

The Mainstreaming Legacy of the 2000-06 Structural Funds Programmes

**Summary report of the lessons learnt and good practice of the
mainstreaming of the Horizontal Themes in
the Scottish Structural Funds programmes for 2000-06**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report highlights the experience and good practice of mainstreaming the Horizontal Themes in the 2000-06 Scottish Structural Funds programmes. It is not meant to be comprehensive – there are already numerous reports and guidance on implementing the Horizontal Themes in Scotland, referenced here. In a Structural Funds context, the Horizontal Themes can be defined as being applicable across all programmes, all stages of project design and delivery and the performance framework for the programmes. In this report, the two key Horizontal Themes are discussed in detail – Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development – but the issues and lessons are common.

Our approach to mainstreaming can be characterised as *performance*- rather than *conformance*-based: ie. the Horizontal Themes are fully integrated into project planning, delivery and evaluation through a mixture of incentives, encouragement and demonstration rather than exclusively through by enforcement and penalties. The objective has been to persuade project sponsors by setting out the rationale and benefits for the Horizontal Themes, providing support and advice on how to integrate them and encouraging successful projects to pass on good practice. To achieve this, good use has been made of three sets of mainstreaming tools:

- use of champions at different levels of programme and project management;
- ‘hard-wiring’ of Horizontal Themes into all stages of project appraisal, assessment and monitoring; and
- establishment of training and mutual learning networks, particularly between project sponsors.

The approach’s success is attested by numerous evaluations, which have also identified key lessons for future programming (domestic as well as European):

- securing high-level commitment;
- making sure there is a good strategic fit and evidence base;
- fixing the right selection criteria for projects;
- maintaining networking and good practice exchange between projects sponsors; and
- putting in place a rigorous performance framework for measuring the Horizontal Themes.

The lessons have deeply informed the new programmes. This has been enhanced by two changes to mainstreaming the Horizontal Themes:

- the separation of Sustainable Development into two Horizontal Themes – Environmental Sustainability and Social Inclusion – within a common sustainable development framework; and
- the use of rigorous assessment procedures for ensuring that the Horizontal Themes have been fully integrated into new programme development through Strategic Environmental and Equal Opportunities Assessments.

1. HORIZONTAL THEMES IN SCOTTISH STRUCTURAL FUNDS: INTRODUCTION

The following report highlights the experience and good practice developed through mainstreaming the Horizontal Themes through the Scottish Structural Funds programmes in the 2000-06 period. The report is not meant to be comprehensive. There is a wealth of studies, reports and guidance that has been produced on implementing the Horizontal Themes in Scotland, much of which is referenced here. One of the aims of this report is to encourage individuals to seek out these other materials for more detail and to summarise the key elements of good practice that have underpinned the Scottish approach to mainstreaming and the lessons learnt for future programming.

This is a good time to be looking back at what has been one of the most distinctive and successful elements of the programmes. It has left a legacy that has been regularly remarked upon in evaluations of the programmes and which has informed the development of the programmes for 2007-13. Mainstreaming has a long history in Structural Funds in Scotland; however, the 2000-06 period saw the introduction of innovative new features in our approach to the Horizontal Themes, embedding a systematic approach that stands as a good model to how mainstreaming can be pursued more widely.

The focus of this report is on the systems and methods used to mainstream Horizontal Themes. It does not contain examples of successful and good practice projects, as these are already set out in other publications. Instead, it draws out the key features of the mainstreaming model in Scotland and how it has influenced the treatment of the Horizontal Themes in the 2007-13 programmes.

The report concentrates on two Horizontal Themes in particular: Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development. Other Horizontal Themes have been operated across the programmes – for example, the Objective 3 programme also included Support for Local Initiatives, Information Society and Lifelong Learning – but these two have been the most prominent, not least because of the significance of Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development in wider EU and national legislation. The approach to mainstreaming applies to all Horizontal Themes, but the examples drawn are based on these two, not least because both themes are specifically required by the EU regulation governing the implementation of Structural Funds for 2000-2006 (Council Regulation (EC) 1260/1999). This stated that Sustainable Development and Equal Opportunities must be mainstreamed across all Structural Funds programmes:

(through the) efforts to strengthen economic and social cohesion, the community also seeks to promote the harmonious, balanced and sustainable development of economic activities, a high level of employment, equality between men and women and a high level of protection and improvement of the environment.

It is worth setting out here what is meant by 'mainstreaming'. As described in a paper by the European Policies Research Centre on how the Horizontal Themes have been mainstreamed across Structural Funds programmes:

*'Mainstreaming' implies integrating a given issues or perspective fully and consistently into mainstream policies as they are developed, implemented and evaluated.... and, in so doing, involves the issues in question being transformed from the exclusive concerns of specialists to integral aspects of the day-to-day activity of all economic developers, understood and applied as a routine part of their work.*¹

In practice, the training, awareness-raising and obligation to address the Horizontal Themes in project development and delivery carried out by the Scottish programmes has emphasised an approach to mainstreaming which:

- encourages projects to consider Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development in their activities as a matter of routine; and
- focuses on facilitating wider cultural change on the part of organisations leading to practical results, so it is as much about changing the *processes* of creating economic development policy as influencing its *outcomes*.

Mainstreaming is different from positive action: the latter takes place where the programmes have specifically-funded activity that addresses Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development as their primary goals. Positive action is an important part of Structural Funds programming in Scotland, with specific support for environmental sustainability activities – such as renewable energy – and addressing gender imbalances in the workforce. The Scottish approach has long pursued a twin-track approach employing both strands.

The following chapters in this report summarise how the approach has been taken forward in Scotland:

- How the Horizontal Themes have been defined in the Scottish programmes
- How mainstreaming has been taken forward
- How the Equal Opportunities theme has been mainstreamed
- How Sustainable Development has been mainstreamed
- Examples of mainstreaming success stories
- Key lessons for the future

The report has been prepared within the European Structural Funds Division in the Scottish Government in January 2008, but draws heavily on the work of others, particularly:

- the report, *Mainstreaming Equal Opportunities in the Scottish Structural Funds Programmes*, by the National Advisor on Equal Opportunities, Muriel Mackenzie;

¹ IQ-NET Thematic Paper 10(2) *Mainstreaming the Horizontal Themes into Structural Fund Programming*, European Policies Research Centre, University of Strathclyde, 2001: [http://www.eprc.strath.ac.uk/ignet/downloads/IQ-Net_Reports\(Public\)/10.2Horizontal%20Themes.pdf](http://www.eprc.strath.ac.uk/ignet/downloads/IQ-Net_Reports(Public)/10.2Horizontal%20Themes.pdf).

