CONSULTATION – THE REPLACEMENT OF EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL FUNDS IN SCOTLAND POST EU-EXIT

Under the current 2014-2020 programmes, Scotland benefits from over £780 million of funding through the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund, which invest in key policies such as our Modern Apprenticeship schemes and our Low Carbon Infrastructure Transition Programme. If the UK leaves the EU it will no longer receive European Structural Funds. The purpose of these funds is to “invest in job creation and a sustainable and healthy European economy and environment.” In Scotland, they have played a vital role in reducing disparities between different parts of the country for over 40 years. In this context, the Scottish Government is conducting a consultation to seek views on how any replacement funding vehicle could best meet the needs of our citizens, our businesses and our communities.

The European Union is currently negotiating the budgetary and policy framework for European Structural Funds in 2021-27 with five overarching objectives for future EU funding:

1. a Smarter Europe, through innovation, digitisation, economic transformation and support to small and medium-sized businesses;
2. a Greener, carbon free Europe, implementing the Paris Agreement and investing in energy transition, renewables and the fight against climate change;
3. a more Connected Europe, with strategic transport and digital networks;
4. a more Social Europe, delivering on the European Pillar of Social Rights and supporting quality employment, education, skills, social inclusion and equal access to healthcare;
5. a Europe closer to citizens, by supporting locally-led development strategies and sustainable urban development across the EU.

The UK Government has announced that it will roll out a successor programme to European Structural Funds called the UK Shared Prosperity Fund aimed at tackling “inequalities between communities by raising productivity, especially in those parts of our country whose economies are furthest behind”.

The purpose of the consultation is to clarify:

• the aim and objectives of post EU Exit funding in Scotland;
• how to maximise its added value;
• the extent to which it should be aligned with Scottish, UK and EU policy priorities;
• whether and how it should be concentrated thematically or geographically;
• the appropriate arrangements for monitoring and evaluation;
• and the most effective and efficient approach to governance and partnership.

The Scottish Government has established a Steering Group to oversee this consultation. Comprised of experts drawn from a range of key partners, members of the Steering Group will act in an independent capacity to analyse the ideas and views which emerge from the consultation process in order to ensure that stakeholders are empowered to provide their input, experience and expertise in the co-production of potential replacement funding.

You are invited to give consideration and responses to the questions raised in the accompanying document and return your comments to the Future Funds team within the Scottish Government by 12 February 2020.

Access and respond to this consultation online at:


You can save and return to your responses while the consultation is still open. Please ensure that consultation responses are submitted before the closing date of 12 February 2020.

Full details of the Consultation Exercise: