

IRELAND

EQUAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVE PROGRAMME 2000-2006



***ESF: Helping develop employment by promoting employability,
the business spirit and equal opportunities
and investing in human resources***

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1. GENERAL POLICY AND PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction – the EU Employment Policy Context

The new Employment Title in the Amsterdam Treaty (1997) provides for a co-ordinated strategy for employment and the adoption of guidelines which Member States must take into account when formulating and implementing national employment policies. These Employment Guidelines are based on the Four Pillars of **Employability, Entrepreneurship, Adaptability and Equal Opportunities**. This provides the framework for the adoption by Member States of their National Employment Action Plans (NEAP) and which also form the basis for financial support at EU level in particular through the Structural Funds. The aim of the European Employment Strategy is the achievement of a high level of employability for all groups, including those most distanced from the labour market; to develop skills of those already in work, especially in exposed or vulnerable sectors; to broaden the capacity for entrepreneurship and to ensure the equal participation of women and men in the labour market. The challenge for Member States is to translate these aims into effective action at the national and local levels, in urban and rural areas, so as to generate real participation and co-operation in adopting new approaches to shared priorities and the dissemination of the experiences gained.

1.2 The EQUAL Community Initiative and previous Community Initiative Interventions

There is an integrated strategy at EU level to combat discrimination (in particular that based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation) and social exclusion. EQUAL will form part of that strategy by focusing on the labour market and by complementing other instruments and policies which go beyond the labour market area (particularly actions and activities under Articles 13 and 137 of the Treaty). EQUAL is funded through the European Social Fund (ESF) together with appropriate public and private co-financing. The ESF is concerned with measures to prevent and combat unemployment, to develop human resources and to promote equal opportunities for all in accessing the labour market and in particular to contribute to action which supports the European Employment Strategy.

Action and funding through the European Social Fund through its interventions under the previous Community initiatives, EMPLOYMENT and ADAPT, not only supports and complements employment strategy under the national employment action plan, but allows the non-statutory, community and voluntary sector to implement innovative projects by directly engaging the target groups in their implementation and decision making process.

Given the nature and goals of many of these organisations, this has served to ensure that their actions, while focused on issues of human resource development for their participants or the enhancement of services for their target group, have included approaches that embody principles of empowerment and social action. These core principles are central to policies which promote the integration of groups and individuals who have difficulties accessing and remaining in the labour market.

Over the period that EMPLOYMENT and ADAPT has been in operation there is also some evidence of an increase in the number of partnerships and consortia between non-statutory and statutory sector organisations. This has contributed to a sharing of

learning between organisations working in the statutory and community and voluntary sectors. It has also enabled each sector to identify its own strengths and weaknesses with respect to meeting the needs of people experiencing or at risk of disadvantage or social exclusion.

Some 9000 individuals benefited directly from the EMPLOYMENT Initiative with some 89% of participants progressing to education, further training and employment. Almost 8000 individuals benefited under the ADAPT Programme which employed at project level directly over 120 full-time and 245 part-time individuals.

Generally, the capacity of and the potential for community, voluntary groups and the NGO sector to engage in operational areas of pilot Programmes such as EMPLOYMENT and ADAPT has been enhanced significantly as a result of the ESF and relevant co-financing.

Policymakers must, therefore, take full advantage of the knowledge and good practice gained from the various projects to ensure that preventative measures are in place from a very early age to protect against the drift into lifelong dependency and long-term unemployment.

In the future, the competitiveness of Irish industry and the flow of inward investment will largely be determined by the quality and adaptability of the domestic labour market. The Community Initiative programmes have highlighted and paved the way for local and national policymakers to establish linkages between the projects and mainstream labour market, educational and training measures in a more focused way.

This will be developed in a more strategic way under Equal where among the new challenges arising are the development of a multi-cultural society and securing and underpinning equality on a broad range of fronts.

1.3 Primary Objectives of Equal

In accordance with the Commission Guidelines for the EQUAL Community Initiative (ref.2000/ 127/02, published in OJ of the European Communities, C 127, page 2 on 5 May, 2000}, the primary objective of EQUAL is to promote new means of combating all forms of discrimination and inequalities in connection with the labour market.

The ESF is contributing some 33.9 million Euro (indexed) over the period 2000-2006 towards the EQUAL Programme in Ireland. It is vital that the fund be used in a very strategic and focused manner and as an added-value tool, complementary, in particular, to the NEAP and the Employment and Human Resources Development OP. The growth in employment provides a specific and germane context within which EQUAL can achieve its objectives of combating inequality and discrimination, as well as providing for close complementarities between EQUAL and national policy concerns, particularly those relating to labour and skills shortages, other Community Initiatives, Territorial Employment Pacts, the European Refugee Fund and the Equality legislative framework in Ireland.

EQUAL provides an opportunity to contribute to the resolution of these difficulties, particularly the priority issues identified, through combating inequality and discrimination in the labour market. Labour shortages can be addressed by promoting access to the labour market by those currently excluded, while skills shortages can be addressed by providing high quality skills and training to those who

experience inequality and discrimination and by removing the institutional and cultural barriers to their participation and advancement in the work force.

The overarching aim of the Programme is to promote employability and employment growth and to improve access to and opportunities for employment, in particular for the disadvantaged, those suffering from discrimination and inequalities and those who wish to return to the labour market. To this end, the Programme will contribute to national efforts to:

- Mobilise all potential sources of labour supply
- enhance the quality of the labour market by addressing skills, education and training deficits and
- promote social inclusion and equality of opportunity between women and men
- tackle disadvantage and inequality in connection with the labour market which continue to be suffered by some social groups

EQUAL will simultaneously harness the new opportunities in a growing economy for the benefits of those experiencing discrimination and inequality, assist in providing new and skilled workers for the economy and develop long term methodologies to counter all forms of inequality and discrimination at all levels of the labour market.