- the report, *Mainstreaming Sustainable Development in Regional Regeneration*, by the East of Scotland European Partnership (ESEP) Key Policies Group;²
- the Scottish Environment Protection Agency / Scottish Natural Heritage joint report, *Linking Sustainable Development to Regional Development*,³
- an article for the European Environment journal by Calum Macleod, former National Advisor for Sustainable Development in Scotland;⁴ and
- report of the Horizontal Themes Review Group for the South of Scotland Programme Monitoring Committee on the legacy of the Horizontal Themes in the Objective 2 South of Scotland programme.⁵

Interested individuals should seek out these documents to appreciate the range and intensity of mainstreaming activity within Scotland.

² Birley, T, McLaren, G, Llanwarne, A and Tamburrini, S (2004) *Mainstreaming Sustainable Development in Regional Regeneration*, Key Policies Group report: http://www.esep.co.uk/East0006/east_dloads/east_horznt/susdevpt_mainstream.pdf.

³ http://www.esep.co.uk/East0006/east_dloads/east_horznt/susdevpt_sepa.pdf.

⁴ Macleod, C (2005) 'Integrating sustainable development into Structural Funds programmes: an evaluation of the Scottish experience', *European Environment*, pp.313-31.

⁵ South of Scotland European Partnership report, 'Evaluating the Legacy: Horizontal Themes', September 2006.

2. WHAT ARE THE HORIZONTAL THEMES?

Structural Funds target different aspects of economic development through specific measures and priorities on what might be called a 'vertical' basis. 'Horizontal Themes' operate differently. In a Structural Funds context, they have the following characteristics:

- they are principles that apply across all programmes, priorities and measures;
- they should be applied at all stages of project design and delivery and become part of the culture of project sponsor organisations; and
- their impact should be measurable through indicators and targets and measured on a regular basis.

They are issues that should not be seen as separate and distinct from the stated economic development goals of the programmes, but fully complementary with these goals. They do not constitute an additional set of aims for the programmes, but the framework within which the programmes are better able to achieve their objectives. In this context, Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development were chosen as issues that should permeate all aspects of programming for the following reasons:

- their integration into projects would enhance the overall goals of the programmes in boosting economic growth: so, for example, a greater environmental awareness would result in increased economic opportunities for Scotland (eg. renewable energy technologies), while in the case of equal opportunities, a more inclusive approach to encouraging and facilitating all groups into the labour market would increase Scotland's overall employment rate; and
- their integration carried strong social equity goals that complemented the economic development focus of the programmes.

Each of the themes have been defined at EU level with regulations and guidance setting out what is expected of the programmes. However, Scotland has specific definitions for these concepts, rooted in domestic policy practice – they take full account of EU definitions, but extend them ambitiously. Before discussing how mainstreaming has been taken forward in Scotland, it is important to understand how the Themes have been expressed in a Scottish policy context.

Equal Opportunities

The 2000-06 Scottish Programmes took their definition of Equal Opportunities from the 1998 Scotland Act which established Scottish devolution. This stated:

the prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between persons on grounds of sex or marital status, on racial grounds, or on grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or of other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions, such as religious beliefs or political opinions.

The key point about this definition is that it is a wider view of Equal Opportunities than the EU focus on gender mainstreaming. In keeping with the approach embodied

in the Amsterdam Treaty and existing UK legislation, Equal Opportunities have set a challenging wider perspective. This has been reinforced in recent years by UK legislation, such as the Equality Act 2006, which introduced proactive Public Sector Duties with respect to disability as well as gender equality, and age discrimination legislation.

Sustainable Development

In Scotland, Sustainable Development is not simply 'environmental sustainability'. It places a sensitivity to the current environmental challenges within a wider economic and social development perspective. By focusing on *Sustainable* Development, Scotland has pursued a more holistic concept with three key elements:

- the aim of supporting continuing economic development, but within a framework that ensures –
- a socially inclusive and fair distribution of the benefits of economic growth as well as a commitment to minimising the share of the costs of economic growth borne by the most vulnerable parts of society; and
- a commitment to conserving our environmental assets for future generations.

Again, this tripartite approach has been reinforced in recent years by the Scottish requirement that all major policy developments undergo a Strategic Environmental Assessment to determine the environmental impacts of the resulting activities and to set out solutions for mitigating any potential harmful effects: in essence, ensuring that environmental sustainability underpins all major economic development strategic activity.

3. HOW HAS MAINSTREAMING BEEN ACHIEVED?

The Scottish approach to mainstreaming has been based on the principle of *performance* rather than *conformance*. In other words, the integration of the Horizontal Themes into project planning, delivery and evaluation has been facilitated by the use of incentives, encouragement and demonstration rather than exclusively through the use of enforcement and penalties. The objective has not simply been to compel sponsors to adopt the Horizontal Themes, but to *persuade* them by setting out the rationale and benefits for their adoption, provide support and advice on how to integrate the Themes and encourage successful projects to pass on their good practice. This has been particularly effective through the development of learning networks among partners, working on the principle that mainstreaming works best when it is taken up more widely – and enthusiastically – by partners rather than concentrated in the programme management.

Different techniques have been employed at different stages in the project life-cycle to ensure that the Horizontal Themes have been integrated across the programmes.

- For project planning, projects have been encouraged to consider the Horizontal Themes through their prominence in the Operational Programmes (typically with dedicated chapters describing them and highlighting their importance in the programme's aims and objectives) and in application guidance. In addition, the application forms have required projects to set out in detail how the projects would mainstream the Horizontal Themes, forcing project sponsors to consider the Themes at length.
- For project delivery, programme managers have monitored progress in taking forward the Horizontal Themes as part of the normal monitoring of project activity. Indicators were established in the different programmes to ensure that projects reported on different aspects of mainstreaming and targets set. Moreover, there have been extensive programmes of workshops and good practice sessions designed to provide continuing support for mainstreaming to project managers.
- Finally, for project evaluation, the Horizontal Themes were explicitly assessed in the key evaluations of the programmes – notably the mid-term evaluations and the mid-term evaluation updates – and the results and recommendations from the evaluation reports fed back to programme managers and Programme Monitoring Committees so appropriate action could be taken.

