

COMMITTEE ON EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Date:	Wednesday 17 January 2001
Time:	9.30am
Location:	Committee Room 3, National Assembly Building

Title: Implementation of the EQUAL Community Initiative in Wales**Purpose**

1. To seek the Committee's views on the priorities for the EQUAL Initiative in Wales.

Summary/Recommendations

2. A first draft of the Wales EQUAL Implementation Plan is at Annex 1. This sets out the labour market and policy context for EQUAL and provides a framework for implementing the initiative. Chapter 4 details the priorities which have been identified to date in consultation with partner organisations. The Committee is invited to offer views on the appropriateness of these.

Timing

3. Routine. The Wales EQUAL Plan will be finalised by mid February 2001 and will then be submitted to the GB EQUAL Monitoring Committee for approval. The programme will get underway in March 2001.

Background

4. EQUAL is a new European Community human resource initiative which aims to develop innovative ways of combating discrimination and inequality in connection with the labour market, through transnational co-operation. The initiative has a strong emphasis on dissemination and influencing the policy making process and will have a particular focus of equality issues associated with gender; disability; race or ethnic origin; religion or belief; age and sexual orientation. The initiative will also support the social and vocational integration of refugees (asylum seekers).

5. DFEE is leading the development of the initiative on a GB wide basis, in consultation with the National Assembly for Wales and the Scottish Executive. Members have already received copies of the draft GB EQUAL programme (EOC-07-00 (p.4) refers) and this is currently being negotiated with the Commission. The GB document provides for a separate Wales Implementation Plan, overseen by a Wales Management Committee and supported by a ring-fenced allocation of resources. This is likely to be around £12m for the period

2001 – 2006 and the overall value of the programme in Wales, including matched funding, will be around £24m.

6. A first draft of the Wales Implementation Plan is at Annex 1. This represents work in progress but provides the labour market context for the initiative in Wales; highlights some of the key policies which EQUAL will support (eg. Communities First; the Entrepreneurship Action Plan; Future Skills Wales etc); identifies priorities for development work in Wales and provides a framework for implementing the initiative. The Wales EQUAL Liaison Group is overseeing work on the Wales Plan – this is a partnership group which brings together representatives from the private, public and voluntary sectors and includes the statutory equality commissions and the main equality representative organisations. Separate consultative meetings have also been held with a range of organisations, including the CBI; Chambers of Commerce; FSB; TUC Wales; EOC; CRE; DRC; Age Concern; Disability Wales; AWEMA and the Wales Co-operative Society. The Objective 1 and 3 Monitoring Committees have also been given the opportunity to comment on the priorities. EDC will consider the draft plan at the end of January and it will be finalised by mid February. It will then be formally submitted to the GB Monitoring Committee for approval and the programme will get underway in spring 2001.

7. A question and answer brief on EQUAL is at Annex 2.

Consideration

8. EQUAL can be distinguished from the mainstream Structural Fund programmes by its emphasis on **innovation** and its **transnational** dimension. The initiative is not simply about getting beneficiaries into employment or learning opportunities (although this would be a useful bi-product), it is essentially about trialling and testing new ways of tackling discrimination and inequality in the labour market in partnership with other Member States and learning lessons which can inform policy development. It's principal thrust is to find common solutions to problems which are experienced across Europe.

9. The initiative will encourage integrated, thematic based approaches to tackling the complex and multi-dimensional problems faced by the different target groups, rather than supporting projects which focus on the needs of particular target groups. The priorities identified in Chapter 4 are set out according to the thematic fields of activity identified in the EU regulations covering EQUAL. These are based on the pillars of the EU employment strategy set out in the Amsterdam Treaty (i.e. employability; entrepreneurship; adaptability and equal opportunities).

10. In determining the focus of the programme in Wales, we need to be realistic about the scale and range of the development work which can be supported within the funding available. Consultation with partner organisations has inevitably identified a rather long list of priority areas. This is to some extent understandable, as the relative position of the target groups in Wales is generally worse than that across GB on most objective indicators. Levels of unemployment and economic inactivity are generally higher and qualification levels are

generally lower. Our aim should be to identify a manageable number of priority areas which are most relevant to our needs and which afford the greatest potential for lessons to be learned through development work carried out in partnership with other Member States. EQUAL should not seek to duplicate activity which can be equally as well taken forward through the mainstream Objective 1 and 3 programmes.

Conclusion

11. The Committee is invited to comment on the priorities for EQUAL in Wales set out in Chapter 4 of the draft Wales Implementation Plan at Annex 1. In particular the views of the Committee are invited on:

- whether the priorities identified are the right ones or whether there are additional priorities which need to be included?
- whether there are particular Member States that we can learn from in addressing these priorities?
- whether any of the priorities should be geographically targeted?
- how best to ensure the mainstreaming of lessons learned?

European Affairs Division

EQUAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

QUESTION & ANSWER BRIEF

What is EQUAL ?

EQUAL is a new European Community human resources initiative which aims to develop innovative ways of combating discrimination and inequality in connection with the labour market, through transnational co-operation.

Which parts of Wales will be covered ?

EQUAL will cover the whole of Wales.

Why doesn't Wales have its own programme ?

EQUAL is a Member State programme and is therefore being developed on a GB basis by the Department for Education and Employment, in consultation with the National Assembly for Wales and the Scottish Executive. However, it has been agreed that Wales and Scotland will have their own Implementation Plans, supported by ring fenced allocation of resources. Wales and Scotland will also have their own Management Committees which will be sub-committees of the GB Monitoring Committee.

How much money is available for Wales ?

Discussion with the DfEE are ongoing but Wales is likely to receive around £12m for the period 2000 – 2006 and the overall value of the programme, including matched funding, will be around £24m.

What distinguishes EQUAL from other Structural Fund programmes ?

EQUAL is not about mainstream delivery. EQUAL offers a Europe-wide focus for experimenting with new ways of tackling the problems of inequality and discrimination. EQUAL is a testing ground for new ideas where successful results could be mainstreamed into other policies and programmes. Another distinguishing feature is the requirement for EQUAL to be trans-national and working with other countries is seen to be crucial to the Initiative's success.

Who is it designed to help ?

The Initiative will have a particular (though not exclusive) focus on equality issues associated with gender; disability; race or ethnic origin; religion or belief; age and sexual orientation. The initiative will also support the social and vocational integration of refugees (asylum seekers).

How will it work ?

The basic working element of EQUAL will be the Development Partnership (DP). A DP will work within one thematic area and bring together interested parties with relevant experience. It should involve key players such as the equality organisations, local authorities, social partners, the business sectors and other relevant public bodies (such as the WDA or the new National Council for Education & Training). DPs can be constituted of project applicants, advisors and those representing excluded groups. The work of each DP will be based on a formal agreement and work programme.

In Wales, the EQUAL Liaison Group has recommended that DPs operate on an all Wales basis.

How many trans-national partners do you need ?

Each Development Partnership will need to have at least one partner from another Member State. DPs may also co-operate with counterparts outside the European Union, for example, in candidate countries under the Phare programme.

How will the lessons from EQUAL be mainstreamed ?

Thematic Networking Groups (TNGs) will be established at a GB level for each theme within the EQUAL programme and will include policy representatives from the National Assembly for Wales, in addition to representatives from DfEE; other Government Departments; the Scottish Executive; the statutory equality organisations; social partners and Development Partnerships. All DPs in Wales will become members of the relevant TNG.

TNGs will provide advice to the Wales management Committee on Welsh DP proposals as part of the overall appraisal process. The TNGs will also participate in dissemination and evaluation at a European level.

When will the programme start ?

A GB wide first call for applications will be made in the Spring 2001. Applicants will have up to 3 months to complete the EQUAL application form. Preliminary checks on completed applications will be carried out by the Welsh European Funding Office. Applications will then be independently appraised, in accordance with the selection criteria agreed by the Wales Management Committee and GB PMC. During the Autumn of 2001, the Wales Management Committee will consider the appraisals (and the views on the TNGs) and put forward recommendations to the GB PMC on the DPs to be funded in Wales. First projects should start towards the end of 2001.

EQUAL

First DRAFT
WALES IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
The National Assembly for Wales



EUROPEAN COMMUNITY
European Social Fund
Y GYMUNED EWROPEAIDD
Cronfa Gymdeithasol Ewrop

Welsh European
Funding Office



Swyddfa Cyllid
Ewropeaidd Cymru

20 DECEMBER 2000

EQUAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

WALES IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

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Chapter 1: Introduction

- 1.1** This document is the plan for implementing the EQUAL Community Initiative in Wales. EQUAL will cover the whole of Wales and will be supported through the European Social Fund. The initiative will test and promote new ways of combating all forms of discrimination and inequality in the labour market, both for those in work and those seeking work, through transnational co-operation. It will also include action to help the social and vocational integration of Asylum Seekers/Refugees. Wales will receive Euro [XX m], from within the UK allocation for EQUAL, over the period 2000-2006. A further Euro [XX m] of public sector expenditure will match this, bringing the total investment in EQUAL in Wales to Euro [XX m].
- 1.2** The Wales EQUAL Implementation Plan will operate within the framework of the GB EQUAL Community Initiative Programme (CIP) *agreed* between the UK Government and the Commission and is subject to the agreement of the GB Monitoring Committee. It has been developed in consultation with the National Assembly for Wales Economic Development and Equal Opportunities Committees, the equality commissions in Wales and a wide range of partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors.
- 1.3** The Plan provides an overview of the labour market and policy context in Wales and identifies the priorities for EQUAL. It also explains how the initiative will be implemented in Wales, including the role of the Wales Management Committee (WMC), the arrangements for Development Partnerships, the selection of projects, dissemination of outcomes and the financial and administrative arrangements.
- 1.4** The EQUAL initiative is not intended to support mainstream delivery of employment programmes. It has been designed to help us to explore new ways of tackling all forms of discrimination and inequality in the labour market and social exclusion. It will have a particular emphasis on combating discrimination and inequalities based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. EQUAL is distinguished from the new Objective 1,2 and 3 Structural Fund programmes by the following main features:
- its thematic approach to testing new ways of delivering policy priorities within the framework of the European Employment Strategy;
 - the emphasis on transnational co-operation, learning from and sharing lessons with other Member States;
 - and the emphasis on dissemination and using the initiative to inform the development and implementation of policies, including incorporating successful innovation into mainstream Structural Fund programmes and the National Action Plan for Employment.

- 1.5 In accordance with the GB CIP, EQUAL in Wales will operate in eight thematic fields. Seven of these are defined in the context of the four pillars of the European Employment Strategy (ie. Employability; Entrepreneurship; Adaptability; and Equal Opportunities) and the eighth covers the specific needs of Asylum Seekers/Refugees. The eight thematic fields are:

Employability	
A	Facilitating access and return to the labour market for those who have difficulty in being integrated or re-integrated into a labour market which must be open to all
B	Combating racism and xenophobia in relation to the labour market
Entrepreneurship	
C	Opening up the business creation process to all by providing the tools required for setting up in business and for the identification and exploitation of new possibilities for creating employment in urban and rural areas
D	Strengthening the social economy (the third sector), in particular the services of interest to the community, with a focus on improving the quality of jobs
Adaptability	
E	Promoting lifelong learning and inclusive work practices which encourage the recruitment and retention of those suffering discrimination and inequality in connection with the labour market
F	Supporting the adaptability of firms and employees to structural economic change and the use of information technology and other new technologies
Equal Opportunities for women and men	
H	Reducing gender gaps and supporting job desegregation.
Asylum Seekers/Refugees	
I	Helping the integration of asylum seekers/refugees.

Details of the priorities for EQUAL in Wales under each of these thematic fields are provided in Chapter 4.

- 1.6 EQUAL will operate by bringing together the key players in a geographical area or sector into Development Partnerships (DPs). DPs will choose one of the thematic areas and agree

a strategy within which they will try out new ways of dealing with problems of discrimination and inequality which they have already pinpointed. Central to the work of each DP will be its links with at least one partnership from another country (another Member State and possibly non-Member States as appropriate) and its involvement in a network of others dealing with the same theme across Europe. The new ideas will be tested with a view to using the results to influence the design of future policy and practice. DPs will also participate in the dissemination and mainstreaming of good practice.

1.7 Development Partnerships will be selected for EQUAL funding following national calls for proposals.

1.8 EQUAL will fund activity under the following four actions within each thematic field:

- Action 1: setting up Development Partnerships and transnational co-operation - 5% of the budget
- Action 2: implementing the work programmes of the Development Partnerships - 75% of the budget
- Action 3: thematic networking, dissemination of good practice and making an impact on national policy - 15% of the budget
- Action 4: Technical Assistance to support actions 1, 2 and 3 - 5% of the budget.

Actions 1 and 2 are sequential. Member States will be expected to be in a position to start Action 3 at the earliest point that results are available to disseminate. Action 4 will provide support from before the commencement of Action 1.

Overview of Welsh Economy

- 2.1 The performance of the Welsh economy has been poor relative to other UK regions on most objective indicators. Wales has fewer people employed and its skewed economic and occupational structure means that average productivity is lower than in other regions. Wales is still overly dependent on declining or low value-adding industries. Certain skills are in short supply and relatively high proportions of people are effectively excluded from the workforce. Economic disadvantage tends to be heavily concentrated in particular communities.
- 2.2 Whilst the performance of Wales in attracting inward investment has been very good, and the eastern part of Wales has economic output levels not dissimilar to the UK, Wales has a small economic base with too few large home-grown companies. This limits the ability to generate growth from within. The Welsh business supplier and customer networks do not support economic stability, growth and diversification to the extent that they do in the more prosperous areas of Europe. It is vital, therefore, that Wales adopts an international and outward looking approach to business. Although its position on the western side of the UK has sometimes been a disadvantage, the breathtaking rise in e-commerce will make the location of Wales far less of an issue in the future. However, too few companies in Wales (large and small) make the most of the opportunities available to exploit world class technologies, including ICT and e-commerce.
- 2.3 Although the service sector in Wales, including financial services, is growing rapidly, it is small and continues to rely too heavily on the low value-added end of manufacturing. The small and medium enterprise sector is relatively under-developed and relatively few of Wales' small businesses make the crucial transition to larger, dynamic enterprises. Fewer still gain stock market status. The rate of new business start-ups is lower than that in England and Scotland.
- 2.4 Wales has a long standing tradition of self-employment, but the innovation and entrepreneur culture required to create a truly dynamic small and medium enterprise sector is not as strong as it could be. Wales is also under-represented in significant high added-value growth sectors such as ICT, pharmaceuticals and other science and knowledge-based activities. Within the company structure, there are too few decision-making departments, units and occupations in finance, R&D, marketing and product design.
- 2.5 Output per head in Wales remains well below the EU average – 18% below during the period 1994-1996. Furthermore, prosperity is spread unevenly across Wales. In the west of Wales and the Valleys, output per head is nearly 30% below the EU average, although in East Wales it is actually slightly higher.