Part of the learning from the EMPLOYMENT C.I. is that neither the circumstances of excluded groups nor the context in which those circumstances arise are fixed. Change is continual, consequently interventions to combat inequality must have the capacity to adapt to and reflect changing needs and opportunities. In the longer term, therefore, EQUAL will contribute to developing the type of structures and approaches capable of adapting to ongoing situations. EQUAL will develop models for addressing ongoing labour market issues of discrimination and inequality. It will serve as a complement to national human resource and economic policy by ensuring the development of mechanisms to enable institutions, agencies, firms etc and personnel within them to respond to new and different needs and by ensuring the development of structures involving all sectors and actors whose expertise, perspective and capacities are relevant to combating labour market inequalities.

In particular, the strategic aim of the Programme is to act as an instrument of innovation in order to:

- harness the new opportunities in our growing economy for the benefits of those experiencing discrimination and inequality
- develop new and durable methodologies, structures and other necessary mechanisms to counter all forms of inequality at all levels of the labour market and workplace
- foster the development of more flexible and client centred employment and training policies, practices and systems to ensure greater adaptability and responsiveness to structural changes in the workplace and, in particular, the need for innovative family friendly policies
- support lifelong learning/work-based learning projects that implement practical actions focused on the more vulnerable within the workplace
- support further practical actions in response to the development needs arising from new jobs and from radically changing existing jobs areas

- develop best practice in relation to the management of diversity generally in society and, in particular, in the workplace

1.4 How Equal will Work – The Thematic Approach

EQUAL will provide the scope to try out new ideas which could change future policy and practice in human resource mobilisation, development, employment and training. The total amount of European Social Funds available to Ireland will be 33.9 million Euro indexed over the period 2000-2006. The EQUAL Financial Plan (Appendix 7) proposes, for practical reasons, an intervention rate of 75% for the duration of the Programme with the exception of the Technical Assistance Priority for which an intervention rate of 50% is proposed.

This funding will be augmented by co-financing from the public and private spheres, including appropriate exchequer funding. A dedicated exchequer Budget line will be provided for this purpose. Match funding should also be sought from Statutory Agencies, such as FÁS, County Enterprise Boards, Enterprise Ireland, Údarás na Gaeltachta, as well as from local and regional Authorities and from private sources. Development Partnerships should, in the first instance, establish and secure the necessary match funding at the application stage.

EQUAL will complement and inform activity funded under the National Development Plan (NDP)/Community Support Framework (CSF) and the National Employment Action Plan (NEAP). The European Commission, in consultation with the European Parliament, Member States, and the social partners has set nine possible themes for the first call for EQUAL proposals. Eight of the themes are linked directly to the European Employment Strategy. The ninth covers the specific needs of asylum seekers. Overall, the aim of the thematic approach is to explore new ways of tackling the problems common to different types of discrimination and inequality, rather than focusing on a specific target group.

Each Member State must choose the themes within which it wishes to explore and test new ideas in co-operation with other Member States based on national priorities. It should also be noted that, because of the overall horizontal nature of the Initiative, it will be possible to integrate similar Themes within the same Four Pillar priority and flexibility will be given for some cross-over or cross-cutting even between Priorities. This pragmatic and consolidated approach will suit Member States such as Ireland with smaller EQUAL Budgets.

Development Partnerships will be selected for EQUAL funding following public calls for proposals by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

The nine EQUAL themes under the Four Pillar Priorities

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

(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
 (h) Reducing gender gaps and supporting job desegregation.

Asylum seekers: Any proposals under this theme will depend on official status of the asylum seeker

EQUAL will operate by bringing together the key players in a geographical area or sector including public administration, non-governmental organisations, social partners and the business sector (in particular SMEs) to work in partnership. These *Development Partnerships* will agree a strategy within which they will try out new ways of dealing with problems of discrimination and inequality which they wish to address. A mandatory requirement and central to the work of each *Development Partnership* will be formal links with at least one partnership from another country and the possibility of being involved in a network of other partnerships dealing with the same theme or themes across Europe. The new ideas will be disseminated and evaluated for their potential for influencing future policy and practice.

1.5 EQUAL Programming/Consultation Process

The EQUAL Programming process has been informed primarily through –

- European Employment Strategy
- Existing National labour market policy as outlined primarily through the National Employment Action Plan (NEAP)
- The Government Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (PPF)
- An ex-ante evaluation – integrated within the CIP and appended as a separate Annex to the CIP for clarity.
- Complementarity with the Employment and Human Resource Development OP 2000-2006 and the National Employment Action Plan (NEAP)
- Previous Community Initiatives Employment and Adapt
- Analysis of existing situation as regards discrimination and inequalities in connection with the labour market

The process has also been assisted through a formal social partner consultation process and other ad hoc consultations, including with the Technical Support Structures for Employment and Adapt and the co-ordinating structure for Employment, the Equality Authority and the equality unit of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and other Government Departments and relevant Agencies. The process has also been informed through the final evaluation Reports (national and EU-wide) of Employment and Adapt.

Accordingly, the CIP was drafted by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, as the national authority for ESF in Ireland and managing authority for the EQUAL CIP and the Employment and Human Resource Development OP 2000-2006. During the course of the drafting process there was ongoing consultation with

the administration in Northern Ireland (the Department of Higher, Further Education, Training and Employment) on arrangements for co-operation and future North/South developments on EQUAL. The Special EU Programmes Body, set up as one of six cross-border Bodies under the Belfast Agreement, was also consulted in that context. The Consultation process is described in greater detail at Chapter 5.1

2. Current Labour Market Policy and Labour Market Strategy

2.1 Broad Socio-Economic Overview

During the 1990s and particularly the latter half of that decade, the growth in Ireland's economy and employment has been far above the average performance of our main trading partners. It can be said that Ireland now has a high-performance economy with a convergence in the Irish standard of living (measured as GNP per capita) towards the EU average. The Department of Finance December 1999 forecast estimates that real GNP grew by 8.6% in 2000 while real GDP expanded by 10.7%. In fact, GDP growth has averaged about 8% per annum over the 1994-1999 period. The economic climate in Ireland is expected to remain good. The latest macro-economic assessment forecasts for 2001 that real GDP and GNP will increase in volume terms by 8.8% and 7.4% respectively.

