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Welsh European Funding Office

European Structural Funds 2014-2020

Cross Cutting Themes Key Document – European Social Fund

Integrating the Cross Cutting Themes across the 2014-2020 European Structural Funds.

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Foreword

The Cross Cutting Themes (CCTs) also referred to as horizontal themes are issues that touch on general principles such as democracy, equality, sustainability and good governance. They require action in multiple fields and as such need to be integrated into all areas of the European Funding programmes and be addressed in the dialogue on development of the programmes.

For the 2014-2020 programmes, the CCTs are Equal Opportunities, Gender Mainstreaming, Sustainable Development and Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion.

Set within an evolving policy context, the picture of integrating the CCTs in Wales is one of steady progression and improvement from previous programmes. Increased awareness, positive developments in legislation and policy, matched by changes in attitudes has, combined with lessons learned and a clear focus from the European Commission to push the agenda forward. The Welsh Government has developed policies across the range of its statutory responsibilities including Sustainable Development, Equality and Diversity and also Tackling Poverty.

The aim is to continue with the progress made and ensure the benefits of the 2014-2020 programmes are spread equitable to the people and communities within the region, thereby maximising the impact of the programmes and showing the true added value of successful integration of the CCT principles.

The aim of the Cross Cutting Themes (CCTs) is to improve the quality and the legacy from each of the operations supported by the Structural Funds and 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 and the Welsh Language; Sustainable Development and Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge and thank the organisations who reviewed the draft version of the CCT guidance documents, whose comments have been incorporated in the final versions.

How to use the guidance

The following guidance is aimed at anyone involved in the development of 'Operations', especially 'Lead of Operations' and Welsh European Funding Office staff with a view to ensuring maximum integration of the cross cutting themes.

The CCT guidance for the ESF Programmes consists of this Key Document and a Cross Cutting Theme (CCT) Matrix. This document sets out:

- a definition of the three cross cutting themes along with the specific objectives
- the policy context and objectives for the cross cutting themes for the 2014-2020 Structural and Investment Funds
- the legislative framework and;
- the monitoring and evaluation process which will be used to assess the success of the integration of cross cutting themes across the ESI programmes?

The CCT matrix provides a list of actions, broken down by individual Programme and Priority, which 'Operations' must consider incorporating with a view to maximising the potential for CCT delivery.

Introduction

The Regulations governing the European Programmes stipulate that all operations funded through European Structural and Investment Funds **must** integrate Equal Opportunities and Gender Mainstreaming, and Sustainable Development as horizontal themes, as well as taking action to Tackle Poverty and Social Exclusion.

These cross cutting themes will add value, raise awareness and understanding while ensuring maximum participation and mitigating adverse impacts. This will help operations move beyond compliance and develop systems which support best practice.

Guiding Principles:

The following common principles will guide future selection of operations across all Investment Priorities:

- Interventions should seek to integrate economic, social and environmental outcomes, consistent with the central organising principle of sustainable development and contributing to the outcomes of the cross cutting themes;

Equal Opportunities and Gender Mainstreaming

The equal opportunities and gender mainstreaming cross cutting theme aims to reduce injustice and promote social cohesion, while providing the opportunity for all eligible beneficiaries to participate and use their skills and abilities to raise the levels of GDP in Wales and address the imbalance in earning for women and men and others with protected characteristics. The key ESF programme objectives for equal opportunities and gender mainstreaming are:

- Reduce the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- Reduce over-representation of certain ethnic groups, care leavers and disabled young people among those who are NEET;
- Provide targeted support to employers to employ disadvantaged individuals;
- Support older workers, and those with health issues, to remain in work and continue to learn new skills;
- Identify and test solutions to the pay and employment differences in Wales to overcome the negative impact that these have, in particular on women, disabled people and people from Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) groups;
- Create an environment which supports inclusive work places, promotes equality of opportunity for staff through improved employee engagement and support the reconciliation of work and private life;
- Support access for disabled people and people from BME backgrounds to training and employment opportunities.
- Overcome the negative impact that pay and employment differences have on women in Wales;
- Challenge traditional employment roles where gender stereotypes may exist and assist young people, both males and females, to take up and retain employment in non-traditional areas or industries where specific genders are underrepresented, such as females in industries where STEM subjects are required (e.g. Engineering, Information Technology)
- Increase the representation of women in STEM courses;
- Challenge occupational segregation by increasing the numbers of women and men training or retraining in non-traditional areas (e.g. childcare, social care), focusing on areas where there are skills shortages;
- Provide affordable, quality childcare which meets the need of a modern economy and its workforce;
- Identify and support opportunities to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language and support speakers of the language; and
- Recognise health and wellbeing as one of the corner stones of a healthy, vibrant economy.