In each stage, common mechanisms have been used to reinforce the mainstreaming approach for both Horizontal Themes. These mechanisms are at the heart of the Scottish approach. Three sets of mechanisms have been critical to the Scottish approach:

- the use of champions;
- the 'hard-wiring' of Horizontal Themes into the project appraisal, assessment and monitoring systems; and
- the establishment of training and mutual learning networks.

Champions

The literature on mainstreaming acknowledges the importance of having champions for the Horizontal Themes. Champions need to be in place at each level of programme and project management. These champions have several roles:

- they ensure the visibility of the Horizontal Themes at each level of the programme, whether senior programme managers or individual project sponsors;
- they provide guidance and support on how the Horizontal Themes can be integrated into programme and project development; and
- they can help the wider integration of the Horizontal Themes by acting as policy 'missionaries' beyond Structural Funds.

The key champions for the Horizontal Themes have been the National Advisors. For the Scottish programmes as a whole, National Advisors were established for both Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development to oversee and champion mainstreaming across the Structural Funds. Their specific tasks are discussed in the theme-specific sections below, but overall, the National Advisors were responsible for:

- working with the different programme partnerships to draw out and disseminate good practice in mainstreaming;
- advising the Managing Authority and the Programme Management Executives (PMEs) on the systems in place to mainstream, monitor and evaluate the Horizontal Themes;
- providing training to programme management staff and Advisory Group members on the Horizontal Themes;
- reporting on the Horizontal Themes to different parts of programme management and to the European Commission through the Annual Implementation Reports;
- identifying good practice from other programmes outside Scotland; and
- identifying key policy developments in Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development that would affect programme and project operations.

As the Horizontal Themes do not exist in isolation from each other, the National Advisors worked together and developed common approaches to support programme and project managers (eg. joint training sessions). The synergy from the two Themes acting in parallel is another element of the holistic approach to mainstreaming taken by the Scottish programmes.

Champions existed in other parts of programme management as well. The Managing Authority and the PMEs all had their own designated Horizontal Theme champions. For some programmes, there were dedicated groups established to ensure mainstreaming of the Horizontal Themes was taken forward.

Lastly, special Fora were established to provide a focus for discussion and action on Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development across all the programmes and

partners. For example, the Scottish Structural Funds Equal Opportunities Forum was established in 2000 with representatives from the five Structural Funds PMEs, the Scottish Executive European Structural Funds Division and Equality Unit, the Council of Scottish Local Authorities, Scottish Enterprise, the Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations, UHI Millennium Institute, Craigmillar European Partnership, the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Equality Network, and the Scottish Parliament's Equal Opportunities Committee. The Forum met twice each year and offered the opportunity to discuss mainstreaming issues with other practitioners, sharing expertise and experiences.

The remit of the Equal Opportunities Forum was as follows:

- consideration of what the Scottish Structural Funds Programmes are doing to ensure mainstreaming of Equal Opportunities including dissemination, publicity and awareness raising to the beneficiaries and to the Partner organisations;
- an opportunity for those running projects to advise on their efforts and whether these could be mainstreamed;
- ensure that the PMEs were continuing to direct EU funding to areas in line with Scottish and UK policy developments (to ensure that this was happening, it was important that the views of the Scottish Executive Equality Unit, Scottish Parliament and the Commissions on Equal Opportunities, Race Equality and Disability were all taken into account); and
- raise awareness of the Scottish programmes as potential funding sources for Equal Opportunities projects.

Project assessment

If the Horizontal Themes are to be taken seriously by projects, they need to be built into the project appraisal and assessment framework in a way that gave clear weight to their importance. Across the Scottish programmes, this has been done in two important ways.

- Scoring criteria for project applications. How applications have addressed the Horizontal Themes is an explicit criteria in all the programmes against which applications are scored. Projects that give cursory attention to the Themes score badly. In many cases, minimum scores have been required for each of the Horizontal Themes if projects were to be funded. It was not enough simply to state that the Themes 'did not apply' – projects were required to demonstrate that at the very least, the Themes were considered at all stages of project development, even if the action taken at the end was minimal.

One example of such a scoring system is that used by Strathclyde European Partnership for the Objective 2 West of Scotland programme on environmental impact and resource efficiency. The following scoring guide was used:

- '0' was given to projects demonstrating little or no consideration of environmental issues beyond those required by legislation
- '1-3' was given to project demonstrating a consistent and well-integrated approach to environmental integration

- '4-5' was given to projects demonstrating a consistent and well-integrated approach to environmental issues, but one that includes appropriate partnership working or professional advice from environmental bodies

In assessing how applications addressed the issue, guidance was also given to advisory groups that projects were expected to demonstrate in some detail that they were going above and beyond mere statutory compliance in their mainstreaming activities (eg. simply noting that the lead sponsor had an equal opportunities statement was not enough). In this way, applicants were strongly encouraged to pursue mainstreaming meaningfully rather than simply by 'ticking the boxes'.

- Indicators and targets. Each programme had targets that were directly linked to the achievement of the Horizontal Themes – for example, gender composition of beneficiaries was undertaken of ESF training activities, while the number of businesses undertaking environmental management, increase in the volume of waste recycled and increase in the share of energy from renewable resources were ERDF indicators in the Highlands & Islands programme.

Monitoring is an important aspect of this. A good example of how data has been collected on Equal Opportunities has been the Objective 3 programmes' use of a specialised qualitative questionnaire issued to all project sponsors. The responses were analysed annually and reported to the PMC and in the Annual Implementation Report.

Guidance and training

Lastly, mainstreaming was supported by a planned programme of guidance and training on integrating the Horizontal Themes by each of the PMEs. The programme of awareness raising and support were set out in PME action plans, which aimed at developing and sharing good practice throughout Single Programming Documents (SPDs) and at broadening the understanding and importance of the Horizontal Themes for all partners. In several cases, these action plans were approved by the respective Programme Monitoring Committees early in the programming period as well as by the respective Horizontal Theme Fora for their consideration to ensure consistency between the programmes, and to establish an overview of the approach to mainstreaming at a pan-Scotland level. Typically, these action plans described the context and distinctive characteristics of the programme and set out priorities and a future plan of work. They contained commitments to mainstream the Horizontal Themes through project monitoring, training and awareness-raising, reporting through the Annual Implementation Reports and project appraisal and selection criteria.