2.6 At the same time, nearly one third of our employers in Wales are experiencing skill shortages. The stock of available skills is lower than that in most competitor countries. There are big challenges in overcoming weaknesses in school performance; barriers to training and learning post-16 and in lifting the research base of the higher education sector.

Table 1: The economy of Wales – a profile					
	Period	West Wales & Valleys (OBJ 1)	East Wales (OBJ 3)	Wales	UK
					<i>UK =100</i>
GDP per head# (1)	1996	73	100	84	100
GDP per workforce job# (2)	1996	89	101	94	100
Household disposable income per head (3)	1998	N/A	N/A	85	100
Average hourly earnings** (4)	1999	86	90	88	100
Economic inactivity (working age) (5)	1999/2000	28%	20%	25%	<i>rate</i> 21%
Employment rate (6) (working age)	1999/2000	67%	74%	69%	74%
Claimant unemployment rate (7)	Oct 2000	5.1%	3.3%	4.3%	3.5%
Change in workforce jobs (FTEs) ~ (8)	1981 – 1995	-6%	+12%	+3%	N/A
Working age population with no qualifications (9)	Spring 2000	22%	16%	20%	16%
Business density^ (10)	1999	230	277	247	318

· **Sources**

(1), (2) and (3) ONS Regional accounts and National Assembly calculations. (4) New Earnings Survey (5), (6) Labour Force Survey (LFS) (7) Benefits Agency administrative system (8) Annual Employment Survey, Agricultural Census and National Assembly calculations (9) LFS (10) DTI and National Assembly calculations.

· **Notes**

Most recent available figures for the sub-Wales areas. [See also note 1 on page 1?].

*Average hourly earnings for all full-time employees. GB = 100.

~Results on the basis of the NUTS boundaries are not available. Figures given are for “best-match” old counties.

^Businesses registered for VAT per 10,000 adult population, excluding agriculture.

“West Wales” comprises the unitary authorities of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire. “The Valleys” comprises the authorities of Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Merthyr, Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen. Together, “West Wales and the Valleys” makes up the Objective 1 area. “East Wales” comprises all the remaining unitary authorities in Wales.

- 2.7 In recent times between one-third and one-half of the overall discrepancy in GDP per head has been a consequence of lower activity rates in Wales. Much the largest part of this discrepancy is accounted for by differences in activity of the working age population, with differences in the proportion of pensioners making only a small contribution. Inactivity amongst the working age population is concentrated in particular groups. Compared with the UK as a whole, Wales has high rates of inactivity for both men and women. However, over a long period, activity rates have been rising for women. The Labour Force Survey (LFS) shows that high Welsh inactivity is largely attributable to high reported levels of long-term sickness, typically amongst the middle aged (45 plus) with few qualifications and from manual backgrounds. This problem is concentrated geographically, particularly in the ex-mining communities in the Valleys.
- 2.8 The variation in economic performance within Wales is significant. Two-thirds of the population of Wales lies within the Objective One region, “West Wales and the Valleys”, with an average GDP per capita just 73% of the UK average. In the Valleys area, activity rates, output per head, and average wage levels are all low compared both to Wales and the UK as a whole. In more rural parts of West Wales, activity and employment levels are generally higher than in Wales as whole (except in some of the coastal resort towns), but output per head and average wages remain low. Even within the more prosperous parts of Wales such as Cardiff and Newport, there are substantial concentrations of, low incomes, low economic activity and social exclusion.

Overview of the Labour Market in Wales

- 2.9 Overall, there are important problems in the labour market in Wales, which inhibit the prospects for economic development and employment growth. However, these problems

are particularly concentrated in West Wales and the Valleys, and in the more deprived parts of the urban areas in East Wales. Headline figures are shown in Table 1.

- 2.10 Inactivity is high compared to the UK as a whole and is concentrated in West Wales and the Valleys.. Inactivity in the Valleys area is particularly high relative to the UK amongst females of working age, and amongst men aged 50-64. In West Wales, inactivity is particularly high amongst females aged 50-59.
- 2.11 Unemployment is higher in most of Wales than in the UK. Long term unemployment forms a broadly similar proportion of total unemployment as in the UK , but this may reflect people removing themselves from the register in the face of poor employment prospects. Short-term unemployment rates (i.e. less than 6 months) remain above the GB levels for under 25s. This appears to be a particular problem in West Wales due to seasonal employment factors. Some localities in West Wales and the Valleys are suffering depopulation.
- 2.12 Although there is a base of traditional skills, skill levels in the population generally tend to be low and there is underachievement in terms of qualifications. In some areas, this underachievement starts at school level, with very poor performance in some localities – particularly the Valleys and inner urban areas in east Wales. A significant proportion of the workforce has poor basic skills. Table 2 provides a summary of current qualification levels in the context of the National Education and Training Targets for Wales.

LIFELONG LEARNING MEASURE	CURRENT POSITION IN WALES (AUTUMN 1999) (a)	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY 2004
1. 16-18 year olds without qualifications (b)	18%	To be reduced to 5%
2. 19-21 year olds without NVQ Level 2 or equivalent qualification (b)	23%	Below 20%
3. Adults (19+) without qualifications	20%	Below 12.5%
4. Adults (19+) with NVQ Level 2 or equivalent qualification	60%	Above 70%
5. Adults (19+) with NVQ Level 3 or equivalent qualification	39%	Above 50%
6. Adults (19+) with NVQ Level 4 or equivalent qualification	22%	Approaching 30%
7. Adults (19+) with functional basic skills in literacy	84% (1996)	Above 90%

8. Adults (19+) with functional basic skills in numeracy	56% (1996)	Above 60%
(a) Estimates, particularly for the young age groups, should be treated with caution because the small sample size of the survey can lead to large sampling variability.		
(b) Ages at 31 August		

- 2.13 Compared to the UK as a whole, the occupational structure shows an under-representation of more highly skilled jobs. Managerial jobs, in particular, are under-represented and there are probably shortages of managerial skills in the population, which may account in part for the low levels of business formation. On average across Wales, there are fewer hard to fill vacancies than in the UK, and people in work are more likely to lack the skills employers need. In some parts of West Wales and the Valleys prospects are very bleak with high unemployment, little new investment and poor skills development, with skills gaps being significant.
- 2.14 The structure of employment is changing. Part-time employment, in line with wider UK trends, is becoming increasingly prevalent, with almost one third of employees now in part-time occupations. The growth in part-time work has been concentrated in the service industries and especially in occupations traditionally dominated by women. Women comprise the greater majority of part-time workers.
- 2.15 The predominance of low-skilled sectors and occupations feeds through into levels of earnings, which is low compared to the GB figure, and very low in some rural localities, being less than 80% of the GB figure in the case of Gwynedd.
- 2.16 The patterns of economic adjustment and consequent employment growth are uneven. There are 'hotspots', particularly in east Wales, where filling vacancies appears to be a significant problem for some employers. The localised nature of labour markets, and to some degree a lack of geographical mobility, throughout the area continues to act as a serious constraint on the ability of some areas to benefit from economic growth and on business development.
- 2.17 From a more positive viewpoint, Wales benefits from a well-developed network of universities and further education colleges. However, there have been issues about the availability of facilities for more specialised training. In parts of Wales, the constraints of population sparsity and poor communications also affect access to training opportunities more generally.

Analysis by Pillar

- 2.18 The section below provides a brief analysis and assessment of the position of the groups which will be specifically targeted under the EQUAL initiative, in the context of the four

“pillars” of the European Employment Strategy. Statistical data is drawn from the Labour Force Survey unless otherwise indicated. Where statistical data is not available, reference is made to studies which help to indicate the relative disadvantage faced by these groups.

Employability

- 2.19 Although the current labour market conditions in the UK are favourable with strong employment growth and a corresponding fall in unemployment it appears that Wales is failing to benefit fully from these conditions. Added to that there are distinct groups within the labour market, which experience discrimination and inequality.
- 2.20 Activity rates for all the excluded groups tends to be below the GB average. 84% of part time employees in Wales are women who we know tend to receive less training and development opportunities. Statistics also show that Wales has a greater number of lone parents than in GB. Activity rates for disabled people at 57% are well below the rates for non-disabled people at 84% and there are particular problems for those disabled people aged over 50 where just 30% are working. ILO unemployment rates for disabled people at 12.5% are also significantly higher than those for non-disabled people at 6.6%. People from ethnic minorities also face particular problems where activity rates stand at 69%, compared to 75% for white people.
- 2.21 Wales also has an ageing workforce; population projections show that by 2005 approximately 50% of the working age population in Wales will be over the age of 40. Inactivity rates amongst older people are higher at 39% when compared to 31% for those under 50. Statistics also show that if older people lose their jobs they are much more likely to become long-term unemployed. Although Wales has a lower level of reported homosexual behaviour among men we know that attitudes are more censorious in Wales than elsewhere in GB and therefore this could be due to under-reporting. Religion does not appear to be a major labour market issue in Wales, although it is clear that there are issues surrounding discrimination based on race and ethnicity.

(a) Disability

- ❖ There are 404,000 disabled people in Wales accounting for nearly 23% of the working population (GB 18%). The level of disability increases with age. 9% of people aged 16-19 have a disability, compared with 36% of those aged over 50. The proportion of the working age population that are disabled does not show any variation between men and women in either Wales or GB.
- ❖ 37% of disabled people are in employment compared with 79% of non-disabled people (GB figures 47% and 81% respectively). Disabled people make up 12% of all people in employment in Wales.
- ❖ 54% of men and women with a disability who are aged under 50 are in employment; but among those aged 50 to retirement age, fewer than 30% are working (GB figures 65% and 38% respectively)

- ❖ ILO unemployment rates for disabled people are significantly higher than those for non-disabled people, 12.5% compared to 6.6% (GB figures 10.5% and 5.4% respectively)
- ❖ 57% of disabled people are economically active compared with 84% of non-disabled people.
- ❖ GB research indicates that 16% of disabled people who are or have been economically inactive say that they have experienced discrimination or unfair treatment in a work related context [DFEE Research Report 69)

(b) Race/ethnicity

- ❖ Ethnic minorities make up 1.7% of the working age population of Wales (GB figures 6.7%)
- ❖ Those from the Indian sub-continent (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) form the largest ethnic minority group, followed by Black ethnic groups and then Chinese and other Asians.
- ❖ 58% of people from ethnic minorities are in employment, compared to 69% of white people (GB figures 58% and 76% respectively).
- ❖ Economic activity rates are lower for ethnic minorities, 69% compared to 75% for whites (the gap is larger for GB with rates of 66% and 80% respectively).
- ❖ ILO unemployment rates for ethnic minority people in GB are significantly above the rates for white people, 12.9% compared with 5.5% (rates are for those economically active aged 16 and over. While figures for Wales are not statistically reliable there is no evidence (from activity rates and employment rates) to suggest the relative position is significantly different in Wales.
- ❖ For GB, the proportion of those who are economically inactive but wish to work is 9.2% for ethnic minorities and 6.2% for whites. The figures for ethnic minorities in Wales is not statistically reliable; the figure for whites in Wales is 7.8%.
- ❖ GB Research shows that unemployed ethnic minority claimants have a median length of unemployment of twice that for white claimants (8 months compared to 4 months). It also suggests that 19% of people from ethnic minorities believe that they have personally been refused a job for racial or religious reasons [Modood, T. et al. Policy Studies Institute, 1997].

(c) Gender

- ❖ 47% of the working age population in Wales are women, but only 45% of the employed are women; (GB figures 48% and 44% respectively)
- ❖ Economic activity levels are lower amongst women at 69% compared to 80% for men (GB figures 73% and 85% respectively).
- ❖ 93% of male employees work full-time compared with 56% of women (GB figures 92% and 57% respectively). 84% of part-time employees in Wales are women (GB 81%).

- ❖ ILO unemployment rate for women (over the age of 16) is 5.7% compare to 8.5% (GB figures 5.2% and 6.5% respectively).
- ❖ The proportion of women who are economically inactive but wish to work is 8.8% compared to 6.9% for men (GB figures 7.9% and 5.0% respectively).
- ❖ The LFS shows that 5.4% of the population aged 16 to 59 claim child benefit as a lone parent in Wales compared to 4.5% for GB.

(d) Older workers

- ❖ A quarter of the working age population in Wales are over the age of 50, (GB figures 24%). Population projections show that by 2005 approximately 50% Welsh working age population will be over the age of 40.
- ❖ The employment rate of older people in Wales (ie those aged between 50 and retirement age) is well below that of the working age population. 58% of those aged over 50 are in employment, compared to 69% for the working population as a whole. This gap in employment rates is wider in Wales than for GB (66% and 74% respectively)
- ❖ ILO unemployment rates for older people in Wales are lower than for younger people, 4% compared to 17% for those aged 16-24 (GB figures 4% and 13% respectively). However, economic inactivity levels are much higher amongst older people, 39% compared with 31% for younger people (GB figures 30% and 28%).
- ❖ If older people lose their jobs, they are much more likely to become long-term unemployed. Of those who are unemployed, the long-term unemployed (12 months plus) account for 42% for the over 50s compared with 34% for persons aged 25-49 and 13% for those aged 16-24 (GB figures 44%; 33% and 12% respectively)
- ❖ GB research indicates that 20% of employees aged over 50 feel that they have experienced age discrimination in relation to an actual or possible job [DFEE Research Brief RBX 6/00)

(e) Religion or belief

[DN: SD to provide population data]

(f) Sexual Orientation

- ❖ The level of reported homosexual behaviour among men in Wales is one of the lowest in GB (3.3%). As data also shows that attitudes towards homosexuality are more censorious in Wales than elsewhere in GB, there is a possibility of under-reporting. In contrast, levels of reported recent lesbian activity are relatively high in Wales compared to other regions in GB (second highest to Scotland, outside London). (Health Promotion Wales:Technical Report 15)

- ❖ Women living in rural areas of Wales are nearly three times as likely as those in urban areas to report having had a female sexual partner (3.9% compared with 1.4%). For men, the reverse is true: those living in towns and cities are more than three times as likely as those in the country to report having had a homosexual partner. (Health Promotion Wales: Technical Report 15)
- ❖ Violence against gay men in Wales is amongst the highest in the UK. 67% of gay men report severe verbal abuse and 28% have been victims of violence. A further 29% report being harassed. (fpa Cymru research survey; 2000)

Entrepreneurship

- 2.22 Wales needs to increase the level of entrepreneurial activity, measured by the birth rate of new businesses and the net loss or gain of existing businesses. Wales is currently losing businesses at a faster rate than the UK. The net loss in Wales between 1994 and 1998 was 4,700 businesses compared to a UK gain of 51,100 during the same period. The birth rate of new businesses in Wales compared to the existing stock of businesses is at least 30% below the UK average. Wales has the second lowest business start-up rate of any region of the UK.
- 2.23 The proportion of the working age population in self employment is 7.4% for Wales compared to 8.3% for GB.
- 2.24 Certain groups, such as Welsh speakers, women, young people, ethnic minorities and older workers are underrepresented in enterprise creation

(a) Disability

- ❖ 15% of self-employed people in Wales have a long-term disability (GB 14%). Of those with a disability, 5% are self-employed compared to 8% of the non-disabled (GB figures 6% and 9% respectively)

(b) Race/ethnicity

- ❖ For GB the rate of self employment is lower for ethnic minorities, 7.2% of those of working age compared to 8.4% for whites. The biggest difference is for women, ethnic minority women have a rate of 3.0% compared to 4.5% for white women and the figures are 11.3% and 11.8% respectively for men. Self employment figures for Wales are not disclosable.