This relative slowdown in growth is indicative of supply side restraints including scarce labour resources.

A summary Analysis of Strengths and Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats in the broad labour market context is contained in **Appendix 1**.

2.2 The Labour Market Context

Before looking at possible labour market challenges in coming years it is worthwhile describing the current labour market context. This will also provide a base point in terms of ongoing evaluation of the Programme and especially the mid-term evaluation in 2003. The CIP for EQUAL, as a complementary albeit distinctive strategy to the Employment and Human Resources Development OP, must, as far as is practicable, operate within the same broad policy framework and prevailing labour market conditions having regard to the authoritative data available and national priorities.

2.2.1 The current Labour Market situation

The labour market landscape has changed dramatically over the last decade. The growth in numbers employed at 5% per annum over the recent period of rapid economic growth (1997-1999) is significant compared to the overall average growth in EU Member States of just over 1% per annum over the same period.

The following Table overviews the key demographic and labour market changes over the comparative 1994 to 1999 structural funding period:

Overview of 1994-1999 Changes in Key Demographic, Labour Force, Employment and Unemployment Variables (April 1994 and April/ 2nd quarter 1999) (000)s							
	April 1994			2nd quarter 1999			%change (on totals)
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Demographics							
Population	1783.3	1802.6	3585.9	1859.1	1885.6	3744.7	+4.4
Population under 15	462.2	436.3	898.5	425.6	403.6	829.3	-7.7
Population 15 and over	1321.1	1366.3	2687.4	1433.5	1482.0	2915.4	+8.5
Working age population	1145.9	1132.8	2278.8	1251.6	1242.2	2493.8	+9.4
Population 65 and over	175.2	233.5	408.6	182.0	239.8	421.6	+3.2
Dependency ratio*	35.7%	37.2%	36.5%	32.7%	34.1%	33.4%	-8.5
Labour Market							
Labour Force (15 and over)	898.1	533.5	1431.6	1006.7	681.4	1688.1	+17.9
Participation rate †	68%	39%	53.3%	70.2%	45.9%	57.9%	+8.6
Employment	766.3	454.3	1220.6	947.3	643.9	1591.1	+30.4
Employment rate°	58.0%	33.3%	45.4%	66.1%	43.5%	54.6%	+20.3
Unemployment	131.9	79.1	211.0	59.4	37.5	96.9	-54.1
Unemployment rate°	14.7%	14.8%	14.7%	5.9%	5.5%	5.7%	-61.2
Long-term unemployment	85.4	42.9	128.2	30.8	10.8	41.6	-67.6
LTU rate	9.5%	8.0%	9.0%	3.1%	1.6%	2.5%	-72.2

Notes: * Population under 15 and 65 and over as % of total population † Labour Force Participation, ° Employment/unemployment as % of labour force 15 and over. Some totals do not add due to rounding
Source: Central Statistics Office, Labour Force Surveys(LFS), 1993-97; Quarterly National Household Survey(QNHS), 2nd quarter 1998 and 2nd quarter 1999

Key changes include:

- rapid growth in female participation rates in the period since April 1994
- Labour force growth of 266, 000 or 17.9% over the period, or an average of over 3% per annum
- Increasing labour force participation, particularly among women where it rose from 39% in 1994 to 49% in 1999
- Exceptional employment growth of some 370,500, or over 5% average per annum; the employment rate overall increased from 45.5% to 54.6% while the female employment rate rose from 33.32% to 43.5%
- A reduction in unemployment of 114,100 (from 211,000 to 96,900), equivalent to a rate reduction from 14.7% to 5.7% during the period.

Central statistics Office (CSO) 2000 results:

The latest CSO 2000 results indicate that the unemployment rate was 4.1% (end 2000) down from 5.5% one year earlier (seasonally adjusted standardised unemployment rates). The rate for January 2001 stood at 3.6%. Nearly two-thirds of the fall in unemployment has been in long-term unemployment.

The recent growth in those employed and overall job numbers in the economy has been unprecedented. Nevertheless, surveys conducted by FAS and Forfas on behalf of employers have indicated increasing recruitment difficulties being experienced

over all sectors, most acutely in the software and information technology sectors. Labour shortages can also be seen in reduced job applications (including in the public sector), increased labour turnover, increasing vacancy-to-employment ratios within firms and wage pressures.

2.2.2 Current labour market strategy

Labour market policy as set out in Chapter 5 of the National Development Plan and the ongoing roll-over of the National Employment Action Plan (NEAP) provides for measures to address the skills and labour shortages imbalances in the labour market. The NEAP underlying policy mix Objectives and proposed activities under each of the four Pillars is contained in **Appendix 2**.

2.2.3 National Development Plan/Community Support Framework

The NDP 2000-2006 provides for total investment during the period of 51.5 billion Euro of which less than 10% will be derived from the Structural Funds. Structured on the Four Pillars, Employability, Entrepreneurship, Adaptability and Equal Opportunities, the National Development Plan proposes to invest over 12.6 billion Euro or 25% of the total in the development of human resources as follows:

- Employability 5.9 billion Euro
- Entrepreneurship 0.5 billion Euro
- Adaptability 6 billion Euro
- Equal Opportunities. 0.26 billion Euro

2.2.4 Policy frame of reference for Human Resources

In laying down general and horizontal legal provisions governing the Structural Funds 2000-2006, the Structural Funds Regulation of 21 June 2000 (1260/1999) provides in Article 1 that the Structural Funds (and other existing financial instruments) shall, among other things, support the adaptation and modernisation of policies and systems of education, training and employment (**Objective 3** priority). Ireland has submitted its Objective 3 Policy Frame of Reference (PFR) to the Commission together with the National Development Plan. The Objective 3 PFR provides the link between the Employment Strategy and Structural Funds support.

The PFR Strategy is contained in **Appendix 3**.