Within these action plans, guidance and training had several components, ranging from the provision of easily-accessible materials for projects to face-to-face training sessions and workshops to networks of good practice.

- Online guidance. All the key programme websites contained dedicated guidance for projects to integrate the Horizontal Themes, including toolkits that enable applicants to consider mainstreaming from a practical perspective within the whole project life-cycle.

A good example of this is the West of Scotland Objective 2 programme documentation with respect to Equal Opportunities, placing the theme in context, and encouraging projects to consider how they can be proactive on the issue.

- First, in the 'Economic and Social Context' chapter, where possible statistics were disaggregated by gender, disability and ethnicity, highlighting any specific Equal Opportunities issues arising from the analysis.
- Second, the SPD carried a clear aim to eliminate inequalities and to support the principles of mainstreaming Equal Opportunities at all stages of implementation of the Programme. Indeed, one of the four Programme Strategic Objectives was to 'Promote Equal Opportunities' – this objective focused on the mainstreaming of Equal Opportunities relating to all aspects of the Programme to reduce inequalities and disparities.
- Third, reference to Equal Opportunities was built into each of the programme's priorities and measures, through the inclusion of measure-specific indicators on Equal Opportunities issues.
- Lastly, the SPD also contained a Strategic Equal Opportunities Assessment of the Programme, carried out by the Equal Opportunities Focus Group, highlighting how the equal opportunities objectives of the programme can interact at a priority and measure level.
- Training. Training in the philosophy and practicalities of mainstreaming the Horizontal Themes was cascaded throughout the programmes, including programme managers as well as individual projects sponsors. This included special workshops as well as part of bilateral meetings with projects, normally led by the National Advisors or the dedicated Horizontal Theme managers in the PMEs.
- Celebration of good practice. The last way in which mainstreaming has been culturally embedded has been through the celebration of notable mainstreaming examples. Award ceremonies were built into good practice events for projects, involving the celebration of good examples of integrating the Horizontal Themes which provided opportunities to highlight innovative forms of integration and to emphasise their importance in project and programme design. A good example of this is the Good Practice Awards run annually by the Objective 3 PME, as described in section six below.

4. MAINSTREAMING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The approach set out in the previous section applied equally to Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development. However, within the Equal Opportunities Horizontal Theme, there have been some distinctive features of mainstreaming that are worth highlighting. While not an exhaustive list, this section details several of the more notable elements of good practice for Equal Opportunities:

- the work of the National Advisor for Equal Opportunities;
- key promotional events, such as the Gender Mainstreaming Conference and the Mainstreaming Horizontal Themes Good Practice Event; and
- the Equal Opportunities Good Practice Guide.

National Advisor for Equal Opportunities

As noted above, National Advisors operated across Scotland, providing advice and support on the mainstreaming of the Horizontal Themes. The post National Advisor for Equal Opportunities post was created 2002 and funded by the five PMEs. The post came to an end in 2007.

The National Advisor's work priorities were agreed as follows:

- work with Scottish Structural Funds Partnerships to examine current practice on Equal Opportunities mainstreaming in the programmes, and publicise good practice and share experience within and across programmes;
- examine systems used by PMEs to monitor Equal Opportunities and suggest improvements to monitoring systems;
- map out the training needs for PMEs and help develop appropriate training programmes to be undertaken by PMEs;
- advise Steering Groups and consultants on equalities issues in the mid-term evaluations of the programmes, and ensuring that the methodologies used in evaluation embed Equal Opportunities;
- discuss with equalities agencies the need to identify sources of baseline information;
- consider how to facilitate positive action projects; and
- identify and publicise good mainstreaming practice from other Member States which was transferable to Scottish programmes.

Events

In addition to the smaller-scale but numerous good practice workshops and events to support mainstreaming issues (eg. with respect to project application), there were two significant events in 2000-06 which are worth highlighting: the Gender Mainstreaming Conference; and the Good Practice Event for Mainstreaming the Horizontal Themes.

- Gender Mainstreaming Conference. The Scottish Executive and the five PMEs hosted the third of an annual series of Gender Equality Conferences for UK and Ireland Structural Funds Programmes. It was held at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on 19 November 2003. In keeping with the multi-strand approach to the Horizontal Themes in Scotland, the conference theme was widened to address the full spectrum of Equal Opportunities strands rather than focus exclusively on gender equality. The conference included workshops on a range of topics including a stock-taking of the methodologies for equal opportunities used by the mid-term evaluations, the difficulties in generating positive action projects, and the challenges of mainstreaming equal opportunities in rural areas. Overall, the conference proved to be a valuable opportunity for a comparative review of the results of the mid-term evaluations with respect to Equal Opportunities.
- Mainstreaming the Horizontal Themes Good Practice Event. This event took place in Dunfermline in October 2004 and was attended by around 120 delegates from the Objective 2 and 3 Partnerships and from other EU Member States. The event included practical workshops based around 'live' projects supported by the Eastern Scotland Objective 2 Programme, the Scottish Objective 3 Programme and the EQUAL Community Initiative in Scotland. The workshops focused on sharing experience of mainstreaming Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development, and feedback from delegates was positive. The workshops provided an opportunity for delegates to share experience of mainstreaming the Horizontal Themes and commenced with a short presentation on the project, followed by more in-depth discussion on delegates' own experience of mainstreaming. Three publications were launched at this event, 'Linking Sustainable Development to Regional Regeneration', 'Mainstreaming Sustainable Development: Review of the ESEP Approach and Guidance for Applicants' and 'Equality in Practice – Making it Work'.

Equal Opportunities Good Practice Guide

In 2004 'Equality In Practice – Making It Work: A Practical Guide for the EU Structural Funds'⁶ was produced by the National Advisor for Equal Opportunities. The guide provided projects with an easy-to-use manual to help ensure that mainstreaming Equal Opportunities took place at each stage of project design and delivery, and to share the extensive experience of mainstreaming Equal Opportunities in projects funded by the Structural Funds in Scotland. The Guide provided good practice examples and case studies taken from a range of projects from the five Scottish Programmes and the four Community Initiatives operating 2000-06.

Discussions with partner organisations and projects highlighted an increased demand for an exchange of experience guide, which used real examples from projects funded through ESF and ERDF. The guide gave contact details to facilitate exchanges between projects and programmes, and the clear message in the guide was that all projects can address Equal Opportunities issues. The range of projects covered activity in:

⁶ http://www.esep.co.uk/assets/files/Equal_Opportunities_in_Practice.pdf.