(c) Gender

- ❖ Women account for 22% of the self-employed in Wales (the figure is 26% for GB).
- ❖ X%?? of new small businesses in Wales are set up by women (UK figure 30%) [*DN – SD liasing with DfEE on this re: regional breakdown*]
- ❖ 5% of all economically active women are self-employed, compared with 14% of economically active men (GB figures 6% and 14% respectively)
- ❖ There is evidence of gender segregation amongst the self-employed. 25% of self-employed women in the UK work in public administration, education and health, compared to 5% of men. Conversely 25% of self-employed men work in construction compared with 2% women (Women and Men in the UK; facts and figures 2000: Cabinet Office, Women's Unit)
- ❖ GB research indicates that women face more problems than men do when setting up in business. (Barclays Review, Women in Business, Dec 1996)

(d) Older workers

- ❖ Older people are more likely to be self-employed than younger people. 11% of persons aged 50 to retirement age in Wales are self-employed, compared with 8% of those aged 25 to 49 and 1% of those aged people 16 to 24 (GB figures 11%, 9% and 2% respectively).
- ❖ Excluding agriculture, the gap in self employment rates between Wales and GB widens. 9% of persons aged 50 to retirement age, 7% of those aged 25 to 49 and 1% of those aged 16 to 24 are self-employed. GB figures are 10%, 9% and 1% respectively.

Adaptability

- 2.25 Wales lags behind the rest of the UK in qualification levels. Only 37% of people of working age have level 3 qualifications, compared with 41% for GB. Wales also has a greater proportion of adults with no qualifications – 20% compared to 16% for the UK – and 24% of adults have low literacy or numeracy skills.
- 2.26 The 1998 Future Skills Wales (FSW) survey revealed that 30% of employers had experienced hard to fill vacancies and just under 18% had reported skills gaps. Nearly one in five of all employers reported a gap between current workers' skills and the skills needed by their organisations. Core skills in information technology, 'soft skills' (ability to learn, communication, team working) and business focused skills (understanding customer needs, product knowledge) were identified by employers as being amongst the most important. Cost and staff time were identified by employers as the most significant barriers to training, whilst individuals identified childcare and family commitments as the main barriers.
- 2.27 The FSW survey also identified generally positive attitudes to training amongst employers, with half of those surveyed having funded off the job training in the past 12 months.

However, certain occupations receive more training than others, for example managers and administrators are most likely to receive training, followed by professionals, clerical/secretarial staff, and craft workers. Plant and machine operatives and largely unskilled workers are least likely to receive training.

(a) Disability

- ❖ Disabled people are less likely to have an NVQ level 3 or above than non-disabled people (26% compared to 40% in Wales, 30% compared to 43% in GB), and are more than twice as likely to have no formal qualifications, 36% compared with 16%. (GB figures 30% and 13% respectively)
- ❖ Disabled people are generally underrepresented in higher level jobs. 29% of disabled people in employment are either managers or administrators or in professional or technical occupations, compared to 33% of non-disabled (GB 33% and 38% respectively).
- ❖ The average gross weekly earnings for disabled persons is £227, 84% of the earnings of non-disabled people (£270). Disabled persons earn, on average, less than their counterparts in GB (£268).

(b) Race/ethnicity

- ❖ In Wales, the proportion with highest qualification at NVQ level 3 or above is roughly the same for ethnic minorities and whites (38% and 37% respectively); the proportion with level 2 or below is higher for ethnic minorities (51% compared to 42%) and thus the proportion with no qualifications is lower (the position in GB is different; there is a lower proportion of level 3 or above for ethnic minorities, 37% compared to 41%, an equal proportion having level 2 or below, 42%, with ethnic minorities having a higher proportion with no qualifications, 21% compared to 16%).
- ❖ There are gender variations in the level of qualification; men have a higher proportion with level 3 or above with women having a higher proportion of level 2 or below. Within GB the gap between the sexes at these levels is much less for ethnic minorities while in Wales the gap between the sexes is much wider for ethnic minorities.

(c) Gender

- ❖ There are generally less women with higher qualifications and more with no qualifications. In Wales, 31% of women have NVQ level 3 or higher (42% of men), 46% have NVQ level 2 or lower (39% of men) and 23% of women have no qualifications (19% for men). The pattern in GB is similar with 35% and 47% respectively for NVQ level 3 or above, 46% and 39% respectively for NVQ level 2 or lower and 19% and 14% with no qualifications respectively.
- ❖ Of those in employment, 14.6% of women undertook some sort of job related training compare to 12% for men (GB figures 15.9% and 12.9% respectively). The

difference is mainly due to a higher take up of training away from the job among women.

- ❖ Women are underrepresented in higher level jobs. In 1999, 10% of women in employment were managers and administrators compared to 15% for men (GB figures 12% and 19% respectively). Women are also underrepresented in all ICT sectors, particularly software and computer engineering jobs.

(d) Older workers

- ❖ Older people less likely to have qualifications than younger people. 32% of those aged over 50 have no formal qualifications, compared with 16% of those aged 25 to 49 and those aged 16 to 24 (GB figures 28%, 13% and 12% respectively).
- ❖ Older workers are more likely to be managers or administrators (16%) or work in craft or related occupations (14%). Only 5% of older people work in sales occupations, compared to almost one in five of workers aged 16 to 24.
- ❖ Turnover amongst older workers tends to be lower than amongst younger ones. However, some organisations still use age as the criterion for selecting people for redundancy.[DN – how to measure this?]

Equal Opportunities (gender)

- 2.28 The number of women participating in the labour market in Wales has increased significantly in recent years and the female employment rate is now at its highest ever. The female proportion of the workforce has risen from X% in 1971 to Y% today. (GB figures 36% and 50%). [DN – information for Wales to follow]. However barriers continue to exist to women entering and progressing in the labour market. The Welsh labour market is characterised by vertical, horizontal and contractual segregation and women are concentrated in a narrow band of occupational sectors and in mainly low paid, low status work. It is also noticeable that the situation is compounded for ethnic minority women, disabled women and older women. These groups are severely disadvantaged in terms of their ability to access training and education, and to gain quality employment. The lack of good quality, affordable and accessible childcare is a major barrier to labour market participation (particularly for women) and childcare provision in Wales is amongst the lowest in the UK.
- 2.29 There is a gender pay gap in Wales which is in part explained by the differing employment pattern of women and men, and in part by women earning less in similar jobs. Economic research into the latter area has suggested that only part of this differential can be explained by the varying characteristics of male and female employees (such as the reduced time that women have, on average, spent in the labour market). A significant part of the differential remains after allowing for these factors, and has been attributed by researchers to discrimination. Such discrimination may in turn, provide a contribution to an explanation of the differing employment pattern, and "job segregation".

(a) Disability

- ❖ Disabled women are marginally less likely to be in employment. 37% of disabled women of working age are in employment compared to 38% of men. Employment rates for men and women are lower than the comparable rates in GB (49% men and 45% women).
- ❖ 45% of disabled men are economically active, compared to 41% of women.
- ❖ ILO unemployment rates are higher for men than for women (15% compared to 9%). GB figures are 12% and 9% respectively.
- ❖ Although disabled women are more likely to be economically inactive (59% compared to 55%), inactive men are more likely to want work. 19% of such disabled men would like to work, compared to 16% of women.

(b) Race/ethnicity

- ❖ Employment rates vary by gender. For ethnic minority women the figure is 50%, 17 percentage points lower than for men, while for white women the figure is 65%, 8 percentage points lower than for men (rates for ethnic minorities are comparable in GB and, although rates for whites are higher for GB, the gender gap for whites remains similar at 10%).
- ❖ The gap in economic activity rates between ethnic minorities and whites is larger in the case of women, 59% for ethnic minority women compared to 69% for whites whereas the figures for men are 80% in both cases (for GB the figures are 56% and 74% respectively for women and 77% and 85% respectively for men).
- ❖ ILO unemployment rates are generally lower for women but only marginally so in the case of ethnic minorities in GB, 12.7% compared with 4.8% for white women while the figures for GB men are 13.1% and 6.1% respectively.

(c) Gender

- ❖ The labour market in Wales is characterised by gender segregation. Women account for 72% of clerical and secretarial occupations; 70% of personal and protective occupations and 71% of sales occupations. In contrast, women account for only 6% of craft and related occupations and 17% of plant and machine operatives.
- ❖ 46% of Modern Apprenticeship starts in Wales in 1999-2000 were young women (DFEE Trainee Database).
- ❖ Current data from the New Earnings Survey (April 2000) shows that women's average gross weekly earnings, for full-time employees, was 78% of men's (74% for GB).
- ❖ The lack of good quality, affordable and accessible childcare is a major barrier to labour market participation (particularly for women). Provision of childcare in Wales is amongst the lowest in the UK.

- ❖ Women continue to dominate part-time work which makes up 44% of female employment but just 7% of male employment. 93% of male employees work full-time compared with 56% of women (GB figures 92% and 57% respectively). 84% of part-time employees in Wales are women (GB 81%)
- ❖ The employment rate for women in a relationship with dependant children 0-4 years is X% (GB 59%), whereas only Y% of lone mothers (with dependant children) are in employment (GB 47%) [*DN – SD to provide figures*]

(d) Older Workers

- ❖ Economic activity rates are higher amongst men over the age of 50 than for women over 50, 64% compared with 57%. These rates are well below the equivalent for GB, with the rate for males 72% and for females 65%.
- ❖ The ILO unemployment rate for men aged over 50 is over twice that for women, 5.6% compared to 2.2%.
- ❖ Males are more likely to be economically inactive but still seeking or wanting to work (10% for males compared to 8% for females). These rates are higher than the equivalent for GB (8% and 7% respectively).

Chapter 3: Policy Context

Introduction

- 3.1 This Chapter is intended to provide an overview of the European, UK and Welsh policy context for EQUAL in Wales.
- 3.2 Following the transfer of specific devolved powers and responsibilities of the Secretary of State for Wales, to the National Assembly on 1 July 1999, the National Assembly has responsibility for developing and implementing policies which reflect the particular needs of the people of Wales. Wales remains part of the UK and primary legislation passed by the UK Government is applicable in Wales. The National Assembly has responsibility for education and training policy but employment policy is reserved to the UK Government, which takes the lead on employment legislation and has responsibility for the public employment service. This includes the funding and delivery of the New Deal and other Welfare to Work initiatives. In Wales, the UK Government is taking forward its Welfare to Work policies in partnership with the National Assembly and contributing Welsh organisations.
- 3.3 Employment strategy in Wales is based on three inter-linked objectives: increasing the supply of good quality jobs; improving the skills of the workforce; and helping into work those currently inactive in the labour market.

European Policy Context

- 3.4 The **European Employment Strategy** (EES) is laid down in the Employment Title of the Treaty of Amsterdam. Through a set of Employment Guidelines, the EES supports and guides Member States' work over the medium term towards combating unemployment, increasing employability and flexibility, improving the adaptability of the labour market, and improving gender equality in the workplace. The EES takes a non-regulatory approach to dealing with labour market issues, with action taken within its overall framework by Member States at national, regional and local levels according to their individual labour market needs and institutional structures.
- 3.5 Member States prepare Employment Action Plans on an annual basis and report upon progress to the Commission each year. These Plans in turn inform the Commission's Joint Employment Report and Council recommendations, and support peer reviews and exchange of best practice.
- 3.6 The main goals of the European Employment Strategy have been defined as:
 - to achieve a high level of employment in the economy and for all groups in the labour market
 - to move away from a passive fight against unemployment towards promoting sustained employability and job creation

- to favour a new approach to work organisation in such a way that EU firms are able to cope with economic change while reconciling both security and adaptability, and allowing individuals to participate in life-long training
- to provide equal opportunities for everyone in the labour market to participate and have access to work.

The EES is founded on 22 Guidelines which fall under 4 Pillars :-

- improving employability
- developing entrepreneurship
- encouraging adaptability of businesses and their employees
- strengthening equal opportunities for women and men

3.7 The **UK Employment Action Plan** for Employment provides the national response to these guidelines and is prepared by the UK Government in consultation with the National Assembly for Wales and the other devolved administrations. It analyses the problems and challenges in the labour market and sets out key policy measures and initiatives which will be used to tackle them.

3.8 The **2000 Joint Employment Report** endorsed the UK's labour market policies and congratulated the UK on its healthy employment growth and low level of unemployment and high levels of employment for men and women. In the light of the report JER, the Council identified particular areas where increased emphasis would be valuable:

- improve the balance of policy implementation of the Guidelines, so as to strengthen and make more visible efforts to modernise work organisation, in particular by fostering social partnership at all appropriate levels.
- pursue efforts to reduce the gender pay gap and take action to improve childcare provision, with a view to making it easier for men and women with parental responsibilities to take employment. Special attention should be given to the needs of lone parents.
- reinforce active labour market policies for the adult unemployed before the 12 month point so as to increase the number of people benefiting from active measures, and supplement the support provided by the Jobseekers' Allowance Regime.
- intensify efforts to implement initiatives on life long learning, particularly those aimed at increasing the general level of basic skills, demonstrating how access will be ensured for those groups traditionally reluctant to take up the opportunity, or unable to find suitable provision.

3.9 In 1997, the **Amsterdam Treaty** was agreed which expanded the scope of EU Equal Opportunities policy to include measures to combat discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

- 3.10 A new **EU Equal Treatment Directive** designed to outlaw discrimination against people at work on the grounds of their religion, age, disability or sexual orientation was agreed in Luxembourg in October 2000. A deadline of 2003 has been agreed for the provisions on religion and sexual orientation and 2006 for disability and the age discrimination laws.
- 3.11 In May 1999, the European Commission published a Communication, “**Towards a Europe for All Ages**” which stated that within the framework of the European Employment Strategy, the Commission is committed to promote policies which can secure adequate adaptation to the ageing of the labour force and to supporting the efforts of Member States with funding from the European Social Fund. For older workers support for active labour market policies to combat unemployment and prevent men and women from sliding into long-term unemployment is recognised as being of particular importance.

UK Policy Context

ESF Policy Frame of Reference

- 3.12 The **ESF Policy Frame of Reference** sets out the United Kingdom’s policy for the use of all EU Structural Fund support for human resource development to promote employability and to develop human resources in all parts of the country for the period 2000-2006. The framework provides a planning tool and a policy rationale for Structural Fund support and guides partnerships in all parts of the UK to programme Structural Fund resources. The European Social Fund, and aspects of other EU Structural Funds, support the strategy set out in the UK National Action Plan for Employment. EQUAL will provide a useful means to test ideas which can be mainstreamed to other Structural Fund programmes and to help improve on the performance set out in the National Action Plan.

UK Employment Programmes

- 3.13 The UK Government sets the overall economic framework for high and stable levels of growth and employment. UK and National Assembly policies promote employment opportunities for all and focus on the need for a skilled, trained and adaptable labour force, and a flexible labour market, underpinned by basic minimum standards of fairness and decency. The UK Government and the National Assembly are particularly committed to helping young unemployed people and the long-term unemployed move from welfare to work and re-engaging other welfare recipients with the labour market. A key element of this strategy is to make work pay, through policies such as the **National Minimum Wage** and the **Working Families Tax Credit**. Other tax and benefits reforms have also been introduced to make it easier for people to move from benefits into work such as **Job-Seekers Allowance, Restart interviews, Jobplan Workshops, Jobclubs, Work Trials and the Jobfinders Grant**.
- 3.14 The UK Government has introduced a wide range of employment and training programmes targeted on the long-term unemployed and other economically inactive client groups under the **New Deal** and other **Welfare to Work** initiatives. The following New Deal Initiatives operate in Wales - **New Deal for 18-24 year olds** , the **New Deal for 25 Plus** , the **New**

Deal 50 Plus, the New Deal for Partners, the New Deal for Lone Parents and New Deal for Disabled People. The programmes are funded by the Department of Education and Employment but have been developed in Wales under the guidance of the Wales New Deal Task Force and are delivered through a network of local partnerships. The Assembly has a target to get 30,000 young people back to work under the New Deal.

UK Employment Legislation

- 3.15 The Government is supported in promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and the Disability Rights Commission (DRC). Each Commission undertakes its own actions towards equality goals. All three organisations have offices in Wales and a regular dialogue with the National Assembly for Wales.**
- 3.16** The Code of Practice on Age Diversity in Employment and its accompanying guidance set a standard for tackling age discrimination in employment, and is supported by advertising and publicity. An evaluation of the Code's impact will be published in 2001 and will inform future plans for legislation in this area. In addition, the Cabinet Office published a paper entitled, "Winning the Generation Game" which contains seventy five suggestions on how to combat age discrimination.

Welsh Policy Context

- 3.17** The principles of equal opportunity for all citizens and ensuring that no groups are excluded from society are central to both the National Assembly for Wales and UK Government policy, not least in relation to the labour market. These principles have been endorsed by the new **Partnership Government**. In line with the equality principles enshrined in the Amsterdam Treaty. **The Government of Wales Act 1998** commits the National Assembly to ensuring that the principle of equality of opportunity for all people is taken into consideration both in the exercise of its business and in carrying out its functions. As part of discharging its responsibility to equality of opportunity the National Assembly is seeking to mainstream equality across the board through the development of systems and structures with particular regard to policy formulation, policy development and service delivery. An action plan is in place to take this forward which will ensure that mainstreaming is supported by specific actions such as the development of data baselines, the provision of equal opportunities awareness training across all aspects of the National Assembly's work and importantly working in close partnership with the equality agencies in Wales from both the statutory and voluntary sector. Another important feature of the **Government of Wales Act 1998** is the provision for the new WDA to have an extended role in the economic and social development of Wales.
- 3.18** In its first strategic plan "**Better Wales**", equal opportunities is identified alongside tackling social disadvantage and promoting sustainable development as one of the three major themes which will guide the work of the National Assembly.

3.19 **Better Wales** sets out a statement of values and principles which will influence the way the National Assembly will develop its policies, budgetary priorities and programmes over the coming years. Central to these values and principles is the promotion of a culture in which diversity is valued and equality of opportunity is a reality, and the development of an inclusive society where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. More specifically, the National Assembly is committed to:

- promoting equality of opportunity and tackling disadvantage;
- promoting a tolerant society in which diversity is valued;
- addressing the needs of all social groups, particularly the young, older people, disabled people and black and ethnic minorities;
- recognising the particular needs of rural areas and areas of social deprivation; and
- focusing efforts and resources on the problems of those most in need.

Better Wales also identifies five main areas for action:

- I. **Better opportunities for learning** – including action to open up lifelong learning opportunities for everyone; enabling more people with young families to work and increasing the participation of under-represented groups in learning and employment;
- II. **Better stronger economy** – including reducing unemployment and inactivity amongst groups which traditionally experience high levels of unemployment; breaking down barriers to self-employment and increasing opportunities through the social economy;
- III. **Better health and well being** – improving health and reducing health inequalities, including action to target the most disadvantaged communities;
- IV. **Better quality of life** – including helping people living in disadvantaged areas through community led action to develop confident communities, with decent housing, good local facilities, a high quality environment and free from crime and substance misuse; and
- V. **Better, simpler government** – including assessing all elements of the National Assembly’s budget in terms of the contribution made to developing a more inclusive society; reviewing the performance of sponsored bodies in taking forward equal opportunities policies and ensuring local government takes full account of equality issues; achieving greater diversity in public appointments and implementing family friendly policies.

3.20 The National Assembly recently published its first annual report outlining its equal opportunities arrangements under the terms of section 120 of the Government of Wales Act 1998. In addition, and to take forward its equality obligations in a coherent and consistent manner, it has established an **Equality Policy Unit**. The Unit is a general resource for all officials in the National Assembly, providing policy guidance and advice on equality issues.

3.21 The importance of equal opportunities to the National Assembly can be measured by the fact that it is only one of two standing committees with a remit spanning the whole of the Assembly functions. **The Committee on Equality of Opportunity**’s remit is to ensure that

the Assembly has effective arrangements in place to promote the principle of equality of opportunity for all people in the exercise of its functions and the conduct of its business.

- 3.22 Another major theme which has been identified by the National Assembly as a priority for action is **promoting social inclusion**.
- 3.23 The principle aims are to develop an inclusive society where everyone has the chance to fulfil their potential and the promotion of a culture in which diversity is valued and equality of opportunity is a reality.
- 3.24 The National Assembly also has direct responsibility for a range of policies and programmes which help to tackle social exclusion, integrate people into the labour market and to help people not currently active in the labour market to acquire the skills and motivation needed to obtain employment and progress in their careers. These are outlined below within the context of the 4 pillars of the European Employment Strategy:

I. Employability

- 3.25 The National Assembly will invest £81million over the three year period from 2001 to help some of the most deprived communities across Wales. This funding will support the following initiatives:-
- (a) **Communities First** - in April 2000, the Assembly launched a consultation document on a new approach to community regeneration. The intention is to establish cross-sectoral and multi-agency methods of designing policy and local service delivery which directly involve the community in planning and delivering services. Communities First will sponsor the creation of partnerships and encourage the development of locally determined, innovative patterns of service delivery which cuts across the conventional divisions between education, health, housing, training, employment planning and other services which impact on the well-being of individuals and their communities. It will target the most deprived areas in Wales. A second consultation document which will culminate in the selection of the communities to be targeted is expected to issue by the end of the year. The programme is expected to be launched in the Spring of 2001.
- (b) The **People in Communities** programme aims to add value to other actions the Assembly is taking forward to tackle social exclusion. It is helping to determine what kind of action really works in excluded communities, where poverty and deprivation are concentrated. The programme is being implemented in eight communities across Wales. From 2001 the People in Communities programme will be incorporated into the Communities First programme.
- (c) The **Children and Youth Partnership Fund** has been established to promote local initiatives to lift the educational attainment of young people; engage them in creative activities in their communities and to encourage them away from crime, drugs, vandalism and truancy. Projects are being delivered by local partnerships.

- 3.26 The **Youth Gateway** is a new scheme currently being piloted as a partnership between TECs and the Career Service to provide unfocused young people leaving school with in-depth assessment and guidance to ensure that they embark on a route which is suitable for them.
- 3.27 The **Adult Guidance Initiative** provides access to careers information and guidance to enable people to make effective choices about learning and career opportunities. Local networks are now well established drawing together local partners, including the Careers Service, Employment Service, Higher and Further Education Institutions and the Community Education and voluntary sectors. The networks provide free access to information and advice with referral to specialist guidance for the unemployed and economically inactive. Targets for 1999-00 are for 40,000 people to access information and advice and 10,500 to access guidance.
- 3.28 The provisions of the **Learning and Skills Act 2000** aims to ensure more efficient provision of post-16 education and training, informed by delivery plans drawn together by community consortia comprising local stakeholders in post-16 education and training. The Learning and Skills Act also includes new powers, which are unique to Wales, to improve support for young people. To implement these powers, the National Assembly's Policy unit has recently published a report '**Extending Entitlement: supporting young people in Wales**'. The report is intended to support a more integrated approach to support for young people aged 11-25 with the objective of promoting sustained and effective participation in education and training as well as health, well being and citizenship.
- 3.29 The **Youth Access Initiative** supports projects that help disengaged 14-17 year-olds, and those at risk of disengagement to enter employment, education or training. Action plans have been developed by local authorities and TECs to implement local solutions. These set out measures to contact disaffected young people; to assess their needs; develop their basic skills and personal effectiveness; and to integrate them into education, training or jobs. From April 2001, this is to be combined with the Children and Youth Partnership Fund.
- 3.30 The **Millennium Volunteers** initiative reflects the National Assembly's concern to promote a better society through combating social exclusion and encouraging active citizenship, starting with young people. The objectives of the programme are to:
- raise the numbers and extend the range of young people involved in volunteering;
 - to assist in young people's personal development, enhance their skills and increase their employability;
 - to develop community activity in poor neighbourhoods;
 - increase the viability of community groups and the services they deliver; and
 - to have a clear beneficial effect on local communities.

The scheme supports and encourages 16 -24 year olds to make a sustained commitment to volunteering on activities which will have an impact on the community.

II. Adaptability

- 3.31 **Lifelong Learning** - the National Assembly's stated policy is to establish Wales as a learning country, one which is renowned world-wide for its high standards of education and training.
- 3.32 The 1998 lifelong learning Green Paper for Wales '*Learning is For Everyone*', or *LIFE* as it is commonly known, took the first steps toward achieving this goal by setting out a blueprint for lifelong learning. It proposed a National Learning Strategy for Wales based on :-
- better access to information and provision
 - new measures to increase and widen participation
 - a single, flexible, credit-related qualifications framework spanning all learning post-16
 - new targets for learning; and
 - strengthening co-operation, collaboration and partnership at the local, regional and all-Wales levels.
- 3.33 The 1999 *Education and Training Action Plan for Wales* took up the philosophy of *LIFE* and turned it into achievable proposals. The Action Plan recommended modernising Wales' post-16 education and training systems through planning and providing in partnership. The aim is to promote new opportunities responsive to local need, widen choice and levels of participation, raise service standards, cut duplication and waste, and remove nugatory competition. Central to the new arrangements will be the establishment of a **National Council for Education and Training for Wales** together with its regional committees responsible for the funding of all post-16 education and training, excluding higher education. Local planning and delivery of post-16 education and training would fall within the remit of new Community Consortia for Education and Training.
- 3.34 The National Council for Education and Training for Wales will have a remit covering the whole of Wales. It will become operational from April 2001 and will assume the current strategic planning and funding responsibilities of the Further Education Funding Council for Wales and the four Welsh Training and Enterprise Councils. It will also have responsibility for funding community based learning and, in due course, post-16 education in schools. The National Council's total annual budget will be in the region of £400 million.
- 3.35 The Assembly has also agreed **National Targets for Education and Training** in Wales.
- 3.36 The National Assembly has endorsed the proposals for the establishment from April 2001 of an all-age guidance service - **Careers Wales**. Operating under a common brand, Careers Wales will draw together the Careers Service and the adult guidance networks. It would also provide the telephone helpline 'learndirect' with access to both local and national data on learning opportunities.

- 3.37 A national careers information helpline – **learnirect** - is provided in partnership with the University for Industry (Ufi) from 4 call centres in Wales to link with local guidance networks.
- 3.38 The **University for Industry** (Ufi) is at the heart of the UK Government’s Lifelong Learning agenda. The aims of the Ufi are to stimulate the demand for lifelong learning amongst business and individuals and to promote the availability of and access to learning, particularly through the use of information and communication technologies. Ufi Ltd has established a Wales Advisory Group to advise on Welsh priorities and policies and to amplify the Ufi message throughout Wales. To achieve its aims Ufi Ltd intends to establish a network of Learning Centres across the UK in a variety of settings including libraries, colleges, shopping centres etc. The centres will be established through regional Learning Centre Hubs. There will be four Hubs in Wales coterminous with the Regional Economic Fora.
- 3.39 Basic Skills** - The National Assembly, as part of the lifelong learning agenda, is supporting and funding key initiatives and policies which aim to turn round Wales’ poor basic skills record. This is happening in partnership with the further education sector, the Basic Skills Agency and local authorities.
- 3.40 In 1998/99 the **Further Education Funding Council for Wales** (FEFCW) funded just over 15,000 enrolments on discrete basic skills programmes in further education institutions in Wales. In addition to delivery which takes place at main campus sites, FE institutions have seen basic skills programmes as one of the key areas to be taken forward through outreach development, particularly in the most socio-economically deprived communities (as identified by National Assembly indices). FEFCW research into current outreach provision offered by FE institutions in such communities has shown that basic skills programmes account for the largest category of course, and attract more students than any other type of programme.
- 3.41 In addition to discrete provision, FE institutions also deliver basic skills support to students on mainstream FE programmes. Institutions are currently required to spend a minimum of 50 per cent of funding secured through the Widening Participation factor at stage II of the funding methodology on basic skills support. In 1999/2000 this equated to £1.4 million. All institutions are being encouraged by the FEFCW to achieve the revised **Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark**, with its focus on strategic effectiveness. The Council is currently considering how its funding may be more effectively deployed to underpin this approach.
- 3.42 **The Family Literacy Initiative** is run by the Basic Skills Agency in partnership with all 22 Welsh local education authorities, their primary schools and further education colleges. A more recently introduced **Family Numeracy Initiative** is also underway. These two initiatives enable children and their parents to study together, thus breaking down inter-generation barriers to learning. They concentrate on preventing failure early; attracting adults who have not participated in learning; working in areas where social exclusion is greatest and academic results are lowest; and developing effective and sustainable partnerships between schools, colleges and LEAs.