2.3 National Employment Action Plan 2000

Like the National Development Plan, the NEAP is based on the “Four Pillars” of the EU Employment Strategy, i.e. promoting Employability, developing Entrepreneurship, encouraging Adaptability and promoting Equal Opportunities for Women and Men.

The NEAP addresses current labour market challenges with a new orientation from being focused solely on tackling unemployment to the pursuit of policies to provide the labour market with an adequate supply of appropriately skilled workers and the creation of sustained employment.

The NEAP proposes to address the two main labour market imbalances in the following ways:

Skills shortages

- A commitment to in-company training and lifelong learning for those already at work.
- Increased third level education and training provision.

Labour shortages

- Assisting unemployed in their return to work.
- Increasing labour force participation
- Attracting immigrants to augment domestic skills.

Overall in the light of the current market situation in Ireland, the objectives of the NDP and NEAP are as follows:

- ***To promote both employment growth and employment for all who seek it and the effective elimination of long-term unemployment***
- ***To address skills and labour shortages in the economy by mobilising labour supply***
- ***To enhance labour quality through education, training and, in particular, lifelong learning***
- ***To strengthen the preventative approach to minimise unemployment and prevent the drift into long-term unemployment***
- ***To support increased female participation, equal opportunities and a balanced increase in immigration***
- ***To promote social inclusion with particular reference to the re-integration of the socially excluded and, in particular, the long-term unemployed into the open labour market***

2.3.1 NEAP labour market strategies

Labour market strategies now focus on the pursuance of policies to provide the economy with an adequate supply of appropriately skilled workers to sustain economic growth. The responses to labour shortages have been aimed at measures to effect an overall expansion in labour supply, including assisting unemployed in their return to work and increasing labour force participation.

As far as skills shortages are concerned, the primary response has been to enhance education and training provision and the upgrading of skills requiring a commitment to in-company training and lifelong learning for those already in employment. Attracting immigrants to augment domestic supply and skills has also been part of the overall response strategy. A balanced approach to immigration is being developed by Government based on a more proactive policy to meet selected skills needs.

While actions to expand the supply of labour by, for example, attracting immigrants are being implemented, a policy response is also required to increase labour market participation of existing pools of labour, for example, older people, travellers, people with disabilities and women, who have in the past experienced barriers based on discrimination in relation to accessing employment. To increase the labour market participation of these groups, a labour market response which accommodates diversity and assists those that are experiencing barriers is required.

There still remain a significant number of people who face barriers in accessing employment in the mainstream labour market. For many, access to skills training, although crucial, is only part of the solution. For those that are excluded from the labour market on grounds of discrimination, i.e. based on the ground provided in equality legislation, the barriers in existence are more complex. Addressing the skills deficit alone will not assist those excluded from the labour market on grounds of discrimination. Measures that focus on the labour market itself are needed. The labour market itself needs to adapt and shift to accommodate diversity. Equally, training measures that are designed to combat skills deficits must take into account the diverse needs of those that are labour market disadvantaged. There is also the risk that those who are most disadvantaged are likely to access “precarious” employment. The types and quality and sustainability of such employment are in question. The risk is that some people are becoming “repeatedly” unemployed, moving in and out of low paid work.

The **EQUAL** CIP will provide opportunities to optimise the added value to and support for the implementation of those priorities. The primary objective or challenge of EQUAL is, through co-operation at National and transnational level, to devise new approaches beyond the current mainstream policy analysis and, as a testing ground for labour market and human resource policies and issues to find innovative solutions to existing problems and to anticipate future problems arising.

2.4 Future Labour Market Challenges - overview

Labour force growth of approximately 2.25% per annum is expected over the 2000-2002 period – still well above the European average in the short term. NDP projections to 2006 forecast labour force growth in the order of 2% per annum.

Unemployment is now below 5% and further large falls in unemployment cannot be expected. Sustained and rapid employment growth is now resulting in a scarcity of labour, not only in high skilled sectors, but also across the economy. Consequently, the labour market is increasingly tight reflecting the transformation of labour market policy from unemployment prevention to labour activation and mobilisation strategies.

In the medium term, the continuing economic boom and unprecedented employment growth will continue to pose labour supply difficulties. Labour force data (CSO/IBEC-ESRI monthly surveys) suggests continuing tightening of the labour market with record numbers of firms (particularly since 1996) reporting that they are doubly constrained by a shortage of both skilled and unskilled labour. It is clear that demand for high skilled personnel exists in parallel with an equally high demand for low skilled employees. The ESRI’s National Survey of Vacancies in the Private Sector/ Non-Agricultural Sector in August 1998, notes that 60% of all vacancies were in respect of jobs in the low to intermediate skills sector. Other surveys (e.g. Chambers of Commerce Labour Force 2000) found that, from amongst 757 companies surveyed, almost 50% of companies with long-term vacancies were paying overtime to staff while 26% indicated that their staffing problem is restricting growth.

2.5 Locally-designed solutions

Another problem, which Ireland is currently facing, as with many other EU countries is the dichotomy of skill shortages co-existing with unemployment. One reason for this situation is a skills mismatch in the economy- the skills required are not available from amongst the unemployed. As well as providing suitable training opportunities,

are there other approaches to providing access to meaningful “employment” for people in this category.

The more concentrated and intransigent the problem of unemployment the more locally designed the solution is required. The tendency is usually to seek solutions at the national level which by definition have national applicability. Employment approaches which have the support of the local community and which generate a culture of work combined with community development have proved attractive. For example, one important aspect of the social economy is that it operates at the local level i.e. the solution is geared to addressing the specifics of the problem at the local level. This applies equally to rural and urban communities, where people can feel both geographically and personally distanced from the labour market and employment opportunities.

One reality, which the current employment boom has confirmed, is that there will always be a core of persons who, through a combination of disadvantage, will never be able to avail of employment in the open labour market. Rather than be subjected to permanent registered unemployment status and the merry-go-round of training, progression and integration. Are there innovative ways of providing the skills training and personal development needs for the severely disadvantaged or, as referred to earlier, local and community dimensions to creating suitable employment opportunities.

