a result of one or more characteristics protected under the Equality Act (2010) and their specific needs in terms of supporting access to employment and skills. These ‘protected characteristics’ include age (covering all age groups), disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership pregnancy and maternity, race

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and ethnicity, religion or belief, sex / gender and sexual orientation. The impact for the Welsh language also formed part of this assessment.

15. The EqIA report concludes that the development of the 2014-20 ESF programmes has included extensive consideration of equality and because of this it is highly unlikely that there will be any disproportionate negative impacts on any of the characteristics protected under the Equality Act and that it will support the Welsh language as required by the 2006 Government of Wales Act.

16. Specific actions have been taken to promote equal opportunities and prevent discrimination during the preparation, design and implementation of the operational programme, in particular the requirements for ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities and to promote equality between men and women to ensure a gender perspective at operational level. Actions appropriate for this priority could include:

- New approaches which enable organisations to innovate and work together in a region to ensure public services are accessible and equitable to all
- Support for activity which builds the capacity and capability of the workforce
- Actions to ensure that new regional ways of working as they are put in place promote equality of opportunity for staff and inclusive work places
- Taking opportunities to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language within new regional ways of working, in service delivery and developing capacity

**Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion**

17. The commitment to promote social inclusion and combat poverty is reflected through the inclusion of a new CCT and the strategy for the ESF programmes has been developed in line with this overall approach. The key Tackling Poverty CCT objectives are:

- The creation of jobs and growth providing employment opportunities for those who are out of work
- Tackling barriers to employment such as poor skills, lack of childcare or limited transport options, helping more people to access employment opportunities; and
- Focusing on growth aligned with skills development interventions, enabling those experiencing in-work poverty to access more highly-skilled, better paid jobs.

18. When developing proposals, operations will be expected to have considered how their activity supports the Tackling Poverty CCT objectives. Actions appropriate to this priority could include:

- Upskilling and reskilling staff members to help them benefit from new ways of working
Indicators

19. The indicators for this Priority for both WW&V and East Wales are:

- Number of projects targeting public administrations or public services at national, regional or local level
- Number of methods, processes and tools being developed with support
- Number of entities participating in projects targeting public administrations or public services at national, regional or local level

20. There are no specific CCT output indicators for Priority 5 but as with the wider ESF programmes, the CCT Case (Project) Level Indicators will apply. These are included at Annex 1.

21. Operations will be expected to identify in their Business Plan which CCT Case Level Indicators they will be contributing to and, if appropriate, suggest additional ones which may be added to the list which will demonstrate their CCT contribution. There are no formal evidence requirements for these indicators with delivery demonstrated through the sharing of good practice and case study examples reported to WEFO.
Annex 1

Cross Cutting Theme Case (Project) Level Indicators

The inclusion of formal targets is an important driver to encourage projects to address the CCTs. It also enables the monitoring of progress to take place systematically over the life of the programme. However, in 2014/2015 WEFO carried out an evaluation of how the CCTs had been integrated into the 2007-2013 European funded programmes. One of the key issues identified from the evaluation was that stakeholders (those running projects and those delivering activity) wanted a better way of being able to show that they were successfully delivering activity which contributed to the CCTs. The formal indicators were seen as too blunt and often not relevant to the project activity. In response to this feedback, additional project level CCT indicators were identified, which enable WEFO to capture a broader range of activity. Formal indicators are still relevant but they are no longer relied on to tell the whole story of how projects are successfully delivering CCT activity.

Below is the list of project level indicators which have been identified to date but these can be added to if additional activity not listed is delivered. Only some will apply to your operation depending on the activity you are delivering:

Equal Opportunities and Gender Mainstreaming

- Positive action measures supporting women
- Positive action measures supporting BME people
- Positive action measures supporting young people
- Positive action measures supporting older workers
- Positive action measures supporting disabled people
- Positive action measures supporting other
- Activities which challenge occupational segregation
- Equal Pay activity
- Activity supporting female participation in STEM
- Activity promoting the Welsh language
- Activity supporting speakers of the Welsh language.
- Disability Access Group engagement
- Workplace health programmes supported
- Childcare provision
- Other care provision

Sustainable Development

- Develop an organisational Eco Code
- Local sustainable supply chain development
- Integration of small scale Green infrastructure
- Integration of small scale Blue infrastructure
- Activity which is supporting bio-diversity on a site funded through SF’s
- Development of an organisational Travel Plan and sustainable transport initiatives
- Resource efficiency measures
- Site environmental management plans
- BREEAM excellent where applicable
- BREEAM very good where applicable
- Attainment of CEQUALL for construction activity
- Use of Sustainable Urban drainage Systems (SUDS) where applicable

**Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion**

- Activity which builds skills within the community
- Mentoring / advocacy activity
- Peer support activity
- Volunteering schemes
- Organisations paying the living wage

**Cross Cutting Themes general**

- Stakeholder engagement good practice activity
- Developing / engaging CCT champions
- Integrating Social Clauses into activity
- CCT Toolkits, health checks, base lining mechanisms Apps etc.
- CCT Training packages developed
- CCT staff training programme introduced
- Activity which contributes to the CCT formal indicators in priorities / objectives where they are not present.
For more information:

www.gov.wales/eu-funding

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