- 3.43 Employers have a key role in improving the skills of their employees, in order to support the new range of jobs being developed and so that their companies can become more competitive and successful. Employees, too, must increasingly take on more responsibility for improving their own skills. However, public interventions are needed in order to bring about the increased levels of skills development that are required if the objectives of this programme are to be met. The approach taken in Wales has been to take the necessary actions as a partnership between the social partners, central and local government and training and education providers.
- 3.44 Existing Assembly policies and programmes to improve skill levels in Wales include research and information provision to enable all partners to take the necessary actions; access to advice and guidance; a range of work-based training programmes for young people and adults; training initiatives specifically targeted at the small-firms sector; support for employers to collaborate on skills and training issues and support for the Investors in People programme.
- 3.45 The **Future Skills Wales** project, the results of which were published in March 1999, has provided important information concerning the need to increase the adaptability and employability of the workforce by raising skill levels, working alongside measures to promote equality of opportunity and better access to lifelong learning opportunities. A **Skills Unit** has been established to take forward further research on skills and to disseminate results. It will be located within the Council for Education and Training for Wales from April 2001. A **Skills Task Force** was established in December 1999 to take a strategic look at the results of the Future Skills Wales project, and submit a report to the Assembly with recommendations on further strategic actions that should be taken, to put Wales at the leading edge of economic development. This report was published in October 2000.
- 3.46 The Assembly is also encouraging employers and national training organisations in Wales to come together to set up Skills Sector Groups. Examples of current groups are the Wales Electronics Forum covering consumer electronics, semi-conductor, communications and IT; the Automotive Forum; the South Wales Aerospace Group; and the Opto-electronics sector in North Wales. These groups can help plan skills and strategies for their sectors.
- 3.47 The goal of a dynamic and healthy SME sector in Wales depends to an important extent on the effective co-ordination and targeting of the wide range of support services. **Business Connect** provides a one-stop information and guidance service for SMEs. A new Business Connect Management Board was established in March 1998 to help provide better strategic direction to the business support network and to encourage a more co-ordinated approach. Key priorities include promoting better awareness among the business community of the services available from Business Connect partners and improving take-up. Continuous improvement in the quality of the services and in ensuring they remain relevant and client-focused are also important objectives. In 1999 over 23,000 business enquiries were received via the Business Connect helpline.

- 3.48 It is a strategic aim for the **HE and FE** sectors to contribute to the development of a skilled and well qualified workforce and the capacity for supporting the creation of wealth. Funding incentives have been provided to institutions to encourage them to develop their services and partnerships with industry, commerce and the public services. With the Welsh Development Agency the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales has established a joint initiative to support institutions' development of placement and other career-related programmes designed to improve graduate employability. Funding has been made available to encourage and reward institutions undertaking contract research, consultancy and training thereby encouraging closer links with industry and contributing to the future prosperity of Wales.
- 3.49 Within the framework which has been established institutions are encouraged and expected to contribute to the economic, social and welfare development of their region and the sector offers an extensive range of management, professional development and other courses for adult employees that are directly related to employees and workplace needs.
- 3.50 From 2000/01 the **Knowledge Exploitation Fund** (£34 million over 4 years) has been introduced to enable the HE and FE sectors to accelerate the exploitation of research and development, other knowledge and expertise within institutions, to contribute to wealth and job creation and economic development in Wales.

III. Entrepreneurship

- 3.51 The Assembly supports programmes which encourage entrepreneurship and the development of management skills in SMEs
- 3.52 In order to help foster a stronger enterprise culture in Wales a new **Entrepreneurship Action Plan** is being co-ordinated by the Welsh Development Agency via a Steering Group representing a wide range of key interests. Following extensive consultation the Plan is expected to be ready by Easter and is intended to provide a cohesive framework for action. The aim is for a fully cross-sectoral approach so we effectively nurture and support the wealth of talent in Welsh colleges, schools, local communities and the business sector. Wales' rate of new business formation is among the lowest among the regions of Europe. Implementation of the Plan should help secure the step change needed.
- 3.53 The **Business Start-up Programme**, managed by the Training and Enterprise Councils, aims to support the establishment of more good quality businesses which can survive and grow. Support offered includes help to develop a sound business plan, appropriate skills training and on-going mentoring support. The programme is open to all. In the current year it aims to assist 1,100 new ventures across Wales.
- 3.54 There are an estimated 160,000 sole traders in Wales. The aim of the **Sole Traders Initiative** - which is unique to Wales - is to help these micro-businesses to take on their first employee, thereby creating new employment and helping the businesses to expand. Since its launch in April 1998 an estimated 800 new jobs have been created under the Initiative.

- 3.56 A wide range of initiatives are under way in Wales to encourage closer links between SMEs and colleges. One of the main schemes is **Cymru Prosper Wales** which focuses on providing direct experience for students within small firms, via short term placements. The aim is to assist students in gaining first hand experience of small firms and to allow the companies see the benefits of utilising higher level skills. Over 450 firms are expected to participate in the scheme in the current year.
- 3.57 TECs also promote enterprise and business awareness through their **Education Business Links** programmes. The aim is to provide all young people, while in compulsory education, with an opportunity to learn about business - with direct input from the business community.
- 3.58 The importance attached to developing the social economy in Wales was outlined in the **Pathways to Prosperity** document published in July 1998. The document recognises the valuable contribution which local, community initiatives can make to the wider economy of Wales and calls for development strategies to recognise their potential importance as an economic tool.
- 3.59 In accordance with the provisions of the Government of Wales Act 1998, as part of its business planning process the **new WDA** will be working with 'third sector' agencies to identify new and sustainable ways of achieving economic and social development through the social economy.

IV. Equal Opportunities for Women & Men

- 3.60 Equality of opportunity for women means enabling them to overcome the particular barriers they face, to contribute fully to society and the economy and be able to achieve a rewarding and financially secure life. Not all women are parents; and many men are parents too. There are also carers to consider. It is important to ensure that women retain lifelong contact with the labour market where they wish to do so, break out of stereotypical employment roles and learn new skills. Women who register as unemployed and are available for work are given help in finding work on the same basis as men in a similar position.
- 3.61 The Assembly is working in partnership to take forward equal opportunities in employment in other ways. It supports **Chwarae Teg** ("Fair Play") which is a voluntary partnership body whose aim is to improve the position of women in the labour market. It does this in a number of ways including; advice and guidance to women entrepreneurs and managers; research and promotion activities; advising SMEs about gender policies; developing childcare and carer support measures. The Assembly is also a partner with the UK Government in the Work-Life Balance campaign to encourage employers to introduce employment policies which help their workforce to better balance their work and home responsibilities. One aspect of this campaign in Wales is a Work Life Balance Challenge Fund, to assist the development of relevant practices and policies in SMEs. The Assembly is also developing a strategy for the support of carers, the majority of whom are women.
- 3.62 The Wales **European Equality Partnership** was launched in October 1997, comprising Chwarae Teg, WCVA, WDA, All Wales Ethnic Minority Association, WEFO, National

Assembly for Wales, the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality and Disability Wales. The partnerships main aim is the integration of equal opportunities into structural fund project development, approval and monitoring and to develop new measures to mainstream equal opportunities in the economic development of Wales.

- 3.63 The **National Childcare Strategy** in Wales is part of a United Kingdom-wide initiative. Its aim is to provide good quality, affordable childcare for children aged 0-14 in every neighbourhood in Wales. It is a key part of the Government's plans to promote social inclusion, to improve prospects, to give children a good start in life and to help them get the most out of education. It is also important to the Government's welfare reform programme and its aim of increasing the opportunities for parents, especially women to work or train.
- 3.64 The Strategy is being taken forward by **Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships** in each of the 22 local authority areas, who submitted their first childcare plans in 1999-2000. The partnerships are charged with ensuring that the £14.3m New Opportunities Fund grant monies for the creation of 22,000 out of school childcare places is fully utilised within the timescale set of 1999-2003. The latest information is that 8,600 places have been created and over some £1.9 million in grant awards have been made. Total funding from the Assembly in 2000-01 amounts to £2.3 million, of which £1.4 million is supports partnerships and the remaining £0.9 million is paid via training and enterprise councils (TECs) to the Chwarae Teg out of school care development team.
- 3.65 The **Children First Programme** aims to transform services for children in need, including children who are looked after by local authorities. Priorities are the introduction of new arrangements for young people moving on from the care system, ensuring that children in need and children looked after have the same life chances as other children, keeping children safe from harm and meeting the complex needs of disabled children. £5 million was made available to local authorities in 1999-2000 and the local government settlement for 2000-2001 included an additional £48 million for social services, with an expectation that one third would be spent on children's services, primarily on Children First. The National Assembly's final budget for the next three years will earmark central funding for Children First of £12.2million, £16.3 million and £18.6 million.

The Welsh Language

- 3.66 Public policy in Wales is firmly behind the maintenance and promotion of Welsh and of its use in all areas of life. The 1993 Welsh Language Act enshrined the principle that Welsh and English 'should be treated on a basis of equality' in public business and in the administration of justice. The 1998 Government of Wales Act placed a similar requirement on the new National Assembly, and the Assembly has held its proceedings bilingually since its inception.
- 3.67 The Welsh Language Board (a public body accountable to the National Assembly) is charged with promoting and facilitating the use of Welsh. The Board pursues a wide range

of initiatives. The Board has statutory powers to require public bodies to implement language schemes covering their use of Welsh. Over 100 schemes have been approved by the Board to date, and practical bilingualism is becoming a norm throughout the public services in Wales. There are no legal requirements on the private sector to use Welsh, but increasing numbers of companies are choosing to do so.

Purpose of Section

- 4.1 This section sets out the priorities for EQUAL in Wales. These priorities have been developed within the overall framework of the GB aims for EQUAL as set out in the GB Community Initiative Programme. The priorities identified are broad enough to allow for policy developments over the 6 year period of the Initiative and are intended to provide a prospectus for potential applicants.

Aims & Objectives of the EQUAL Community Initiative

- 4.2 EQUAL is part of the European Union's strategy for promoting more and better jobs and for ensuring that no one is denied access to them. The overall aim of EQUAL is to promote new ways of combating all forms of discrimination and inequality in connection with the labour market, through trans-national co-operation. The Initiative has a strong emphasis on dissemination and influencing the policy making process and will provide the scope to trial and test new ideas which can shape future human resource development and employment policy.
- 4.3 The Initiative will have a particular focus on equality issues associated with gender; disability; race or ethnic origin; religion or belief; age and sexual orientation. EQUAL will also support the social and vocational integration of asylum seekers/refugees.

GB Priorities Framework

- 4.4 The GB CIP sets out an overarching framework of priorities for EQUAL. This framework was developed in consultation with the National Assembly for Wales and the Scottish Executive. In addition, a GB EQUAL Working Group was established to advise on the proposed priorities and the outcomes of the GB wide consultation exercise undertaken during the summer of 2000. This Working Group included representatives from various Government Departments, social partners, the statutory equality commissions, the voluntary sector and other organisations with a specific interest in EQUAL.
- 4.5 Responses to the consultation, and advice from the GB EQUAL Working Group, indicated that the Employability themes were regarded as being of particular importance in exploring ways of overcoming barriers to employment facing excluded groups and should attract a high proportion of the available resources. In particular the absence of basic skills was identified as a key issue for EQUAL to address.
- 4.6 It was also concluded that with the exception of theme G (reconciling family and professional life), all of the EQUAL themes should be included within the GB programme. The issue of work/life balance will be addressed through the Adaptability themes, because of the need to integrate this with measures to promote flexibility in working practices and to promote business competitiveness.

4.7 The results of the consultation in Wales were very much in accord with the overall GB view. Therefore, although many of the priorities for Wales have been tailored to respond to particular Welsh needs and circumstances, there are clear and demonstrable links with the aims of the initiative at the GB level.

Equal Opportunities Statement

4.8 Each action under the EQUAL programme in Wales will:

- acknowledge that the primary responsibility is on society and its institutions to find ways of including people rather than on the individual to overcome societal barriers.
- value social diversity, recognising that there are differences between people, groups and communities that must be addressed in any policy or strategic development
- promote policies that positively encourage and enable participation by all sectors of the community.
- work towards removing physical, institutional and attitudinal barriers to participation in social, economic and political activities, taking into account the different access, information, communication and participation needs of individuals.

4.9 In particular, the EQUAL programme will:

- ensure that all information is available in appropriate languages and in accessible formats
- ensure that all premises and venues used by EQUAL participants are accessible
- ensure that all application, evaluation and management procedures are accessible
- address HAC (human aids to communication – e.g. language interpretation, BSL interpretation, palantype etc) requirements
- address participation requirements of parents and carers.

Wales Priorities for EQUAL

EMPLOYABILITY

Rationale

- 4.10 There are important problems in the Welsh labour market which inhibit the prospects for economic development and growth, and these are particularly concentrated in West Wales and the Valleys and the more urban areas of East Wales. Economic inactivity rates are high compared to the UK and unemployment is higher in most of Wales. Pockets of high long-term unemployment remain, particularly in deprived communities across Wales.
- 4.11 In addition many people in the working age population lack the basic and generic skills to gain and retain employment and there is underachievement in terms of qualifications. A significant proportion of the workforce has poor basic skills.
- 4.12 Labour Force Survey data shows that the excluded groups to be targeted under EQUAL are particularly vulnerable to unemployment and inactivity and that their relative position in the labour market in Wales is worse than the GB average. Skill levels are also generally lower, particularly amongst disabled people and older workers.
- 4.13 EQUAL can help to improve the effectiveness of existing labour market interventions such as the New Deal and also inform the development of new approaches to community regeneration such as Communities First, which will target some of the most deprived communities across Wales.

Theme A: Facilitating Access and return to the labour market for those who have difficulty in being integrated or re-integrated into a labour market which must be open to all.

Aims

(1) To combat discrimination faced by individuals from excluded groups and promote equality in the workplace. Activities could include:

- Exploring new ways of developing positive attitudes towards citizenship in pre 16 education by providing guidance officers and learning practitioners with more effective tools to promote social inclusion and equality of opportunity.
- Developing more effective personal development programmes aimed at raising aspirations amongst excluded groups.
- Innovative approaches to tackling youth and adult illiteracy and reducing the number of young people who drop out of the school system early. Particular attention will be given to young people with learning difficulties and with educational problems.

- Developing a suitably accredited, comprehensive equal opportunities training framework targeted at employers and co-workers and to explore new ways of supporting training delivery.
 - Conducting research into the real and perceived barriers faced by excluded groups in accessing the workplace and to develop innovative ways of overcoming these.
- (2) To test support mechanisms to help excluded groups integrate/re-integrate into the labour market. Activities could include:
- Piloting ways of improving dependent care to enable carers to access and return to the labour market and helping employers to develop more carer friendly employment practices.
 - Developing models for supporting sustainability of childcare provision, particularly in deprived communities and rural areas.
 - The Development of new methods and frameworks for measuring “distance travelled” and “soft outcomes” as part of integrated approaches to improving the employability of excluded groups.
 - Exploring new ways of ensuring guidance and learning providers promote equality of opportunity in career selection amongst excluded groups pre-16 and before they access the labour market.
 - New approaches to raising the awareness of guidance and learning providers of equality issues and the needs of excluded groups.
 - New ways of improving access to and participation in vocational education and training for excluded groups.
 - Exploring new ways of using volunteering opportunities as a means of re-integrating excluded groups into the labour market, with a particular emphasis on older people.
 - New approaches to progression/development work linked to achieving equality through recruitment, selection and induction systems.
 - Exploring new ways of ensuring systems of transition into the labour market offers effective support for young people leaving care.

Theme B: Opportunities to promote potential for ethnic minorities within the world of work.

Aim: To improve the employment prospects of ethnic minorities. Activities could include:

- Exploring new ways of developing positive attitudes amongst young people (including pre 16) towards citizenship and diversity in our society
- Providing guidance officers and learning practitioners with more effective tools to promote social inclusion and equality of opportunity.
- Exploring innovative ways of engaging communities/families in supporting language training for ethnic minorities through partnership arrangements with learning providers and the development of mentoring approaches.
- Improving employers, business and employment agencies awareness and perceptions of qualifications, knowledge and skills acquired from outside GB
- *Piloting ways of improving skill levels in ethnic minority communities.*

Links with the Employment Action Plan

Potential Partner Organisations include:

National Council for Education and Training in Wales; Employment Service; Local Authorities; FE and HE Institutions; secondary schools; other public sector bodies; careers companies; NTOs; voluntary and community organisations; the private sector and trade unions.

Potential Transnational partners include:

Financial Allocation

40% of the Wales EQUAL allocation.

Theme A – 30%; Theme B – 10%

Matched Funding

Potential sources of matched funding include: the National Assembly for Wales, Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies, the Employment Service, local authorities, the National Council for Education & training, Careers Service Association for Wales, voluntary sector, National Lottery Funds, NTOs and the Private Sector.

Final Beneficiaries:

Development Partnerships

Field of Intervention:

21

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Rationale

- 4.14 Wales needs to create an environment where, through the right support and encouragement, all people have equal opportunity to become entrepreneurs. Sustainable business development is the key to the creation of jobs, enhanced competitiveness and the generation of wealth. However, Wales has the second lowest business start-up rate of any region in the UK.
- 4.15 The proportion of the working population in self-employment is 7.4% for Wales compared to 8.3% for GB and we know that the figure for many of the excluded groups is significantly lower.
- 4.16 Activity under the EQUAL Initiative will need to complement and build upon the framework for action which has been developed to encourage enterprise across Wales through the Entrepreneurship Action Plan. The Plan recognises that certain groups such as disabled people, women, older workers and ethnic minorities are currently underrepresented in enterprise creation. It could also complement developments in the social economy linked to Communities First.
- 4.17 It will also be important to develop community based enterprises to act as a bridge for those in disadvantaged areas currently excluded from the economy, to move back into mainstream economic activity.

Theme C : Opening up the business creation process to all by providing the tools required for setting up in business and for the identification and exploitation of new possibilities for creating employment in rural areas.

Aim: To test approaches to ensure that mainstream business support is developed to meet the needs of excluded groups. Activities could include:

- New approaches to awareness raising and training for business support advisers to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the principles and practical application of equal opportunities and a better appreciation of the needs of excluded groups by allowing excluded groups to participate in the development and delivery of services.
- Developing new ways of promoting an entrepreneurial culture amongst young people in education with an emphasis on longer-term engagement.
- Exploring the use of women-only pre-start up business training, support and advice and the use of women's business networks and mentoring
- Exploring the use of targeted ethnic minority pre-start up business training, support and advice and the use of ethnic minority business networks and mentoring.

- Exploring new ways of promoting and sustaining entrepreneurship in rural areas amongst excluded groups.
- Conducting research into the real and perceived barriers to business start-up amongst excluded groups and to develop innovative ways of overcoming these.
- Innovative ways of tailoring enterprise support provision to meet the needs of excluded groups, including the use of peer-group links and networks.
- Initiatives involving the financial institutions designed to address barriers to accessing business finance facing excluded groups. Research into Innovative financing (e.g women's banks, small business grants targeted at excluded groups).
- Developing links between higher education institutions and their surrounding area as a means of encouraging entrepreneurship within communities.

Theme D : Strengthening the social economy (the third sector), in particular the services of interest to the community, with a focus on improving the quality of jobs.

Aim: To develop a common understanding of the way in which the Social Economy can encourage labour market integration. Activities could include:

- Exploring the development of Credit Unions as a stepping stone towards entrepreneurial activity within communities.
- New approaches to developing the management and business skills of individuals involved in the community regeneration and providing them with toolkits to facilitate effective engagement with communities.
- Developing new models for encouraging communities to become empowered and socially sustainable, through capacity building and multi-agency partnership working.
- Developing reliable indicators of change in communities as a basis of measuring and evaluating progress in tackling social exclusion and supporting community regeneration in disadvantaged and deprived communities.
- Exploring models for engaging the private sector more effectively in supporting the development of the social economy and community enterprise activity.

Links with the Employment Action Plan

Potential Partner Organisations include:

Welsh Development Agency; Enterprise Agencies; Local Government; FE and HE Institutions; Employment Service; other public sector bodies; NTOs; Wales Co-operative Society; voluntary and community organisations; the private sector and trade unions.

Potential Transnational Partners include:

Financial Allocation

20% of Wales EQUAL Allocation.

Theme C – 10%; Theme D – 10%.

Matched Funding

Potential sources of matched funding include: the National Assembly for Wales, Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies, local authorities, Employment Service; voluntary sector, National Lottery Funds, WDA and the Private Sector.

Final Beneficiaries:

Development Partnerships

Field of Intervention:

ADAPTABILITY

Rationale

- 4.18 Wales needs to develop a skilled, enterprising adaptable and healthy workforce capable of meeting the needs of knowledge based, faster growing businesses. Success will depend upon adequate long-term investment in education, a culture of enterprise and a new emphasis on re-skilling and up-skilling the workforce. It will also be important to encourage diversity in the workforce by creating an environment whereby individuals can balance their work and personal lives.
- 4.19 The challenge for EQUAL will be to ensure that the groups with the lowest skill levels and those who face the biggest barriers to participating in lifelong learning are no longer excluded.
- 4.20 Wales must compete in an information age where the acquisition, analysis and use of knowledge will be key to sustained competitiveness and again it will be vital to ensure that those facing particular barriers are not left behind.
- 4.21 Activity under EQUAL will need to complement the National Learning Strategy for Wales, developed on the basis of the Learning is for Everyone Green Paper. The aim is to develop Wales as a 'Learning Country' by providing better access to information and provision and new measures to increase and widen participation.
- 4.22 EQUAL activity will also need to take into account the recommendations of the Skills Task Force which has been submitted to the National Assembly and published in October 2000.

Theme E : Promoting lifelong learning and inclusive work practices which encourage the recruitment and retention of those suffering discrimination and inequality in connection with the labour market.

Aim: To test innovative approaches to attract non-traditional learners to improve their basic and new skills. Activities could include:

- Piloting ways of improving access to basic and key skills in the workplace.
- New approaches to maximising the opportunities for people from excluded groups to acquire basic IT skills.
- Exploring the barriers (physical and psychological) which prevents excluded groups from accessing learning, and testing ways of overcoming these barriers (eg. Mentoring and use of alternative learning media and learning venues).

- Developing “employee sharing” practices and shared apprentice schemes as a means of overcoming barriers to training in SMEs and research into the feasibility of establishing a ‘human resource skills pool’ within particular business sectors.
- Innovative ways of providing training and personal development which is easily accessible for the employee and less disruptive for the employer.
- Innovative approaches to enabling social partners to develop workplace learning and pilot schemes to promote lifelong learning in SMEs.
- Exploring new ways of engaging SMEs and their employees in order to improve basic and new skills amongst micro businesses.
- Conducting research into the real and perceived barriers faced by excluded groups in accessing learning and to develop innovative ways of overcoming these.
- Developing effective recruitment guidelines and monitoring systems which allow a confidential system of self-identification of impairments and other potentially stigmatising or culturally exclusive labels.

Theme F : Supporting the adaptability of firms and employees to structural economic change and the use of information technology and other new technologies.

Aim: To promote inclusive working practices and adaptability, with a particular emphasis on work/life balance and the use of ICT. Activities could include:

- Developing schemes and toolkits to persuade and help employers to adopt more flexible work/life balance employment policies.
- Research into the potential for developing homeworking practices amongst excluded groups as an option to supplement workplace employment.
- Exploring the use of flexible/progressive retirement policies as a means of retaining/transferring key skills within businesses
- Exploring models for developing sectoral and learning networks to support the training needs of groups of small and medium sized enterprises.
- Piloting ways of improving access to training in the workplace and elsewhere for excluded groups (eg. more imaginative and effective use of ICT and ICT training focusing specifically on the needs of older workers).
- Innovative ways of working with employers to support job retention for disabled people and those with work limiting illnesses; older people with health issues and people with caring responsibilities, including the use of technologies in work.

- Exploring positive measures to maintain the working capacity and skills of older workers and to raise employers' awareness of the potential of older workers.
- Piloting the placement of young people with IT skills into SMEs as an accessible means of expanding the IT skills of small firms.

Links with the Employment Action Plan

Potential Partner Organisations include:

National Council for Education and Training in Wales; Welsh Development Agency; Employment Service; FE and HE Institutions; other public sector bodies; Enterprise Agencies; NTOs voluntary and community organisations, the private sector and trade unions.

Potential Trans-national partners include:

Financial Allocation

25% of Wales EQUAL Allocation.

Theme E – 12.5%; Theme F – 12.5%

Matched Funding

Potential sources of matched funding include: the National Assembly for Wales, Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies, the Employment Service, local authorities, the National Council for Education & Training, voluntary sector, Careers Service Association for Wales, NTOs, WDA, trade unions and the private sector.

Final Beneficiaries:

Development Partnerships

Fields of Intervention:

23, 24.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Rationale

- 4.23 There is an urgent need to remove barriers to education, training, employment, higher education and enterprise for women. Gender segregation is more marked in Wales than in the UK as a whole, with women concentrated in a narrower band of occupational sectors and in mainly low paid, low status work. Economic activity rates for women are also significantly below the GB average. Wales has one of the lowest levels of childcare provision in the EU. The absence of good quality, affordable and accessible childcare and responsibility for dependant's care can deny access to training and employment opportunities, particularly for women.
- 4.24 Although the gender pay gap has narrowed over the past 20 years, women's average gross weekly earnings for full-time employees was only 78% of men's in April 2000. Almost half the women in Wales earn less than £250 per week while only a quarter of men earn below this threshold. Conversely, half the men in Wales earn more than £350 per week but only a quarter of women workers come into this category. Women also continue to dominate part-time work, which tends to afford less training and career development opportunities. The Equal Opportunities Commission has published a Code of Practice to help employers develop non-discriminatory pay systems. The 'glass ceiling' is prevalent in Wales, particularly in sectors such as banking and teaching. The EOC published a report early in 2000 which showed that although girls consistently did better academically than boys they were still entering stereotypical jobs which helped to perpetuate the cycle of low pay for women.

Theme G : Reconciling family and professional life, as well as the re-integration of men and women who have left the labour market, by developing more flexible and effective forms of work organisation and support services

[To be delivered through Theme F]

Theme H : Reducing gender gaps and supporting job desegregation

Aim: To identify ways of supporting job desegregation. Activities could include:

- Innovative ways of delivering 'stay in touch' schemes for women, particularly those with higher level skills, who risk losing their up-to-date knowledge whilst outside the labour market or who will face difficulties re-entering the labour market.
- New approaches to facilitating access of women to lifelong learning and in particular to IT training.

- Piloting ways of breaking down and overcoming stereotypes of “women’s and men’s work” and roles among parents, peers, learning and guidance providers and employers.
- Testing innovative approaches to promoting career progression in sectors/occupations where gender is a perceived barrier (eg ICT, Engineering, Science).
- Research into the working culture of those sectors which are known to be dominated by one gender (i.e is there a recognition of work-life balance issues in engineering etc). Testing ways in which those particular sectors could become more attractive to both men and women.

Links with the Employment Action Plan

Potential Partner Organisations include:

National Council for Education and Training in Wales; FE and HE Institutions; Welsh Development Agency; Employment Service; Local Government; other public sector bodies; Voluntary and community organisations; the private sector and trade unions.

Potential trans-national partners include:

Financial Allocation

5% of Wales EQUAL Allocation.

Theme H – 5%.

Matched Funding

Potential sources of matched funding include: the National Assembly for Wales, Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies, the Employment Service, local authorities, the National Council for Education & Training, voluntary sector, Careers Service Association for Wales, trade unions and the private sector.

Final Beneficiaries:

Development Partnerships

Field of Intervention:

25

ASYLUM SEEKERS/REFUGEES

Rationale

- 4.25 Asylum seekers and refugees are two legally distinct groups of individuals, who reside in the UK. EQUAL is required to focus on the needs of Asylum Seekers/Refugees. However one of the factors which has exacerbated the situation for Asylum Seekers/Refugees in the past who are given permission to work - or become refugees - has been a failure to respond in a co-ordinated and coherent way to the very diverse needs of people within these two groups.
- 4.26 It is recognised that in order to develop a service which avoids the current pitfalls, EQUAL should enable individuals to be assisted along the continuum from asylum seeker to refugee - with support appropriate to their legal status. Restricting support to the “Asylum seeker” period would limit support and exacerbate rather than address their varied needs. EQUAL provides an opportunity to develop an employment strategy to run parallel to the Refugee Integration Strategy which is being devised by the National Asylum Support Service.
- 4.27 In view of the Home Office’s policy responsibility for Asylum Seekers/Refugees it has been agreed that action will be taken forward on a GB basis for this theme. However, the aim is to ensure that innovative activity takes place in Wales and Scotland which responds to the needs and circumstances of each country.