- business start up and growth
- community economic development
- research and development
- urban development
- rural development
- industrial sites and premises
- tourism
- training for employed people
- training for non-employed people

It presented case studies from projects, giving consideration to how projects had addressed Equal Opportunities issues. Importantly, it also detailed the challenges they faced and how these were overcome. The guide gave advice on monitoring Equal Opportunities in projects, enabling projects to develop checklists for their own activity from examples in the guide, and PME's to develop checklists for project monitoring.

The guide was a useful tool for PME's for awareness-raising with projects, and it was well also received by partner organisations, projects, staff in the European Commission, and Structural Fund Programmes in the rest of the UK and other EU Member States.

5. MAINSTREAMING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

As with Equal Opportunities, the Sustainable Development Horizontal Theme presented a number of good-practice elements that are worth detailing in their own section:

- the work of the National Advisor for Sustainable Development;
- key promotional events, such as the conference on mainstreaming Sustainable Development; and
- the ESEP report and guidance, *Mainstreaming Sustainable Development in Regional Development*, and the core criteria for project appraisal.

National Advisor for Equal Opportunities

Like the National Advisor for Equal Opportunities, the National Advisor for Sustainable Development was also created at the start of the programming period with a remit to operate across all the Scottish programmes. The post had broadly comparable functions to the National Advisor for Equal Opportunities – and often carried these out in close co-ordination with the latter – but was funded differently. The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) jointly funded the post.

One activity that can be highlighted is the National Advisor's work in producing the joint SEPA/SNH report, *Linking Sustainable Development to Regional Regeneration*⁷. The report had three objectives:

- it illustrated how Sustainable Development principles have been integrated into Scotland's programmes;
- it gave case-study examples of funded projects, demonstrating the actual benefits of mainstreaming Sustainable Development into economic development projects; and
- it identified key lessons from Scottish mainstreaming experience that should inform future Structural Funds and regional policy development in Scotland.

Events

Again, as with Equal Opportunities, there have been a number of workshops and seminars on mainstreaming Sustainable Development. In addition, there has also been significant, high-profile events which have publicised the contribution of Sustainable Development to Structural Funds and regional economic activity.

In October 2004, a one-day conference was held to promote the mainstreaming of sustainable development across Scottish Structural Funds programmes and to highlight best practice amongst programme managers, sponsor partners and project applicants. The conference launched two publications consolidating learning from the sustainable development approach: *Linking Sustainable Development to Regional Development* (as discussed above) and *Mainstreaming Sustainable Development in Regional Regeneration* (as discussed below).

⁷ http://www.esep.co.uk/East0006/east_downloads/east_horznt/susdevpt_sepa.pdf.

Mainstreaming Sustainable Development in Regional Regeneration

The East of Scotland European Partnership published a report setting out the East of Scotland Objective 2 Programme's approach to mainstreaming Sustainable Development.⁸ It builds on the region's participation in the European Commission project in which 12 EU regions shared good practice in Sustainable Development as a theme in Structural Funds. The report not only assessed progress in developing the approach, but also provided guidance to applicants in how Sustainable Development should be mainstreamed, a toolkit with how-to advice and the core criteria against which projects would be appraised.

The criteria are worth discussing in more detail. These criteria were identified as fundamental to the design, appraisal and selection of all projects supported by the programme. By embedding the tripartite approach to Sustainable development, these 12 core criteria ensured that all aspects of Sustainable Development would be considered by project developers:

- net additional jobs: how many net additional jobs would be created or safeguarded by the project;
- evidence of demand: what is the quality, validity and robustness of the market research and evidence of market failure;
- partnership and leverage: the scope, intensity and value of the partnership between participating organisations and level of resources that would be levered into the project;
- infrastructure impact: how the project makes use of serviced/brownfield sites and existing buildings and services;
- resource efficiency: extent to which the project encourages efficient procurement and usage of water, energy and raw materials, minimises waste and encourages use of 'green' products and services;
- environmental impact: contribution of the project to the enhancement and/or protection of the environment;
- access and equal opportunity: extent to which the project actively promotes full and equal participation of individuals and social groups from the local economy;
- local added value: how much local value added is generated by the project;
- capacity building: degree to which the project addresses deficiencies in local economic and social infrastructure, organisational competencies and workforce skills;
- social inclusion: how far the project integrates disadvantaged communities into mainstream activities;
- strategic integration: number and intensity of linkages to relevant local, national and European strategies; and

⁸ These are described in more detail in the *Mainstreaming Sustainable Development in Regional Regeneration* report discussed above:
http://www.esep.co.uk/East0006/east_dloads/east_horznt/susdevpt_mainstream.pdf.

- durability and feasibility: how the project will become self-sustaining over time.

Each of these criteria have clear application to one of the three aspects underpinning Sustainable Development – for example:

- resource efficiency and environmental impact for the environmental sustainability pillar;
- access and equal opportunity and social inclusion for the social inclusiveness pillar; and
- net additional jobs and evidence of demand for the economic development pillar.

In combination, the criteria comprehensively measure the sustainable development impact of applications. Versions of these criteria can be found in all the Scottish programmes.

6. MAINSTREAMING SUCCESS STORIES

The previous sections identified a range of activity that demonstrates the breadth and intensity of mainstreaming within the Scottish Structural Funds programmes. To this must be added a recognition of the *diversity* of activity. In this section, more detail is given on some of the more successful activities that took place, often at local/programme level, which shows how the mainstreaming approach was taken forward in different ways by the partnerships and programmes. Five examples are given here:

- the Highlands and Islands Equality Forum;
- the ESEP Key Policies Group;
- the Objective 3 Good Practice Awards;
- the Horizontal Themes Learning Review Group in the South of Scotland; and
- the Equal Opportunities Working Group in the Objective 2 West of Scotland Programme.

Highlands and Islands Equality Forum

The Highlands and Islands Equality Forum (HIEF) is an ESF-funded project which raises awareness of equality issues and delivers equality training at local levels to small businesses, voluntary organisations, education institutes and public authorities, working in partnership with Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, the UHI Millennium Institute, Local Authorities and Communities Scotland. It was funded by ESF through the Highlands & Islands programme for 2000-06. HIEF's work programme focused on six strands: training and learning; awareness-raising; events; research; communication; and strategic programme and greatly adds to the understanding and practice of mainstreaming in the programme area.