2.6 Human resource Investment Priorities 2000-2006

As part of the Governments preparation for the National Development Plan 2000-2006, the ESRI completed a Study on the identification of priorities for investment over the period 2000-2006 which included detailed findings and recommendations in relation to active labour market policies and the allocation of resources for training and education.

These recommendations are also relied on in the strategy for and orientation of the EQUAL Programme in Ireland.

The labour market data as analysed by the ESRI indicates a significant tightening in the market for skilled labour (Second and Third level education) with a forecast of labour shortages in third level education category by the end of the decade. Data also indicates that relative unemployment rates are highest for those with Primary and Junior Certificate level qualifications than for those with Second and Third level educational qualifications and the gaps persist through periods of high and low unemployment.

The ESRI forecasts that the relative decline in the demand for unskilled labour (workers with Primary education) will continue as a result of so called “qualifications inflation” and migration amongst young skilled workers. The ESRI projections suggest that the most likely outcome for the next decade will be an emerging shortage of skilled labour combined with a surplus of those with least skills. In the light of their findings and projections, the ESRI has recommended that resources should be targeted at the most disadvantaged groups. In the overall human resource context the priorities identified for future investment relate to:

- ◆ The disadvantaged
- ◆ The scale and quality of the outflow from education
- ◆ Training issues

Furthermore, particular account should be taken of the needs of the disabled and the importance of promoting equal opportunities.

In relation to education, the ESRI analysis indicates that a significant number of disadvantaged children and their parents are not adequately using the services provided resulting in the continued problem of early school leaving which needs to be addressed urgently. Authoritative data suggests that educational under-performance is more evident among pupils from “working class” backgrounds, those with parents unemployed and those whose parents have themselves lower levels of education and those who come from larger families.

2.7 Other Human resource Evaluations: Overview

A large body of evaluation work was produced in Ireland on EU Structural Funds-supported Operational Programmes during the last programming period. **The EQUAL CIP draws upon these Reports and evaluations in positioning the EQUAL Community Initiative at the cutting edge of innovative and imaginative Human Resource development and employment policy.**

Amongst the more influential elements were the more than 40 reports produced by the former ESF Programme Evaluation Unit attached to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. The Unit's work focused on activity across the Community Support Framework, on the range of measures supported under the Human Resources Development Operational Programme and on previous Community initiatives.

Within this context the most recent and relevant sources have been the following;

The 1997 Mid Term Review of the Human Resources Development Operational Programme (1994-1999) - Goodbodies Consultants. This report found, amongst other things, that -

- *Preventing and ameliorating early school leaving (ESL) and the reintegration of the Long-Term Unemployed, through provision of increased resources and improved Counselling and Mediation services should be given a higher priority*
- *a gradual increase in Youthreach places should be provided and a continuous focus should be maintained on preventative action as the most appropriate response to ESL*
- *a targeted and flexible expansion in response to evidence of increasing skill shortages in relation to postgraduate provision,.*
- *An increased focus should be placed on progression to skills programmes and on developing alternative job options for those unlikely to integrate into the mainstream economy.*
- *greater targeting of employee support on managers of very small firms, in high growth sectors and action geared to encouraging such employers to invest their own resources to a more significant extent in HRD*
- *provision should be focused to the greatest extent possible on emerging skills needs and on ensuring that unemployed persons develop and upgrade their skills in a way that ensures their continuing employability in changing economies and labour markets.*
- *the skill development needs of women returners should be a key focus ...with provision geared to meeting their needs (e.g. part-time courses, childcare support, etc.). Any remaining barriers to women's participation on these courses and on other measures which aim to re-integrate women should be removed.*

The ESRI (Economic and Social Research institute) carried out an ex-ante evaluation as part of the preparations for the National Development Plan (NDP)/CSF and identified and assessed key priority areas for investment in the 2000-2006 period. The report highlighted the following:

- *Ireland stands out amongst countries in Northern Europe as having the highest proportion of its labour force without second level school-leaving qualifications*
- *The current level of investment in human capital is broadly satisfactory, though measures are needed to make good some of the failures of the past*
- *The potential growth rate of the Irish economy is more likely to face input constraints in the coming decade than demand constraints*
- *Human capital continues to have a high priority for investment in the future...however the changing demographic structure of the economy will reduce the pressures on the educational sector*
- *The highest priority for public investment is in public physical infrastructure although education and training is also an important priority.*

On the text of the National Development Plan for 2000-06, the Ex-Ante Evaluation of the National Development Plan prepared by the Community Support Framework Evaluation Unit considered that -

- *the rationale for State investment in the Employment and HRD was generally robust, and that this area of investment is likely to contribute to the overall objectives of the Plan, particularly in terms of promoting social inclusion*
- *the four pillar NEAP structure did not easily lend itself to developing coherent programming approaches*
- *the three-fold strategy (NEAPS, sectoral training and education) was not linked to the structure of the programme which follows the four pillars*
- *the level of capacity set out in a number of areas did not appear to take sufficient account of the projected decline in the number of labour market entrants*
- *the assumption that all early-school leavers could be attracted into further training seems optimistic*
- *(on support for under-graduate skills and post-graduate conversion measures) the economy is suffering more from a labour shortage rather than a skill shortage*
- *while the programme provides for an expansion in areas like traineeship numbers (from 1,600 in 1999 to 6,000 by 2006), there is no evidence of corresponding reductions in capacity elsewhere for this broad target group*
- *the levels of provision for the Active Measures for the Long-Term Unemployed and Socially Excluded and the Employment Support Services should be very carefully monitored.*

The Report by the ESF Programme Evaluation Unit: "Challenges for Human Resource Development, 2000-2006", A Report on Major Human Resource Development Issues 2000-2006 Emerging from Evaluation Literature 1994-1999," has significantly influenced the orientation and strategy contained in the EQUAL CIP. The Report addresses key issues to be borne in mind regarding programmes in the forthcoming period including the importance of ensuring that the implementation of measures is in accordance with stated policy and that delivery systems are designed with the policy objective of the programme in mind. It argued for –

A move towards a 'client driven' system, which will require developing a pathways to progression approach for disadvantaged target groups, through:

- recognition of the longer duration interventions or range of interventions which a disadvantaged person should be facilitated to access in order to give him or her the chance of gaining sustainable employment;

- delivering skills training and education provision on a flexible basis to meet the needs both of those in work and those unemployed or outside the labour force, to include part time delivery, delivery in the community, distance learning, etc.; and
- establishment of the National Qualifications Authority and ensuring that it delivers a flexible national framework of qualifications which recognises all forms of learning, regardless of whether learning is gained in a formal setting, in employment or in the home.