Unless otherwise specified within the output indicators, all operations seeking support will be required to establish operational level targets, at a minimum, within the following categories.

ESF West Wales & the Valleys and ESF East Wales Programmes			
	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
Age	Yes (Over 54 years)	Yes (Under 25 years, over 54 years)	N/A
Care / Childcare responsibilities	Yes	Yes	Yes
Disability	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gender	Yes	Yes	Yes
Migrant ¹ EU	Yes	Yes	Yes
Migrant Non-EU (includes Roma)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Work Limiting Health Conditions	Yes	Yes	Yes

¹ A migrant is a 'Non-national permanent resident in a country'
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Sustainable Development

“Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

Sustainable development is the central organising principle of the Welsh Government. The inclusion of sustainable development as a cross-cutting theme is a crucial element to ensure that economic development will not adversely impact on the environment. A high quality, attractive environment plays a key role in enticing and retaining people to live and work in Wales, as well as providing the quality of life for Welsh residents.

The key ESF programme objectives to achieving sustainable development are to:

- Promote environmental awareness and good practice in the implementation of activity;
- Integrate sustainable development into operations undertaking awareness raising education and training programmes;
- Support participating employers to adopt or improve Environmental Sustainability Strategies;
- Promote social justice and equality of opportunity; and
- Recognise and promote health and wellbeing as one of the corner stones of a healthy, vibrant economy.

Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion

Tackling poverty and social exclusion is a European Commission and Welsh Government commitment which will focus on actions to create employment and progression opportunities and will help people to access those opportunities. The programme also aims to increase the mobility of those that are unemployed, work ready or underemployed. Longer term benefits can also be realised from sustainable employment including enhanced well being. The key Tackling Poverty CCT objectives for the ESF programmes in Wales 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

Focussing on growth, aligned with skills development interventions, enabling those experiencing in-work poverty to access more highly- skilled, better paid jobs.

Statutory Obligations and EU Funding Eligibility

Actions that the lead beneficiary would have needed to implement and fund, irrespective of the EU operation, because of statutory obligations are always ineligible costs.

However, actions needed as a consequence of the EU operation, in order to adhere to statutory requirements, are eligible costs, e.g. reasonable adjustments to remove barriers (inc. physical barriers) to participation in an operation. The eligible costs should only be the incremental costs i.e. the additional actions (and costs) beyond which the organisation would have needed to implement, even if the EU operation did not exist. This should always be discussed and agreed with WEFO in advance to ensure available budget etc.

Policy Context and Legislative Framework

Equal Opportunities and Gender Mainstreaming

The integration of equal opportunities, gender mainstreaming and the Welsh language (which we also include in the Equal Opportunities CCT) is important not only for legal reasons, but also because overcoming inequalities between different social and demographic sections of society contributes to the overall effectiveness of the activity delivered by the programmes.

REGULATION (EU) No 1303/2013 Article 7 - Promotion of equality between men and women and non- discrimination states:

‘The Member States and the Commission shall ensure that equality between men and women and the integration of gender perspective are taken into account and promoted throughout the preparation and implementation of programmes, including in relation to monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

The Member States and the Commission shall take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation during the preparation and implementation of programmes. In particular, accessibility for persons with disabilities shall be taken into account throughout the preparation and implementation of programmes.’

Europe 2020 is the European Union’s ten-year growth strategy. The strategy aims at addressing socio-economic shortcomings whilst creating conditions for growth in a smarter, sustainable and inclusive manner. Targets include:

- 75% of the 20-64 year olds to be employed
- Reducing the rates of early school leaving below 10%
- At least 40% of 30-34 year olds completing third level education
- 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion

Other legislation which Operations need to taken into account includes:

- United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)²
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNDRDP)³

The Welsh Government launched its Strategic Equality Plan (2012-16) and equality objectives on 2 April 2012. These highlight how the Welsh Government is fulfilling its legal obligations as well as its strong commitment to equality and inclusion. The Strategic Equality Plan was developed in-line with the general duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010. The PSED states that public authorities must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken which highlights potential impacts the ESF programmes might have on various groups in Wales. The evidence collected by the EIA covers the nine protected characteristics, which helps to support the Welsh Government's compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and Strategic Equality Plan.