The HIEF has been active in holding a number of events. It held a business seminar in September 2005 which brought together members of the business community to discuss the impact of equality and diversity. The seminar was successful in encouraging both business networking and the exchange of thoughts, ideas and opinions. In November the Forum held an Employment Opportunities Event in Inverness which attracted over 100 people, bringing together 'inclusive' employers – those who do not discriminate and who welcome applications from under-represented groups – and people searching for job opportunities.

The HIEF approach to training has been responsive to local needs and was designed and delivered to overcome barriers of rural geography, providing training to local areas, including sparsely-populated areas, and at a time that suits local needs. The HIEF held awareness-raising roadshows in the spring and autumn of 2006 throughout the Highlands & Islands area, reflecting a significant increase in demand for these events. Workshops were open to all businesses, organisations and individuals, and provided information on changes to equality legislation, including changes to the Equal Opportunities legislation, the public sector duties on gender and disability and changes to legislation on religion and belief and sexual orientation.

In addition to the roadshows, HIEF delivered training sessions, covering topics such as general awareness-raising, disability awareness, race and gender, age, attitudinal challenging and case-history workshops, guidance on new public duties, and train-the-trainer sessions with key networks such as the Adult Literacy Network. The HIEF also provided aftercare to organisations who have been involved in roadshows, training and learning events or consultations, and included: cards for providing contact details (followed up within two weeks); one-to-one meetings for follow-up work; signposting to further information or contacts; and problem solving for organisations on specific issues, for example regarding legislative requirements. In 2005/06, 80% of beneficiaries said that their awareness had improved after one of the HIEF's sessions (89% for roadshows and 71% for training events).

The HIEF promotes diversity and equality in the workplace and delivers training to employers to help promote understanding of all equality issues in the workplace, challenging prejudice and attitudes and ensure equal opportunity policies are in place and monitored. The HIEF identifies examples of best practice within the private sector to act as role models and motivators to other SMEs, and to highlight champions of any new equality legislation. It has developed an approach which has increased the number and range of employers involved with the project, including: using venues that businesses would use themselves; using extended lunchtime sessions to fit with business needs; going to businesses to deliver training; fitting training into other training days or sessions; and flexibility and willingness to talk to businesses and be reactive to their needs.

ESEP Key Policies Group

The ESEP Key Policies Group was set up to oversee and accompany the implementation and mainstreaming of the Programme's Sustainable Development and Equal Opportunities Horizontal Themes. It was a non-executive group which sat alongside the Advisory Groups and met regularly to review progress and initiate and manage new activity. It combined expertise on sustainable development and equal opportunities and comprised PME staff, representatives from the Scottish Executive, the Objective 3 Programme, environmental agencies, Local Authorities, Scottish Enterprise, ESEP's Sustainable Development Consultant Advisor and the National Advisors on Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development.

The Key Policies Group had responsibility for maintaining progress on ESEP's mainstreaming of the Horizontal Themes of Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development. The priorities for the Group were initially set out in the Mainstreaming Sustainable Development Action Plan. Subsequently this was strengthened by giving additional weight to the inclusion of equal opportunities expertise. The main priorities for the Group were to continue the programme of awareness-raising; and give support and encouragement to positive actions to demonstrate the Horizontal Themes in practice. The Group had a continuing interest in sharing experience with other European regions, building on its track of taking part in EU initiatives, seminars and exchanges of good practice. It also maintained awareness of developments in policy and practice in Sustainable Development and Equal Opportunities at UK, Scottish and EU programme levels.

Several features of the Key Policies Group's way of working are worth highlighting. First, the Group was the successor to the Steering Group of ESEP's successful EC-sponsored pilot project of applying Sustainable Development to Structural Funds programmes in the 1997-99 Programme. This continuity gave the Group a track record and considerable experience. Secondly, it continued to be chaired by ESEP's Director and its broad and representative membership gives the Group leadership and status, and also ensured it remained rooted in the wider partnership.

Objective 3 Good Practice Awards

The Objective 3 PME introduced annual awards ceremonies to celebrate good practice in projects funded through the 2000-06 Programme that demonstrated exceptional activity in specific categories, based on project delivery and outcomes. The awards were a good example in practice of the twin-track approach of positive action and mainstreaming – there was an award specifically for good practice 'Equal Opportunities', but award winners in other categories often provided good examples of mainstreaming:

- For example, at the 2005 Awards, the project which won the category, 'Most Creative Use of Publicity', was a Construction Industry Training Board project, 'Women into Construction'. This project raised awareness, provided careers and training advice and developed an employers' helpline, promoting equal opportunities. Their aim was to focus on encouraging women of all ages to adopt careers in a sector where they are under-represented at all levels including craft, technician, management and professional.
- Again, the category of 'Best Support Package Provided to an Objective 3 Target Group' was awarded to Aberdeen City Council's Minority Ethnic Childcare project which was selected because of its ability to demonstrate a vast range of support to its beneficiaries from the very outset through its advertising, initial assessment of needs, interviews, interpreters, family-friendly timetabling and children's support. It was created to attract minority ethnic people who wished to train and work in the childcare sector.

SoSEP Horizontal Themes Learning Review Group

At the end of 2005, a Horizontal Themes Review Group was set up to examine some of the issues regarding mainstreaming the Horizontal Themes identified in the mid-term evaluation and the subsequent mid-term evaluation update of the Objective 2 Programme for the South of Scotland. The South of Scotland European Partnership (SoSEP) PME thought that it was important to acknowledge the body of knowledge on mainstreaming built up over the life of the current programme, and to learn lessons from the experiences and processes. The Review Group was made up of PME staff, representatives from key partnership agencies across the South of Scotland, and the two Horizontal Themes National Advisors. The scope of the review was agreed as follows:

- to re-assess, if appropriate, the impact of the programme's activities on mainstreaming Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development;

- to formulate further recommendations on:
 - any short term action points which will help to strengthen effective mainstreaming of the Horizontal Themes during the remainder of the 2000-06 programme,
 - ways to build on the experience of the current programme to help ensure that Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development are at the heart of policy-making across the South of Scotland after 2006, and help to demonstrate the capability of the current programme itself to leave a sustainable legacy.