[DN: Need to include reference to the expected numbers and expected dispersal policies of Asylum Seekers/Refugees in Wales]

Helping the integration of Asylum Seekers/Refugees

Aim: To develop an employment strategy which is appropriate to the needs of Asylum Seekers/Refugees and those allowed to live and work in the UK. Activities could include:

- Piloting new ways of supporting the transition from asylum seeker to mainstream services for those who have been given refugee status.
- Developing new personal development programmes for refugees focusing on social/life skills and workplace culture.
- Exploring innovative ways of engaging communities/families in supporting language training for refugees through partnership arrangements with learning providers and the development of mentoring approaches.
- Developing new approaches to raising the awareness of guidance and learning providers about the needs of asylum seekers and refugees.
- Conducting research and development work, in consultation with employer organisations, to support the recognition of overseas qualifications, acquired knowledge and skills.

- Piloting ‘social clinics’ as centres for successful transition.

Links with the Employment Action Plan

Potential Partner Organisations include:

Home Office; Local Authorities; National Council for Education and Training; Employment Service; careers companies; FE and HE institutions; voluntary sector and community organisations;

Potential Trans-national partners include:

Financial Allocation

5% at GB level.

Final Beneficiaries:

Development Partnerships

Field of Intervention:

Chapter 5: Financial Plans and Monitoring Data 2000-2006

To be completed

Financial Table for Wales Implementation Plan by Priority and by Year						
Commission Reference No -			xxxxxxxxxx			
						M'euro
Priority/Year	Total Eligible Cost	Public Participation			Private Eligible Cost (est.)	Revenue (est.)
		Total Public Eligible Cost	ESF Participation	National Participation		
Priority 1						
2000						
2001						
2002						
2003						
2004						
2005						
2006						
Total ESF Related						
Priority 2						
2000						
2001						
2002						
2003						
2004						
2005						
2006						
Total ESF Related						
Priority 3						
2000						
2001						
2002						
2003						
2004						
2005						
2006						
Total ESF Related						
Priority 4						

Financial Table for Wales Implementation Plan by Priority and by Year						
Commission Reference No -			xxxxxxxx			
						M'euro
Priority/Year	Total Eligible Cost	Public Participation			Private Eligible Cost (est.)	Revenue (est.)
		Total Public Eligible Cost	ESF Participation	National Participation		
2000						
2001						
2002						
2003						
2004						
2005						
2006						
Total ESF Related						
Priority 5 (A-S)						
2000						
2001						
2002						
2003						
2004						
2005						
2006						
Total ESF Related						

Technical Assistance						
2000						
2001						
2002						
2003						
2004						
2005						
2006						
Total ESF Related						
All Priorities						
2000						
2001						

Financial Table for Wales Implementation Plan by Priority and by Year						
Commission Reference No -				xxxxxxxxxx		
						M'euro
Priority/Year	Total Eligible Cost	Public Participation			Private Eligible Cost (est.)	Revenue (est.)
		Total Public Eligible Cost	ESF Participation	National Participation		
2002						
2003						
2004						
2005						
2006						
Total ESF Related						

Note Indexation included at 2% per annum to 2003 only
s:

Monitoring and evaluation

- 5.1 In the 2000 - 2006 programming period there is an increased emphasis on the use of research and evaluation to assess the progress and impact of programmes. This will be reflected for EQUAL. The evaluation framework will build on lessons learnt from the experience of monitoring and evaluating the ADAPT and EMPLOYMENT programmes. The evaluation framework will reflect the fact that the projects funded under EQUAL will be innovative and developmental. The focus will, therefore, be on the method of delivery rather than outcomes as in the mainstream ESF programmes. The aim is to develop a robust and reliable system which imposes the minimum possible burden on projects, whilst still having the maximum impact on policy formulation.

Measures of performance

- 5.2 The European Commission's guidelines¹ state that there is a need for an appropriate and effective system of indicators of programme performance. A certain minimum of input and output information is required to provide a picture of the "volume" of activity funded by EQUAL across Great Britain. The proposed indicators set out in the Community Initiative Plan build on the common minimum outlined in the EC guidelines. The set of indicators expands on the minimum to reflect more closely the nature of the GB programme, structured around the four Pillars. Primarily, the indicators shown are of a quantitative nature, although

it is important to recognise that the EQUAL programme has a large qualitative element to it. The table does include some qualitative indicators. It important to recognise that qualitative indicators are difficult to establish and measurement of them may be more appropriately addressed through formal evaluation techniques.

- 5.3 There are three different sources of information for the collection of monitoring data. The primary source is the monitoring forms (the application form, project closure form and the annual monitoring forms). However, it is more appropriate to collect some monitoring data from project visits carried out by the Support Structure and from work carried out as part of the evaluation. The source is indicated on the table below.

Expected Impact over the Whole EQUAL Programme

OVERALL EXPECTED IMPACT OF EQUAL		
Action	Indicator	Forecast (M Euro)
<u>Action 1</u>		
<u>Input</u>	Funding	
	Average Amount spent on setting up DP	
	Numbers of DP set up	
	Average number of partners in DP	
<u>Action 2</u>	Funding	
	% Of DPs attempting to measure soft outcomes	
	% Of DPs promoting flexible working arrangements within beneficiary companies	
	Number of beneficiaries	
	% Of women receiving support	
	% Of Asylum Seekers/Refugees receiving support	
	Of those companies receiving support, % which are SME	
	Average number of transnational meetings attended per DP	
<u>Action 3</u>	Funding	
	Average number of national events attended per DP	
	Average number of European events attended per DP	

EMPLOYABILITY IMPACT		
Action	Indicator	Forecast (M Euro)
<u>Action 1</u>		
<u>Input</u>	Funding	

<u>Output</u>	Average Amount spent on setting up DP	
	Numbers of DP set up	
	Average number of partners in DP	
<u>Action 2</u>	Funding	
	% Of DPs attempting to measure soft outcomes	
	% Of DPs promoting flexible working arrangements within beneficiary companies	
	Number of beneficiaries	
	% Of women receiving support	
	Of those receiving support, % which are Unemployed	
	Average number of transnational meetings attended per DP	
<u>Action 3</u>	Funding	
	Average number of national events attended per DP	
	Average number of European events attended per DP	

ENTREPRENEURSHIP IMPACT		
Action	Indicator	Forecast (M Euro)
<u>Action 1</u>		
<u>Input</u>	Funding	
	Average Amount spent on setting up DP	
	Numbers of DP set up	
	Average number of partners in DP	
<u>Action 2</u>	Funding	
	% Of DPs attempting to measure soft outcomes	
	% Of DPs promoting flexible working arrangements within beneficiary companies	
	Number of beneficiaries	
	% Of women receiving support	
	% Of DPs supporting forms in the Social Economy	
	Average number of transnational meetings attended per DP	
<u>Action 3</u>	Funding	
	Average number of national events attended per DP	
	Average number of European events attended per DP	

ADAPTABILITY IMPACT		
Action	Indicator	Forecast (M Euro)
<u>Action 1</u>		
<u>Input</u>	Funding	
<u>Output</u>	Average Amount spent on setting up DP	
	Numbers of DP set up	
	Average number of partners in DP	
<u>Action 2</u>	Funding	
	% Of DPs attempting to measure soft outcomes	
	% Of DPs promoting flexible working arrangements within beneficiary companies	
	Number of beneficiaries	
	% Of women receiving support	
	Of those receiving support, % which are Employed	
	% Of beneficiaries participating in lifelong learning	
	Of those companies receiving support, % which are SME	
	Average number of transnational meetings attended per DP	
<u>Action 3</u>	Funding	
	Average number of national events attended per DP	
	Average number of European events attended per DP	

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPACT		
Action	Indicator	Forecast (M Euro)
<u>Action 1</u>		
<u>Input</u>	Funding	
<u>Output</u>	Average Amount spent on setting up DP	
	Numbers of DP set up	
	Average number of partners in DP	
<u>Action 2</u>	Funding	
	% Of DPs attempting to measure soft outcomes	
	% Of DPs promoting flexible working arrangements within beneficiary companies	
	Number of beneficiaries	
	% Of women receiving support	
	Average number of transnational meetings	

	attended per DP	
Action 3	Funding	
	Average number of national events attended per DP	
	Average number of European events attended per DP	

Introduction

- 6.1 The National Assembly for Wales is committed to working in active partnership with the business sector, the voluntary sector and local government. It also works closely with the equality commissions, voluntary bodies working for equality of opportunity and a wide range of other organisations, including its sponsored bodies. “Development Partnerships” are central to the arrangements for implementing EQUAL and are very much in tune with the National Assembly’s overall approach to partnership working. This chapter sets out an overall framework for Development Partnerships in Wales.

Background

- 6.2 Under previous EU human resource initiatives, small-scale projects have been supported by single entities. Despite the often positive and innovative actions of small promoters, their distance from the policy process has meant that mainstreaming of their experience has proved difficult. Under EQUAL there will be a more strategic basis for projects to ensure a greater co-operation between project promoters and the involvement of relevant partners.
- 6.3 EQUAL will operate by bringing together the key players in a geographical area or economic/industrial sector into Development Partnerships (DPs). Each DP will choose a main thematic field and agree a strategy within which they will try out new ways of dealing with problems of discrimination and inequality. Central to the work of each DP will be its links with at least one partnership from another Member State (or with a non-member state involved in the Phare; Tacis or Meda programmes). However, a DP will be more than just a network of project promoters, operating in the same territory or thematic field. It will be a partnership of committed players, sharing a common purpose. Partners will pool their efforts to find innovative solutions to the specific problems they have identified. Their work together will be based on a formal agreement and work programme.

Approach to Development Partnerships in Wales

- 6.4 The main aim is to develop arrangements which will ensure that the EQUAL initiative is effective in meeting its objectives. To achieve this, the initiative must support the development of strategic partnerships which have the capacity to develop innovative solutions to identified problems of inequality and discrimination and to effectively disseminate the lessons learned.
- 6.5 DPs in Wales can be organised on a geographical, economic sector or industrial sector basis. Geographical partnerships can be formed on an all-Wales, regional or local basis depending on the policy focus of their chosen activity. Based on the GB planning assumptions, it is estimated that there will be up to six DPs operating at any one time in Wales over the programme period. This, and the need to ensure that organisations with an important role in developing and implementing policies to tackle discrimination and inequalities in the labour market are engaged in the development of EQUAL from the outset,

suggests that geographical DPs in Wales will cover larger rather than smaller areas.. Thematic work related to assisting Asylum Seekers/Refugees will be organised on a UK wide basis but will also involve Wales based organisations.

- 6.6 There will be a strong preference in favour of integrated, thematic based approaches to tackling the complex and multi-dimensional problems faced by the different target groups, rather than having DPs which focus on particular target groups. DPs in Wales will potentially assist a wide range of disadvantaged groups as a result of their thematic approach, but they will need to ensure that their proposals principally benefit those subject to the main forms of discrimination (based on sex; racial or ethnic origin; religion or belief; disability; age or sexual orientation).
- 6.7 The principle of empowerment will be central to each DP in Wales and every effort will be made to ensure that the views of recipients of support are taken into account and that they are involved in the decision making and evaluation of work programmes.

Selection of Development Partnerships

- 6.8 Development Partnerships will be selected on the basis of applications submitted in response to a GB wide call for proposals. The GB Monitoring Committee will agree a common approach to the selection of DPs. In applying the GB wide selection criteria, the Wales EQUAL Management Committee will look for evidence that DP applicants:
- have the capacity to work effectively with the National Assembly; local authorities; relevant public sector bodies; employers (especially SMEs) and trade unions; the voluntary sector and community organisations in Wales in developing and taking forward their work programmes;
 - are aware of, and have taken into consideration, national, regional and local employment and social inclusion policies and strategies and the potential for supporting these through EQUAL;
 - have an understanding of the mainstream European Structural Fund programmes in Wales and the potential for complementing these in innovative ways through their EQUAL work programmes and trans-national co-operation agreements;
 - propose to involve those targeted for support to ensure that their needs and aspirations are fully reflected in the activities which are planned, either in the composition of their partnerships or in other ways, and can demonstrate that equality principles will be reflected in the operation of the partnership;
 - will ensure equality of opportunity for Welsh speakers and are sensitive to the needs of bi-lingual communities; and
 - have the administrative and financial capacity to manage and account for significant amounts of public funding.

6.9 Selection will take place at two stages. The main selection will be based on an application presenting an outline strategy submitted by at least two different types of partner. It will explain why the partnership is being set up and what it intends to do. It will also include an action plan for the initial period of funding and an outline of the main types of activities planned thereafter. If the partnership is selected, it will receive an initial allocation of funding to consolidate the Development Partnership, to find transnational partners and to firm up its detailed work programme. All of these aspects will have to be in place before selection for the second stage, which is the implementation phase. Further information on the selection of DPs is provided in the GB EQUAL CIP.

Membership of Development Partnerships

6.10 Development Partnerships will typically include organisations that are actively involved in implementing aspects of work programmes; organisations or individuals operating in an advisory capacity and representatives of groups which are being targeted for support (including recipients of support). It is not possible to identify all of the potential partners but there are a number of key strategic and representative organisations in Wales that are likely to be involved in some capacity. Table 6.1 provides a list of these by thematic field.