There is also a range of legislation that underpins the equality agenda including:

- The Equality Act 2010 (Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race and Ethnicity, Religion and Belief, Sex / Gender and Sexual Orientation)
- Public Sector Equality Duty (including the Specific Equality Duties in Wales)
- National Assembly for Wales (Official Languages) Act 2012
- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Welsh Language Act 1993
- s35(2) Government of Wales Act 2006
- Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011

Welsh Government Policies / Strategies that support equal opportunities and gender mainstreaming include:

- Framework for Action on Independent Living
- The Strategy for Older People in Wales 2013-2023 (This strategy identifies older people in Wales as being 50+ years)
- Travelling to a Better Future – A Gypsy and Traveller Framework for Action and Delivery Plan
- Strategic Equality Plan (and Objectives) 2012-2016
- A Living Language: a language for living - Welsh Language Strategy 2012-2017

² UNCRC, includes 'Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011'

<http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/children-and-young-people/rights/uncrc/?lang=en>

³ UNCRDP <http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml>

The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA), 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. The EIA highlights that groups with characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010 can face specific issues that impact upon their ability to access and progress within the labour market, and which place them at greater risk of poverty and exclusion. The EIA also shows that BME groups are disproportionately affected by unemployment, with ethnicity closely linked to income poverty. A formal opinion has been sought from and provided by the Equality and Human Rights Commission ERHC (in Wales).⁴

Welsh Language

The Welsh Government wants Wales to be a truly bilingual nation where people can choose to live their lives through the medium of either Welsh or English or both and where the presence of the two languages is a visible and audible source of pride and strength to everyone. In order to fulfil that vision, the Welsh Government has made a commitment in 'A living language: a language for living', the National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales and its Welsh Language Scheme to mainstream the Welsh Language across policy areas. The implementation of the Structural and Investment Funds will reflect this commitment. Lead beneficiaries will be expected to follow the terms of the Welsh Language Commissioner's document 'Grants, Loans and Sponsorship: Welsh language considerations'⁵. Costs to comply with Welsh Language requirements will need to be included in the financial projections for the operation.

European Structural Funds can play an important role to support efforts to grow the Welsh language within the context of economic growth and job creation. Operations can contribute to these aims by:

1. ensuring that all operations and grant-funded services are available through the medium of Welsh and that these services are actively promoted;
2. ensuring that all operations contribute to positive outcomes for the Welsh language, such as:
 - a. increased use of Welsh by participants;
 - b. increased provision and use of Welsh language services;
 - c. improved Welsh language skills;
 - d. enhanced economic opportunities in Welsh-speaking areas;
 - e. increased awareness of the benefits of the Welsh language for future employment opportunities and economic development.
3. monitoring progress and positive outcomes regarding the Welsh language.

⁴ Equality Impact Assessments European Structural Funds 2014-20 <http://gov.wales/funding/eu-funds/2014-2020/delivering-your-project/monitoring/programme-evaluations/?lang=en>

⁵ Welsh Language Commissioner's guidance: <http://www.comisiynyddygydraeg.org/English/Publications%20List/20120402%20DG%20S%20Dogfen%20>

In addition to contributing to the Welsh Government's strategic aims for the Welsh language, implementing the above measures would contribute towards compliance with the requirements of the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Scheme and, in due course, Welsh Language Standards under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure.

Welsh Language (Wales) Measures 2011

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 received royal assent on 9 February 2011 and establishes 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.