2.8 The Impact of the Evaluations on CIP Content

The evaluation reports referred to above provides opportunities to respond in the CIP to issues raised and to orient or re-orient strategies and the content of proposals presented in this Programme. The range of recommendations and comments are reflected in varying ways in the contents and proposals in the CIP.

The **Goodbodys 1997** report's commitment to equality and to social inclusion is strongly reflected in the National Development Plan, the Employment and Human Resources Development OP 2000-2006 and in this and other Operational Programmes for 2000-2006.

This CIP furthermore develops the active EU commitment to employment policy in the ESF and NEAP contexts: The ongoing commitment to the preventive strategy to, for example, youth and long term unemployment and the efforts to reintegrate those already long term unemployed and marginalized, are consolidated and expanded upon more fully in Chapter 7 (Synthesis of relevant Lessons from Employment and Adapt). There is now increased emphasis on responding to shortages through targeted supply-side initiatives in education and training. Greater selectivity in providing public support to SME's and seeking ways of persuading employers that training is in their own interest remain at the heart of strategy in this regard. There is now a greater stress on Adaptability and responding to changing market needs. The commitment to gender mainstreaming in the CIP will support and contribute to accelerating the removal of any remaining structural impediments to women's equality in the access routes to the labour market.

The ESRI 1998 report reference to the impediment of having the highest proportion of a national labour force in Northern Europe without second-level school -leaving qualifications is reducing rapidly. However, it remains a sufficiently important feature in the tight labour market with the focus on mobilisation and activation of all labour supplies to warrant initiatives in the domains of life-long learning and adult literacy. The 'robustness' of the rationale recognised in the National Development Plan, Ex-Ante Evaluation Report (1999) in the case of employment and human resource development, is further supported and developed in this CIP. The Operational Programme structure, implementation and monitoring processes are designed to identify and to accommodate change and adaptation should new circumstances or conditions call for this.

2.9 CIP Overall impact

It is expected that the CIP will contribute to identification and greater awareness of the difficulties experienced by disadvantaged groups and individuals. The ultimate aim is to devise new labour market strategies using the experiences and lessons gained through EQUAL participation in tackling discrimination and inequalities in connection with the labour market. The ESF Evaluation report referred to the consensus that social exclusion should be tackled as a priority, yielding, in terms of investment, the highest return (minimal dead-weight).

The Report stressed the importance of effective evaluation procedures requiring the provision or development of adequate baseline data, articulation of targets that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time based and the development of appropriate indicators to allow for the objective assessment of the extent to which targets have been met. The proposed integrated data management system (see Appendix 6) will provide a variety of standard data which has not been previously accessible for evaluation purposes (e.g. at County level) of training or education for each beneficiary providing new perspectives on the overall impact of the CIP. This system will need to interface with the minimum level of indicators (qualitative and quantitative) proposed by the Commission and reproduced at Appendices 8 and 9 of the CIP.

It is intended in the Programme Complement and implementation phases to place renewed emphasis on such matters as flexible measure delivery modalities and on the use of indicators structured around the Four Pillar framework which focus on outcomes as well as outputs in ongoing monitoring of the measures. Having regard to the significant level of overall ESF (all programmes) funding and to linkages between the National Development Plan, Community Support Framework and the National Action Employment Plan, a discrete ESF Evaluation function will be included in the Central Evaluation Unit attached to the Department of Finance. While reporting to the head of the new Unit, part of the Unit will be dedicated to ESF Evaluation work under the aegis of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

The arrangements for ongoing, mid-term and ex-post evaluation are set out in detail in Chapter 12.5 of the CIP. The Central Evaluation Unit will also be available to offer technical advice and will provide an ongoing evaluation input to the work of the Managing Authority and Monitoring Committee in relation to the development of performance indicators and evaluation generally (including interpretation of data and of follow-up surveys undertaken in the monitoring process at CIP level). The Equality Unit in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform will advise on the development of equality indicators at operational programme and measure level and will offer advice in relation to the promotion of gender mainstreaming.

3. Current situation with regard to discrimination and inequality in the labour market

3.1 Background

The economic and labour market context for EQUAL is shaped by the increase in economic growth and employment growth, the associated decline in overall unemployment and long-term unemployment, the growth of employment in new sectors, the growth of atypical employment and the experience of both labour shortages and skills shortages. Alongside of these developments is the ongoing need to develop greater capacity at company level to manage change and diversity and more generally the need to promote greater responsiveness to change and development within institutions and policy instruments pertaining to labour market integration.

In the context of an economy and a labour market that provides both opportunities and challenges, the ongoing experience of inequality and discrimination for some groups both increases their vulnerability and impedes the consolidation of the contemporary phase of economic development. The following is a non-exhaustive list of such groups:

Groups vulnerable to experiencing inequality and discrimination

Early school leavers
Long-term unemployed
People in vulnerable or low paid employment
Women returners
Lone parents
Drug users
People with disabilities
Members of the Traveller community
Asylum seekers/refugees
Participants on labour market programmes
Homeless
People with disabilities
Women

The issues and statistics relating to these target groups is further developed in Appendix 1 to the ex-ante evaluation of the CIP which is attached as an Annex to the Programme Document.

3.2 Levels of inequality and discrimination

Within the economy, inequality and discrimination can be identified as operating at three broad levels. The precise form that inequality and discrimination takes at each level differs, the target groups most vulnerable at each level vary somewhat, and the measures needed to overcome inequality and discrimination at each level also vary.