Table 6.1

[DN. To be completed on receipt of questionnaires from partner organisations]

Thematic Fields	Strategic Organisations	Representative Organisations
Employability Themes		
Entrepreneurship Themes		
Adaptability Themes		
Equal Opportunities Themes		
Asylum Seeker/Refugee Theme		

Chapter 7: Implementation Arrangements in Wales

Introduction

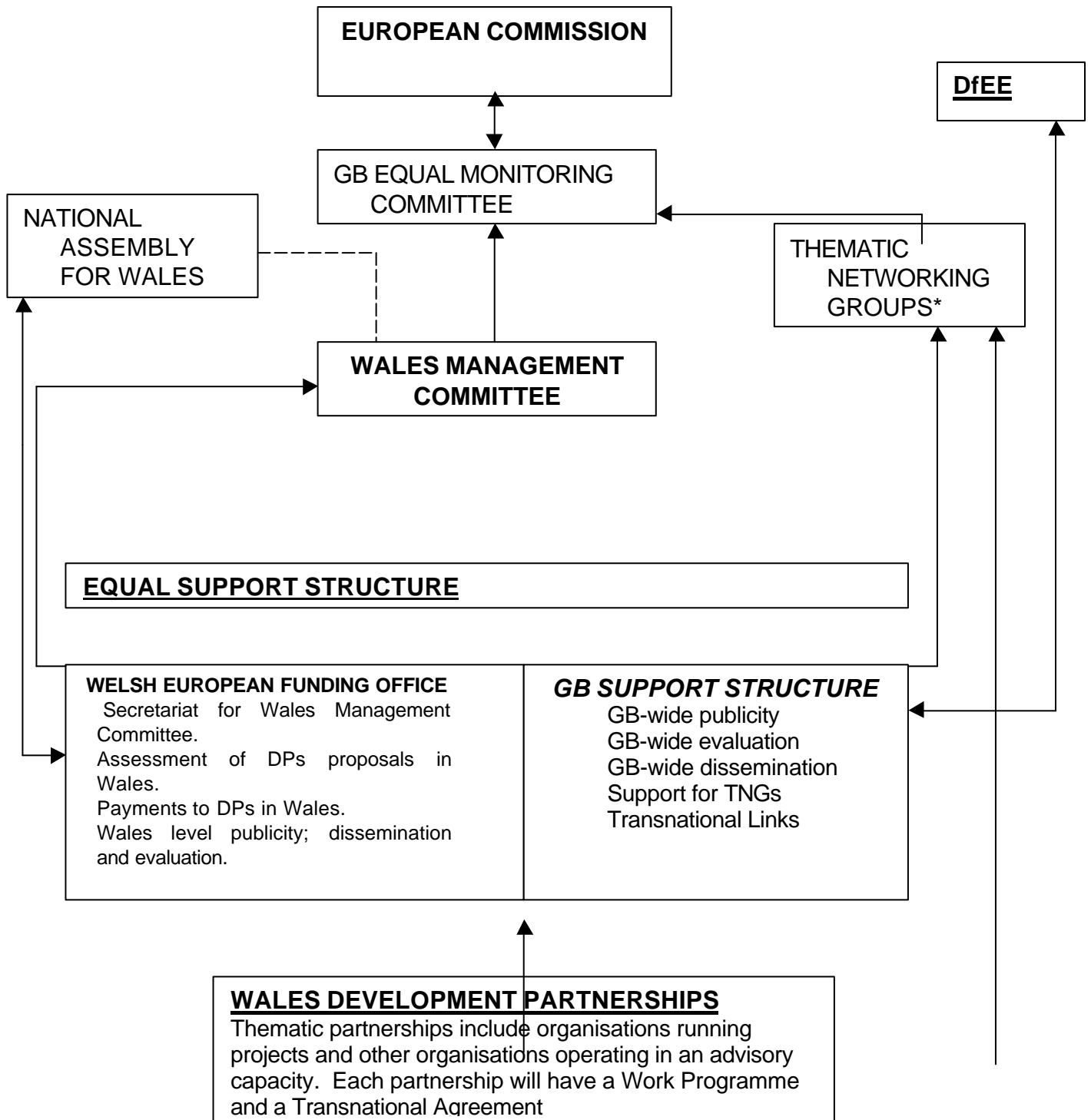
- 7.1 The arrangements for implementing the GB EQUAL Community Initiative Programme (CIP) in Wales will take account of the devolved nature of government in the UK and the need to ensure that the initiative reflects the policy priorities of the National Assembly for Wales and its partner organisations. There will be a strong emphasis on ensuring that the initiative is effectively linked into the policy development and implementation processes in Wales, whilst maximising the potential for the joint working and the sharing of experience across GB and with other Member States.
- 7.2 The EQUAL Community Initiative in Wales will be overseen by a sub-group of the GB Monitoring Committee – the Wales EQUAL Management Committee. This Committee will have responsibility for ensuring that the initiative is effectively implemented in Wales and for reporting to the GB Monitoring Committee on progress. A Wales EQUAL Implementation Plan will be prepared and agreed by the GB Monitoring Committee. This will provide a framework within which Development Partnerships in Wales will operate. The Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) and the GB EQUAL Support Unit will collectively provide the support structure for the initiative. The sharing of experience and the dissemination of outcomes will be supported through the participation of National Assembly Policy Divisions and Development Partnerships in Wales in GB-wide Thematic Networking Groups.
- 7.3 The diagram at Table 1 provides an overview of the arrangements for implementing EQUAL in Wales and further details are provided in the remainder of this Section.

Great Britain Monitoring Committee

- 7.4 A GB Monitoring Committee (GBMC) for EQUAL will oversee strategy, policy, monitoring and evaluation. It will also agree the broad framework for the selection of Development Partnerships, the role of the Thematic Networking Groups and agree and oversee a GB wide publicity strategy. A representative of the Department for Education and Employment (DFEE) will chair the GBMC for EQUAL and the committee will be assisted by a permanent secretariat. DFEE will be the managing authority for EQUAL in Great Britain but will delegate specific functions to the National Assembly for Wales and the Scottish Executive.

Table 7.1

EQUAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVE: IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS IN WALES



* Note: Will include representatives from NAFW Policy Divisions and Wales Development Partnerships

Wales EQUAL Management Committee

- 7.5 The Wales EQUAL Management Committee will be formally constituted as a sub-committee of the GB EQUAL Monitoring Committee. Two of its members will also be members of the GB Committee.
- 7.6 The Wales Committee will be chaired by a member of the National Assembly and will comprise 12 members (see Annex 1). Membership will include, in equal proportions, representatives from the public sector; social partners, voluntary sector and equality organisations. Representatives from the three statutory equality commissions in Wales (ie the Equal Opportunities Commission; the Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Rights Commission) will have full membership status on the Committee. Every effort will be made to ensure gender balance in the Committee's membership from the outset. Representatives from the main equality representative organisations (ie. Disability Wales; Chwarae Teg; AWEMA; Stonewall Cymru and Age Concern Cymru) will also be invited to attend meetings of the Committee in an advisory capacity.
- 7.7 The Committee's primary functions will be to ensure that EQUAL is developed in a way which reflects policy priorities in Wales; to oversee the effective implementation of the EQUAL initiative in Wales on the basis of an agreed plan and to report to the GB Monitoring Committee and the National Assembly on progress. It will put forward recommendations to the GB Monitoring Committee on the selection of Development Partnerships in Wales and monitor the implementation of their work programmes and transnational co-operation agreements. The Committee will also ensure that the outcomes of projects in Wales are effectively disseminated and that Wales benefits from the experience of EQUAL in other parts of GB and in other Member States.
- 7.8 The Committee will agree conflict of interest procedures requiring members to declare any interest in a particular DP proposal and matters associated with the operation of a particular DP. Where such an interest is declared the Member(s) concerned will not be permitted to participate in Committee discussion and decision making relating to the DP in question.

Wales EQUAL Implementation Plan

- 7.9 Within the overall framework of the GB EQUAL CIP, this plan will set out the priorities for development work in Wales within each thematic area, taking account of the Welsh labour market and policy context. It will also provide a framework for implementing the initiative through Development Partnerships. The Wales plan will be supported by an allocation of XXX m euro from the UK Governments overall EQUAL allocation.

Development Partnerships

- 7.10 Development Partnerships (DPs) will be the basic working element of EQUAL. DPs will focus on specific thematic areas and bring together interested parties with relevant experience to develop and implement agreed work programmes and transnational co-

operation agreements. Further information on how DPs will be selected and operate in Wales is provided in Chapter 6.

EQUAL Support Structure

- 7.11 The Support Structure for EQUAL in Wales will be provided jointly by the GB EQUAL Support Unit and the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO). WEFO is an agency of the National Assembly for Wales and is responsible for the day to day administration of all European Structural Fund programmes and Community Initiatives in Wales. WEFO will provide a permanent secretariat to the Wales EQUAL Management Committee. Its delegated responsibilities for EQUAL will include the monitoring of DPs; the certification of claims; the making of payments; the maintenance of accounting systems and the implementation of financial controls. It will also organise the appraisal of DP proposals in WALES, within the selection framework agreed by the GBMC, and will work closely with the GB EQUAL Support Unit in this and other areas, including publicity, dissemination and evaluation.
- 7.12 The GB Support Unit will work with the support structures in Wales and Scotland to develop and implement an effective GB EQUAL publicity strategy and to co-ordinate assessment work on DP applications. It will provide secretariat support to the GB Thematic Networking Groups and help them to develop and implement their dissemination strategies. The Unit will also co-ordinate co-operation in European networking, including working closely with the support structures in other Member States (and non-member states eligible for funding under the Phare; Tacis and Meda programmes) to help potential DPs to find suitable transnational partners, and to collect and share relevant information. It will work with WEFO to help DPs in Wales to develop good quality and effective work programmes and transnational co-operation agreements and to develop a GB database of all DPs, in accordance with the Commission's guidance.

Thematic Networking Groups

- 7.13 Thematic Networking Groups (TNGs) will be established at a GB level for each theme within the EQUAL programme and will include policy representatives from the National Assembly for Wales, in addition to representatives from DFEE; other Government Departments; the Scottish Executive; the statutory equality organisations; social partners and Development Partnerships. All DPs in Wales will become members of the relevant TNG.
- 7.14 The TNGs will report to the GBMC for EQUAL. Their main roles will be to ensure that EQUAL maintains its strategic focus; to consider England and GB-wide DP applications and to recommend on selection to the GBMC (the TNGs will also provide advice to the Wales Management Committee on Welsh DP proposals as part of the overall appraisal process, but the Wales Management Committee will be responsible for making recommendations on selection to the GBMC); and to develop and agree dissemination strategies with the GBMC. The TNGs will also participate in dissemination and evaluation at a European level.

Application Arrangements

- 7.15 A GB wide first call for applications will be made during spring 2001. The call will be publicised through media press notices; the WEFO website and Newsletter and by targeting organisations on the Wales EQUAL mailing list and the WEFO database. All publicity activity undertaken will be bi-lingual, in accordance with requirements of the Welsh Language Act. Potential applicants will be able to obtain access to guidance and the application form from the WEFO website. Application packs will also be available from any of WEFO's offices.
- 7.16 Applicants will have up to three months to complete the EQUAL application form. The selection system will be designed to encourage and reward strategic partnerships, which share common thematic objectives and show that they can work together effectively. Preliminary checks on completed applications will be carried out by WEFO. Applications will then be independently appraised, in accordance with the selection framework and criteria agreed by the GBMC. These criteria will ensure that proposed activities address a specific policy gap, are innovative, have the potential to influence mainstream policy and do not duplicate other Structural Fund programme activity. During the autumn of 2001, the Wales Management Committee will consider these appraisals (and the views of the TNGs) and put forward recommendations to the GBMC on the DPs to be funded in Wales.

Contractual Arrangements

- 7.17 The National Assembly for Wales will either contract directly with each Development Partnership in Wales (where it is a legal entity) or with the nominated Lead Organisation within the Development Partnership. The contract letter will set out the terms and conditions under which funding will be provided and will constitute a binding contract between the Managing Authority and the Development Partnership or Lead Organisation. Contractual agreements relating to the first call for applications will be entered into by 15 November 2001.

WALES EQUAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: MEMBERSHIP

<u>ORGANISATION</u>	<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>ALTERNATE</u>
Chair		
National Assembly for Wales		
Public Sector		
National Assembly for Wales		
Welsh Local Government Association		
Welsh Development Agency		
National Council for Education and Training		
Social Partners		
Business Wales		
Business Wales		
Wales TUC		
Wales TUC		
Others		
Wales Council for Voluntary Action		
Equal Opportunities Commission		
Commission for Racial Equality		
Disability Rights Commission		

CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS IN WALES

Introduction

At the start of the process, in May 1999, the European Task Force decided to establish a sub committee to consider the implications for Wales of the 4 proposed Community Initiatives. As a result an EQUAL Consultative Group was formed in order to advise the Task Force on, amongst other things, four key issues; geographical coverage of the Initiative; an assessment of the potential for and value added by the Initiative in Wales; proposals for policy priorities and proposals for implementation and management. The Consultative Group produced its final report in June 2000.

Since that time a range of consultative approaches have been adopted in the development of the programme, including the setting up of a Wales EQUAL Liaison Group; the distribution of questionnaires; meetings with key organisations and the use of a range of existing networks. In addition discussions have taken place with the relevant National Assembly Policy Divisions.

Formal Consultation

As part of the UK wide consultation exercise carried out by the Department for Education and Employment during July and August 2000, the National Assembly for Wales invited views from a wide range of organisations across Wales.

Questionnaires and accompanying background papers were sent to over 100 organisations. A list of the 23 organisations which responded is attached. An analysis of the responses was forwarded to the Department for Education and Employment to inform the development of the GB EQUAL programme document. The responses have also been carefully considered in preparing the Wales Implementation Plan.

EQUAL Liaison Group

In addition to this formal consultation, the National Assembly for Wales established an EQUAL Liaison Group (ELG) with the remit to support the development of the GB programme and advise the Assembly on the development and implementation of EQUAL in Wales. The following organisations are represented on the Group:

The National Assembly for Wales
Welsh European Funding Office
Welsh Local Government Association
Employment Service
Welsh Development Agency
Wales European Centre
Wales TUC

Cyngor NTO Cymru
 Fforwm (Association of FE Colleges in Wales)
 Careers Wales
 Wales Council for Voluntary Action
 Age Concern Wales
 CYTUN (Association of Christian Churches in Wales)
 Disability Wales
 Chwarae Teg
 All Wales Ethnic Minority Association
 Stonewall (Stonewall Cymru upon establishment)
 Welsh Refugee Council
 Disability Rights Commission
 Commission for Racial Equality
 Equal Opportunities Commission

In addition, organisations involved in the Business Wales network (eg CBI Wales; Chambers of Commerce and the FSB) have been consulted. [DN. Need to confirm this or add to list above following round of meetings] Furthermore, many of the organisations involved in the ELG have their own networks of constituent organisations which have in turn been invited to comment on drafts of the GB EQUAL programme and the Wales Implementation Plan.

Developing the Wales Implementation Plan

During the early stages of developing the Wales Implementation Plan, officials from the National Assembly held individual meetings with the statutory equality organisations and a range of other key interests. The main purpose of these meetings was to discuss the priorities for action in Wales. During October and November 2000, meetings were held with the following organisations:

Federation of Small Businesses
CBI Wales
Chambers Wales
Welsh Development Agency
Wales TUC
Equal Opportunities Commission
Disability Rights Commission
Commission for Racial Equality
Disability Wales
Age Concern Cymru
Wales Co-operative Centre
Welsh Refugee Council
All Wales Ethnic Minority Association

Responses received to the EQUAL Consultation in Wales
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No	Organisations
1	Disability Wales
2	Age Concern
3	EBBW Fach Development
4	Agoriad Cyf
5	Countryside Council For Wales
6	Uni. Of Wales, Lampeter
7	Chair Equality Partnership C/O Chwarae Teg
8	FE Sector
9	HE Sector
10	TEC South East Wales
11	North Wales Open Collage Network
12	Cam Ymlaen
13	Chwarae Teg
14	Environment Agency Wales
15	WCVA
16	Employment Services Wales
17	WLGA
18	CWMNI Cynnal (Welsh)
19	Wales TUC
20	Anglesey County Council
21	AWEMA
22	WDA
23	North Wales Deaf Association