Some of the areas covered by this Measure include:

- gives the Welsh language official status in Wales
- makes provision for promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language
- makes provision about standards relating to the Welsh language
- establishes the principle that the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language
- makes provision for the investigation of interference with the freedom to use the Welsh language
- establishes a Welsh Language Tribunal and abolishes the Welsh Language Board

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 ⁶

⁶ Welsh Language Commissioner's Website:

[http://www.comisiynyddygybraeg.cymru/english/commissioner/law/the%20welsh%20language%20\(wales\)%20measure%202011/Pages/The-Welsh-Language-\(Wales\)-Measure-2011.aspx](http://www.comisiynyddygybraeg.cymru/english/commissioner/law/the%20welsh%20language%20(wales)%20measure%202011/Pages/The-Welsh-Language-(Wales)-Measure-2011.aspx)

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Sustainable Development

The General Regulations governing the European Programmes stipulate that all operations funded through the Common Strategic Framework, which includes Structural and Investment Funds, must integrate Sustainable Development under Article 8.

The objectives of the ESI Funds shall be pursued in line with the principle of sustainable development and with the Union's promotion of the aim of preserving, protecting and improving the quality of the environment, as set out in Article 11 and Article 191(1) TFEU, taking into account the polluter pays principle.

The Member States and the Commission shall ensure that environmental protection requirements, resource efficiency, climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity, disaster resilience, and risk prevention and management are promoted in the preparation and implementation of Partnership Agreements and programmes. Member States shall provide information on the support for climate change objectives using a methodology based on the categories of intervention, focus areas or measures, as appropriate, for each of the ESI Funds.

Europe 2020⁷ is the European Union's ten-year growth strategy. The strategy aims at addressing economic shortcomings whilst creating conditions for growth in a smarter, sustainable and inclusive manner.

Europe 2020: Sustainable Growth (EU Strategy) details the following objectives:

- Emphasis on resource efficiency;
- Greener more competitive economy;
- Lower carbon emissions (20% reduction in green house emissions 1990-2020) ;
- Environmental protection;
- Develop green technologies;
- Smart electricity grids (20% reduction in consumption);
- Improved business environment and support customers

UK Environmental Legislation which is applicable to Wales is detailed as the following:

- Climate Change Act 2008
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
- Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- Wildlife and Countryside (Amendment) Act 1991
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Control of Pollution Act 1974
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011
- The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010

⁷ Europe 2020: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm

The National Assembly for Wales has a duty to promote sustainable development as stipulated under Section 79 of the Government of Wales Act 2006⁸ , which states:

“Welsh Ministers are required to make, keep under review, and from time to time remake or revise, a sustainable development scheme, setting out how they propose, in the exercise of their functions, to promote sustainable development.”

The Welsh Government has a wider definition of sustainable development to that of the European Commission. The Programme of Government sets out the Welsh account of sustainable development, namely "an emphasis on social, economic and environmental well-being for people and communities; embodying our values of fairness and social justice." The European Commission definition alongside that of the Welsh Government's wider vision of sustainable development will be combined to fully contribute to the integration of the sustainable development cross cutting theme.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) became law on the 29th April 2015. The act strengthens existing governance arrangements for improving the well-being of Wales to ensure that present needs are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The act:

- identifies goals to improve the well-being of Wales
- introduces national indicators, that will measure the difference being made to the well-being of Wales
- establishes a Future Generations Commissioner for Wales to act as an advocate for future generations
- puts local service boards and well-being plans on a statutory basis and simplifies requirements for integrated community planning.

Statutory guidance will be available in Spring 2016. For further information on the Act please visit: <http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/future-generations-bill/?lang=en>

The Environment Bill was introduced to the National Assembly for Wales on 11th May 2015. The purpose of Wales' Environment Bill is to provide Natural Resources Wales with a modern legislative framework that enables it to manage natural resources in Wales in a more joined-up and sustainable way, and to amend key areas of the legislative framework to ensure that it supports the improvement of Wales' environment as well as delivering economic and social benefits. At its heart is therefore the application of sustainable development to the management of our natural resources.

Stages of the Bill are currently being scrutinised by the Assembly's Environment & Sustainability Committee.

⁸ Government of Wales Act 2006:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/32/notes/division/5/3/8>
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The Structural and Investment Funds regulations are in keeping with the UK Sustainable Development Strategy⁹ and the One Wales: One Planet¹⁰ report, which details the vision for a sustainable Wales. The One Wales: One Planet report details the sustainable development scheme for Wales. The scheme aims to enhance the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of people and communities, achieving a better quality of life for future generations:

- In ways which promote social justice and equality of opportunity; and
- In ways which enhance the natural and cultural environment and respect its limits - using only a fair share of the earth's resources and sustaining the cultural legacy.