This led to the production of a report which:

- addressed the question of what the South of Scotland the predominant issues of mainstreaming Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development;
- provided recommendations that are realistic and achievable; and
- had the capacity to inform and invigorate discussion about the effective integration of Horizontal Themes into future corporate strategies

The Review Group held a workshop in June 2006 involving a cross-section of project managers from the South of Scotland programme. The discussion focused on:

- project managers' experience of applying the Horizontal Themes to individual projects within the programme;
- project managers' experience of the outcomes from the process – what has been achieved on the ground; and
- views (obtained through small group discussion) on what sorts of actions might help to improve integration of the Horizontal Themes in any Structural Funds programme applicable to the South of Scotland after 2006.

The Review Group used the feedback from the workshop as the basis for drawing up findings and recommendations. They benchmarked the findings from the workshop against findings from other surveys and research work carried out at a Scotland-wide level. The group looked into solutions or initiatives put in place elsewhere in order to harness wider good practice experience.

The main conclusions arising from the Review were:

- a. There are sources of funding available to help specifically with Equal Opportunities or Sustainable Development issues. The difference between these and Structural Funds was that the purpose of the latter was to encourage applicants to incorporate equal opportunities and sustainable development principles into wider economic development activity. The challenge was for people to make this link. The difficulty was the risk of perceptions that in terms of economic or business development or achieving more competitiveness, Equal Opportunities or Sustainable Development principles are seen as (at best) an add on or (at worst) an irrelevance or an additional and unnecessary burden. This was compounded when these themes were seen to focus on issues that were not viewed as being core.

- b. The experience of the South of Scotland Objective 2 programme suggested that the programme had a genuine and creditable impact on mainstreaming Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development principles.
- c. At the same time, however, the programme highlighted a number of learning experiences and it would be equally important that these were used to allow the next programme to build further on the achievements reached to date. In particular, these experiences suggested that the critical need in terms of planning for the next round of Structural Funds was to establish successfully that there was a genuine link between economic development and achieving competitiveness on the one hand, and incorporating Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development principles on the other in order to achieve full understanding and commitment at all levels. The fundamental first building blocks which the experience of the 2000-06 programme would suggest needed to be in place in order to accomplish this were:
 - ♦ to establish the business case for incorporating Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development principles into economic development and business development activity;
 - ♦ to have performance measures which have the capability to address Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development issues relevant to specific geographical regions of Scotland and which thus help to reinforce the business case for active adoption of such principles; and
 - ♦ to have in place active leadership at the top and facilities for advice and support for those on the ground.

Strathclyde European Partnership Equal Opportunities Working Group

At a training session for Advisory Group members the National Advisors and Advisory Group members discussed some of the challenges in measuring the impact of mainstreaming equal opportunities. As a result, a short-term Equal Opportunities Working Group was set up for the West of Scotland Objective 2 Programme, and comprised members of Advisory Groups (Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire, Stow College, SEPA, Ayr College, and Scottish Screen), PME staff and the Equal Opportunities National Advisor. The remit of the group was to examine issues around measuring the impact of mainstreaming equal opportunities in projects supported through the Structural Funds programmes, which could also be used by partners within their own organisations. The focus of the Working Group was on the Equal Opportunities strands of age, disability, gender and race/ethnicity. The Group also examined complementarity with the equal opportunities criteria applied by co-funders of projects as part of the development of the impact measurement system.

The Group examined existing impact measurement systems to ascertain which of these could be used as the basis for the development of an Equal Opportunities tool. They also examined:

- the Equal Opportunities criteria of match funders, and how a mainstreaming approach complements social inclusion and community planning strategies, focusing on issues such as how best to set baselines;
- some of the challenges in gathering information on Equal Opportunities;

- how best to report on progress; and
- trying to identify methodologies for measuring success.

The Group also spent time considering how and how the Structural Funds experience could help public sector bodies meet the new equality duties being introduced at that time.

7. KEY LESSONS

To conclude this report, the legacy of the Horizontal Themes is discussed in the context of future programmes. With the sharp drop in Structural Funds coming to Scotland for 2007-13, there is a strong possibility that this will be the last major Structural Funds period in Scotland. Everything about the 2007-13 programmes is focused on legacy: both in terms of winding down (eg. developing exit strategies for project sponsors) as well as consolidating (eg. deciding what should be mainstreamed beyond the lifetime of the programmes). One of those legacies will be the Horizontal Themes, so it is important that the experience of past programming is distilled, refined and disseminated beyond Structural Funds to ensure that it has a lasting impact.

In this final section, Key Lessons are discussed in two ways. First – looking backwards to assess how effective mainstreaming has been pursued in Scotland and what that experience should teach the new (and potentially last) programmes. Second – looking forwards in terms of how that experience has shaped the 2007-13 programmes.

Looking back: assessment of the Horizontal Themes 2000-06

Mainstreaming has been extensively evaluated, particularly by the mid-term evaluations carried out on all the Scottish programmes (followed up by the mid-term evaluation updates). In general, the evaluations have verified the broad success of the Scottish mainstreaming approach. For example:

- The report of the Objective 2 West of Scotland programme found that applications improved their treatment of the Horizontal Themes after the PME's awareness-raising activities.
- The mid-term evaluation and mid-term evaluation update of the Objective 2 West of Scotland programme concluded explicitly that there had been good progress in mainstreaming the two key Horizontal Themes.

These results of these evaluations have been validated by the monitoring work done on the Horizontal Themes by the Objective 3 programme through its annual questionnaire, which found that 63% of applicants had seen the Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development toolkits and 43% had used them.

Nevertheless, evaluation of mainstreaming identified weaknesses in the mainstreaming approach that required further work. The SoSEP report noted above – 'Evaluating the Legacy: Horizontal Themes' – summarises well the key issues to be addressed, which are applicable across Scotland. Two in particular are worth flagging up here.

- Value of Horizontal Themes. While awareness and acceptance of the value of the Horizontal Themes has become more widespread, there remain a number of partners who continue to believe that Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development have only limited applicability to their activities. Although domestic law is reinforcing the need for all sponsors to mainstream – through, for example, Strategic Environmental Assessments and the new public sector duties of recent equalities legislation – some are not convinced of the business case of the Horizontal Themes. In other words, they see compliance as a requirement for the programmes, not a benefit for their own organisations and its activities.
- Measuring Horizontal Themes. Setting indicators and targets for issues as widespread and cross-cutting as Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development is challenging. Quantitative indicators can only capture aspects of activity. What needs to be addressed is changes in perception and longer-term changes in organisational behaviour, suggesting the importance of qualitative as well as quantitative measures of evaluation.