These three levels are:

1. *Inequality and discrimination in regard to access to the labour market.*

This relates to those whose situation is such that they find it difficult to gain any kind of foothold in the labour market and whose needs are not been adequately met by labour market interventions. Included amongst these groups are

unqualified young people, young single parents, long-term unemployed with poor or redundant skills, women returners with limited skills, asylum seekers/refugees, members of the Traveller community and other socio-economically disadvantaged groups such as ex-offenders, drug-users and the homeless.

2. *Inequality and discrimination in regard to access to quality employment:*

This relates to those groups who can compete on the labour market but whose skills and qualifications confine them to poor quality employment, characterised by low pay, poor conditions, no opportunity for advancement and possibly frequent periods of unemployment. Groups most affected by this include the low skilled, women and poorly qualified young people. Participants on labour market programmes may also be included.

3. *Inequality and discrimination in regard to certain forms of employment and to advancement within employment.*

This relates to those people who are largely already in employment but who experience difficulties in relation to certain types of jobs or economic sectors and in relation to advancement in terms of career development or occupational movement. The groups most affected are women, people with disabilities and working asylum seekers and refugees.

At each level at which inequality and discrimination are experienced, the prevailing causal factors are different and consequently so too are the remedial measures required.

3.3 *Specific Inequalities and discrimination in regard to access to the labour market.*

In relation to this, causal factors include those pertaining to the characteristics of the affected groups, to the nature of demand in the economy and the manner in which that demand is satisfied and to the institutional arrangements surrounding the labour market. The characteristics of the affected groups include disaffection from the labour market, lack of confidence, personal difficulties, literacy problems, no educational qualifications, no vocational skills and no employment history. In the case of asylum seekers, language problems will also feature. Factors arising on the demand side of the labour market include recruitment practices that are discriminatory (unintentionally or otherwise), inaccessible buildings, inappropriate work practices, insecure or otherwise unattractive employment and prejudice to certain groups on the part of employers. Finally, institutional factors include inflexible labour market interventions, poor outreach mechanisms, insufficient guidance and other supports, insufficient links to opportunities in the economy and anomalies arising in the tax / welfare nexus.

3.4 *Inequality and discrimination in regard to access to quality employment:*

The main factors associated with this level of inequality and discrimination relate to the skill and educational levels of those affected and the almost non-existent opportunities to upgrade their skills within or without the workplace. In consequence, those affected remain locked into low quality employment with the ongoing threat of redundancy. No data is available on the overall numbers in such employment or on their prior status, but it is probable they include substantial numbers of the previously unemployed and long-term unemployed. In the current context, any downturn in the economy is likely to have an immediate and adverse impact on this group

3.5 *Inequality and discrimination in regard to certain forms of employment and to advancement within employment.*

The factors associated with this level of inequality and discrimination derive from characteristics of the institutional and cultural context rather than from those of the affected groups. These factors include, organisational cultures that fail to value diversity, rigid management practices, inflexible work practices, gender segregation, gender stereotyping, the lack of role models for women and employer prejudice.

4. Dominant issues within the Four Pillar context

4.1 Pillar 1: Employability- A question of access

There are two issues evident here. Firstly, for groups that are experiencing inequality and discrimination, access to the mainstream employment service is an issue. Ireland's employment policy focuses on a preventative strategy, which seeks to prevent the drift into long-term unemployment and traditionally focused on engaging with people who are on the live register. There are many people who are not on the live register who may wish to work, such as older people and women returners. Although these groups may not be directly excluded from accessing mainstream services, many are not likely to use these services.

In the case of women returners many left the labour market to look after their children and would be available to work if the right jobs and supports were available. Innovative measures need to be put in place which will actively target groups who have been excluded from the labour market and encourage more women to use the public employment service.

For many men, losing a job at 50 was likely to mean early retirement. This may have been a result of the lack of availability of other jobs, or only jobs at lower pay or a prejudicial attitude of employers. These men will not be on the live register, consequently there may be no service directly targeting them in relation to employment opportunities. In addition, they may not even see themselves as potential employees in this current labour market.

Barriers which are preventing access to employment across the inequality and discrimination spectrum are significant. For example, asylum seekers with the right to work and refugees face discriminatory barriers based on prejudice and ignorance.

As a further example, Traveller participation in the mainstream labour market is very low, although evidence would suggest that the numbers participating are increasing. The Traveller community is widely recognised as one of the most marginalized and disadvantaged groups in Irish society based on every indicator used to measure disadvantage including unemployment, social exclusion, illiteracy, education and training levels. There is also strong evidence of anti-traveller discrimination bordering on racism. It is estimated that the traveller population numbers approximately 27,000 composed of 4,905 traveller households. An estimated 40% is aged under 10 years and over 50% is aged under 15 years while only 5% of travellers are aged 50 and over. It is estimated that only about 10% of travellers continue on to second level education and very few, in fact, complete the cycle. Traveller participation in the labour force is very low due to traveller nomadic lifestyle, a preference for self-employment and work in the traveller economy, discrimination, negative stereotyping, lack of skills and qualifications, poor pay and working conditions. The majority of traveller households are dependent on social welfare.

According to a survey conducted by the National Association of Traveller Training Centres, this low participation rate is due to a number of factors including low pay, need for further training, cultural factors and lack of acceptance by "Settled" counterparts. Travellers have traditionally entered the Traveller economy as barriers caused by anti-Traveller prejudice have prevented their access. The Task Force on the Travelling Community, pointed to low skills and education levels amongst the Travelling Community as additional barriers for Travellers entering the mainstream labour market. There is also evidence to suggest that low literacy levels are significant.

There are a number of dimensions to “access” to the mainstream labour market for people with disabilities: Physical access to the built environment, technological (discussed further under the Entrepreneurship Pillar in relation to IT) and attitudinal. Attitudinal barriers are created and reinforced by segregated special education and training environments and by a general lack of knowledge about disability. These attitudinal barriers compound the physical barriers as a lack of knowledge about disability prevents employers from recruiting people with disabilities as misinformed decision making occurs at recruitment stage.