The Sustainable Development Annual Report (2013-2014)¹¹ discusses how the Welsh Government embeds sustainable development as its core principle. The report details the long term economic, social and environmental effects of sustainable development that have informed the policy, programme or initiatives taken over the course of one year. The Sustainable Development Indicators for Wales¹² The indicators are first and foremost, intended to communicate and highlight progress in key issues and priority areas for sustainable development and, along with other evidence, help to identify where action is required.

Operations should consider signing up to the Sustainable Development Charter¹³ which is Wales' highest profile commitment to sustainable development. Signing the Charter is a voluntary commitment aimed at improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of Wales. The Sustainable Development Charter encourages and enables organisations in Wales to become more sustainable – to make decisions that produce the best long-term outcomes for themselves and for the future of Wales.

⁹ Securing the Future – UK Sustainability Development Strategy https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69412/pb10589-securing-the-future-050307.pdf

¹⁰ One Wales; One Planet <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/desh/publications/090521susdev1wales1planeten.pdf>

¹¹ The Sustainable Development Annual Report: <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dsjlg/publications/140623-sustainable-develop-annual-report-13-14-en.pdf>

¹² The Sustainable Development Indicators for Wales: <http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/sustainable-development-indicators/?lang=en>

¹³ Sustainable Development Charter <http://www.sd-charter.net/>

Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion

Europe 2020 is the EU Platform against Poverty which supports the Commission's focus on tackling poverty and social exclusion and will deliver to the EU2020 target of 20 million fewer people in poverty.

Tackling poverty is a key priority for the Welsh Government. All Welsh Government departments are taking forward actions aimed at tackling poverty and improving outcomes of low income households. The Tackling Poverty Action Plan (TPAP)¹⁴ sets out the targets and milestones being taken forward by the Welsh Government to reduce poverty and child poverty in Wales. Enabling parents to access sustainable employment could lay the foundations for a child's transition away from a life of poverty. Welsh Government remains committed to eradicating child poverty by 2020. The Welsh Government's [Child Poverty Strategy](#)¹⁵ sets out its vision and goals for Wales and has children's rights at its centre. The Strategy has 5 goals a number of which align with the aims and objectives of the European Social Fund. The TPAP reiterates the ESF programme target to direct at least 20 percent of the 2014-2020 ESF funds to be invested in tackling poverty and social exclusion through helping people to find and maintain sustainable employment.

The objectives of the European Social Funds are to reduce levels of worklessness and workless households, relative income poverty and persistent poverty in Wales through supporting access to sustainable employment. Section 5 of the Operation Programme titled 'The Specific Needs of Geographical Areas most affected by Poverty or Target Groups at Highest Risk of Discrimination or Social Exclusion', outlines that the focus will be on supporting people, particularly those at greatest risk of poverty and social exclusion, to access and stay in sustainable employment. Actions will look to work with those who are unemployed, underemployed or economically inactive addressing the needs of these groups and the barriers which they face in accessing and staying within the labour market. Section 5 gives specific details of these target groups. The guiding principle of all interventions will be moving the individual towards achieving and maintaining sustained employment, including self-employment, as a means to tackling poverty.

The European Social Funds actions are aimed at addressing the causes of poverty rather than dealing with the consequences. Putting in place interventions that focus actions on reducing poverty by increasing employment levels, particularly for underrepresented groups and those furthest from the labour market; to increase skills levels of the workforce and reduce the number of people with no skills or basic skills only and increase higher level skills in research and innovation; to increase youth employment and educational attainment, and to reduce inequalities in the labour market amongst women and recognised equality groups.

¹⁴ Tackling Poverty Action Plan <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/people-and-communities/tacklingpoverty/publications/taking-forward-tack-pov-plan/?lang=en>

¹⁵ Child Poverty Strategy <http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/children-and-young-people/child-poverty/?lang=en>

Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIIA)

In 2011 Wales became the first country in the UK to incorporate children's rights into domestic law with the introduction of the **Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011**. The Measure embeds consideration of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the optional protocols into Welsh law.