The mid-term evaluations generated action plans of programme improvements and revisions, which the mid-term evaluation updates reviewed. A number of reports and papers have reflected on the 2000-06 period as a whole and set out key lessons for future programming. The most important of these are summarised below.

- Importance of high-level commitment. For mainstreaming to result in significant and long-lasting organisational change, there needs to be buy-in at a senior level. Mainstreaming requires not just representation and champions at different levels of policy and project design and delivery, but a clear priority placed on the Horizontal Themes by management. For the 2007-13 programmes, this continues to be a key element in programming, pursued by the systematic publicity given to the Horizontal Themes at key senior meetings (such as the Programme Monitoring Committees).
- Ensuring a good strategic fit and evidence base. A strategic approach to the Horizontal Themes is essential, beginning with a robust, solid evidence basis for Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development within the original programming documents and carried through a systematic linking of Structural Funds programmes to key policies and strategies in the Horizontal Themes. For the 2007-13 programmes, this was ensured through the use of Equal Opportunities and Strategic Environmental Assessments carried out on the new programmes (as discussed below).
- The right selection criteria. For the Horizontal Themes to be taken seriously, the programmes need to build in clear financial incentives to encourage their adoption. For the new programmes, the scoring system in application appraisal has given the most weight for any criteria to the Horizontal Themes criterion.
- Maintaining networking. Mutual learning networks and good practice exchange between partners have emerged as one of the best elements of Scottish mainstreaming. The new programmes will continue the operation of such networks and good practice events.

- Assessing the impact of the Horizontal Themes. Lastly, the Horizontal Themes need to be properly and regularly assessed to ensure that they are being effectively mainstreamed. The new programmes have set up a number of indicators to capture mainstreaming activity, but recognise the limitations of this approach, already set out above. The Horizontal Themes in the new programmes will be evaluated at a relatively early stage, allowing for key findings to influence the programmes before their final years. They will also give due weight to qualitative measures of success, particularly changes in perception and behaviour.

Looking ahead: taking forward the Horizontal Themes 2007-13

In 2007, the focus in the Horizontal Themes shifted from practice to reflection. With no new commitments of funding after 2006, Horizontal Theme activity in 2007 concentrated on compiling the learning from 2000-06 and applying the good practice and lessons to the development of the 2007-13 programmes.

With respect to Equal Opportunities, for the new programmes, an Equal Opportunities Assessment was carried out as part of programme development. The Scottish Government requires an Equality Impact Assessment to be undertaken when introducing new policies or changing existing policy in a significant way. This entails:

- assessing and consulting on the likely impact of the policies they are proposing to adopt;
- monitoring any adverse impact of their policies;
- publishing the results of their assessment, consultations and monitoring; and
- ensuring public access to the information and to services arising from the Policy.

In recognising this duty, the European Structural Funds Division within the Scottish Government has ensured that the implications of the changes proposed in the new round of Structural Fund Programmes were thoroughly assessed from all aspects of equality through an Equal Opportunities Assessment of the new programmes. A joint meeting of the Equal Opportunities Forum and the Impact Assessment Working Group was held on 22 November 2006 in Glasgow. This was timed to coincide with the formal consultation period on the new programmes which ran from October 2006 to January 2007. This meeting mainly focused on the consultation from an Equal Opportunities view point with regard to the new programmes. A series of questions, based on those in the formal consultation were asked, which again informed the final draft programmes and the delivery process. Representatives were invited from a wide range of equality groups in addition to the usual Equal Opportunity Forum members, however attendance was low. The reason for this may have been that there had been extremely good input from a wide range of bodies in the initial stages, and their views had been taken into account in the development of the draft which had been published and was then at the formal consultation stage. Some bodies may have preferred at that stage to enter a view as part of the formal process registering their input in that way.

Further contact was made with those absent from the Forum and the workshop in order to obtain their views and feedback from the questions relating to the consultation. This was tried in various forms, e-mailing, suggesting meetings at Scottish Government offices or for officials to go to their offices, asking for feedback either by telephone or by e-mail. Further responses from the Disability Rights Commission and the Empower Theme B EQUAL Initiative Development Partnership were received, and these also informed the assessment.

As with Equal Opportunities, the focus of activity in mainstreaming Sustainable Development has been with applying the lessons of the old to the development of the new programmes. This was particularly the case with the Sustainable Development National Advisor, through participation in workshops on the role of Sustainable Development in the new programmes. Two workshops were held with key partners on sustainable development and the new programmes during 2006. Follow-up actions were taken in 2007 with workshops involving Scottish Government, the National Advisor and SNH on setting a scoring system for assessing applications and appropriate environmental indicators for measuring project activity. The results of these workshops informed the procedures for implementing the new programmes.

At the same time, the two ERDF programmes were subject to detailed Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs). The Scottish Government requires all significant policies and programmes to undertake the SEA process, involving a full environmental report and baseline for the area, analysis of potential environmental impacts arising, options for mitigating these effects and full public consultation. The SEA was undertaken by external consultants and completed in March 2007. Their recommendations were integrated into the new Operational Programmes.

These parallel processes helped to inform the definition and development of the Horizontal Themes for the 2007-13 programmes. Rather than the existing two Themes, three have been chosen: in addition to Equal Opportunities, Sustainable Development has been divided into two new Themes, Social Inclusion and Environmental Sustainability. This division recognises that Sustainable Development should be pursued at programme level as part of the overall aim of the programmes ('sustainable development' features in the text of these aims). By giving visibility to Social Inclusion and Environmental Sustainability, both these elements in Sustainable Development will be given clear priority for the future along with sustainable economic growth. In all other respects, the Horizontal Themes framework of previous programming is being carried forward into the new programmes.

In terms of delivery, the instruments for mainstreaming will continue to build on the good practice tested and assessed under earlier programmes. For example, champions will continue to be designated at different levels, such as the Managing Authorities and the Intermediate Administration Bodies for the new programmes. Where required, short-term expertise will be used for training different parts of the delivery system to mainstream the Horizontal Themes on a continuing basis through the lifetime of the programmes, reflecting the smaller scale of the programmes, the experience developed to date across programme management and the reduced need for full-time National Advisors.