The Children's Rights Scheme sets out the arrangements that Ministers must have in place to comply with the duty to have due regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This Scheme was revised on 1 May 2014 to reflect further commitment to children's rights.

The Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIIA) has been developed to ensure Welsh Government Departments support Ministers to comply with the duty to have due regard to the UNCRC. The CRIIA is a six step structured tool to guide the user through the process of having due regard to the UNCRC and to ensure compliance with the duty under section 1 of the Measure.¹⁶

Strategy for the Implementation of the Cross Cutting Themes

A strategy for implementing cross cutting theme is set out in the Structural and Investment Funds Operational Programme document and includes the following:

- On-going specialist advice will be made available to beneficiaries. Specialist input will be provided at an early stage to maximise take-up of the opportunities to promote the three cross cutting themes.
- CCT assessment at all stages of the development of Operations.
- A programme of awareness raising and training will be provided to Welsh Government staff and beneficiaries on how to integrate the cross cutting themes, supported by other WEFO colleagues on the monitoring and evaluation aspects
- Guidance will be prepared together with best practice case study examples that will provide specific information on how beneficiaries can address the three cross cutting themes within their operational plans.
- Regular monitoring of progress.
- Update reports to the Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC) and other stakeholders.
- A range of Priority level indicators will also be used to promote the cross cutting themes.

¹⁶ Welsh Language Commissioners Website:

[http://www.comisiynyddygyymraeg.cymru/english/commissioner/law/the%20welsh%20language%20\(wales\)%20measure%202011/Pages/The-Welsh-Language-\(Wales\)-Measure-2011.aspx](http://www.comisiynyddygyymraeg.cymru/english/commissioner/law/the%20welsh%20language%20(wales)%20measure%202011/Pages/The-Welsh-Language-(Wales)-Measure-2011.aspx)

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Monitoring and Evaluation

WEFO has responsibility for Programme-level evaluations relating to Structural and Investment Funds, including providing advice to operations on monitoring and evaluation. Further guidance on monitoring and evaluation, including explanations of terminology, has been produced by WEFO Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (RME) Branch and is available from the WEFO website

<http://gov.wales/funding/eu-funds/2014-2020/delivering-your-project/?lang=en>

The cross cutting themes team will provide on-going advice, support and monitoring of all approved 'Operations' as well as requesting and checking the evidence which supports claims against CCT-related Indicators.

CCTs and Project Closure:

When preparing an operation for closure, the CCT Team would expect that:

- CCT-related Indicator evidence sample has been received and confirmation obtained from the CCT Team that it meets WEFO requirements
- CCT Milestones, CCT Special Conditions or Issues / Actions raised by the CCT Team against the operation have been met and agreement received from CCT team for them to be closed.
- CCT team has seen and commented on the operation's final evaluation (which needs to report against the operation's CCT aims, objectives and commitments as well as any CCT indicator achievement, successes or difficulties delivering the CCTs)

Cross Cutting Themes Fact Sheets

A series of fact sheets are available which highlight how operations have delivered against a range of equal opportunities and sustainable development indicators and wider commitments funded through the 2007-2013 programmes

Equal Opportunities and Gender Mainstreaming.

From an equality perspective, this includes: Adopting or Improving equality strategies and monitoring systems, delivering to individuals with Protected Characteristics, Vulnerable Groups, Social/Community Clauses, NEET, Non-traditional areas or work/study, Accessibility, Welsh language.

These fact sheets can be found at:

<http://gov.wales/funding/eu-funds/2014-2020/applying/cross-cutting-guidance/factsheets/?lang=en>

Sustainable Development

The factsheet provides information on improving business environmental credentials, raising awareness of environmental sustainability, training and environmental education, the promotion of efficient use of natural resources, awareness of energy conservation, resource efficiency, Eco Code implementation and promoting sustainable transport.

These fact sheets can be found at:

<http://wefo.wales.gov.uk/publications/guidance/crosscutting/;jsessionid=02B7F182F35AC9D39F27A896A8CDEB48?lang=en>

Evidence which Supports the Cross Cutting Themes

Guidance on appropriate evidence to demonstrate integration of the cross cutting themes has been drafted and informs part of the 'ESF Indicators and milestones' guidance document, which can be found at:

<http://gov.wales/funding/eu-funds/2014-2020/delivering-your-project/esf-indicators1/?lang=en>