These issues also effect older people. Many employers base employment decisions on preconceived ideas about age, rather than on skills and abilities.

4.2 Skills levels

For many groups, proactive and targeted measures will not be sufficient to assist them into employment. Those who have been excluded from the labour market for long periods of time face multiple disadvantages. According to the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness, the Task Force on Lifelong Learning will address the issue of initiatives to help people currently outside the workforce to upgrade their skills and/or acquire new ones. A key aim of the Task Force on Life Long Learning will be **“the development, as a matter of priority, of specific initiatives to upgrade the skills of workers in low paid sectors and those facing rapid technological change”**.

The ESRI note that the risk of poverty for the much smaller numbers now unemployed remains very high. Tackling their problems will therefore require more intensive and focused efforts in the future.

Inadequate skills is also cited as a barrier for older people accessing employment. In times of high unemployment, policies were developed to encourage early retirement. Many of the jobs and the skills that these people had are now obsolete. Proactive policies which support older people into education and training are needed to enable them to upskill.

There has been an increase in female labour market participation from 32% in 1986 to over 50% today. This increase is most marked for married women and those aged between 25 and 45 and strongly related to educational attainment. The highest female labour market participation rates are for those with third level education. The group which has shown the most marked increase in labour force participation is married women with completed second level education. Participation for those with primary education is still low.

According to the ESRI in their Medium Term Review, women with Junior Certificate or lower education levels tend to have larger families than the rest of the population, and are also more likely to be lone parents. In 1996, 23% of women with primary education who had children under the age of 5 were lone parents, while for the population as a whole the figure was 11%.

4.3 Pillar 2: Entrepreneurship- A question of access

Under the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness it has been agreed that “Start - your-own business for women, the long-term unemployed and marginalised groups will be developed.” According to the P2000 Women's Access Report, as at 21/4/99, there were only 14.26% women participating on the Back to Work Allowance

(employees and self-employed). Women face particular barriers in attempting to set up their own business. There are many lessons learned from successful NOW projects that focus on flexible and “women-friendly” programmes which are developed to meet the particular needs of women.

The absence of other marginalised groups is significant. The Task Force on the Travelling Community notes that a significant amount of Traveller economic activity takes place within the informal economy. Flexible measures could be developed to allow Travellers to formalise this activity in a non-punitive way.

For ethnic groups, self employment is often seen as an attractive option. The potential for job creation amongst this group is substantial particularly in servicing ethnic diversity.

The creation of a culture of work and enterprise and the fostering of an entrepreneurial environment is essential for the development of new enterprises, the growth of SMEs and an expansion in related employment. Of specific importance, within the EQUAL context, will be the pursuit of activities and projects which increase awareness and develop skills in this area amongst those most disadvantaged. Ireland’s National Development Plan places particular emphasis on SMEs, while at the level of the individual particular attention will be paid to promoting entrepreneurial and management capability, ensuring the enhancement of progression pathways and the development of transferable skills. The Government also indicated in its white paper on Human Resources and in the NEAP, that enterprises need to increase and better leverage their investment in human resources development. Within the entrepreneurial Pillar of the Employment and Human Resources Operational Programme 2000-2006, the focus is on assisting companies, particularly indigenous SMEs, to meet the challenge of adjusting to more competitive market conditions and on encouraging more people, either individually or collectively, to look to self-employment and to establish enterprises.

4.4 Pillar 3: Adaptability – training, work arrangements and practices

Continuing education and training, particularly company training, is essential for promoting adaptability and employability of firms and employees. It is accepted that there are efficiency and equity grounds for public investment in education and training.

According to the NESC there is evidence that training is not evenly distributed. It points to the fact that part-time workers do not avail of training opportunities to the same extent as full-time. In addition, there are more women (70%) participating in part-time work than men. In general, those with higher educational qualifications tend to participate more in further training. The NESC Report “Opportunities, Challenges and Capacities for Choice 1999 also stated that “*The needs of those with poor educational attainment, who may be undertaking low skilled and low-paid work should be a particular focus, as should the training needs of part-time workers and women*”.

For those that are experiencing labour market inequalities, getting a job may be difficult, but holding on to it may be even harder. For those that have been out of the labour market for long periods of time, the workplace can be very daunting. In addition, they may need to access skills training to improve their skills levels. There is also evidence that people who are labour market disadvantaged, usually enter low paid employment. Inflexible working hours and the cost and lack of access to childcare constitute major barriers to full-time parents, predominantly women,

returning to and remaining in the workforce. In a time of labour market shortages, the fact that workplaces are not family friendly is ever more apparent. This is reflected in the fact that Irish women are having their children later than women in other European countries as the lack of both childcare and a family friendly workplace make it difficult for parents to combine both roles. The ESRI notes that the current debate on access to the labour market for parents has concentrated on the lack of available childcare.

However, workplace flexibility also impacts on other groups. The absence of flexible work arrangements is also an issue concerning religion and race grounds. If we are to create a labour market that is accessible to all then both cultural and religious issues need to be taken into account. The workplace needs to accommodate a diverse workforce and respect different cultural traditions.

Flexibility also impacts on older people in the workforce. The abrupt ending of working life is not the best approach to retirement. A more flexible workplace could allow older people to think more flexibly about how they will retire. Research into the needs of older people is urgently needed to identify their needs in relation to the labour market. New work organisation offers older workers a real opportunity to return to the labour market and remain in employment for longer.

Work arrangements can have a major impact on people with disabilities. Job descriptions can be drawn up that accommodate a person's disability. Employers can replace unnecessary criteria with job related ones and in so doing have a wider choice of applicants from which to recruit.

The workplace needs to adapt to accommodate diversity. Many lesbians and gay men avoid disclosing their sexual orientation at work for fear of harassment and discrimination. Some will only choose jobs where it is safe to be "out". Unfortunately many of these are low paid and short-term contracts. This limits the employment choices of lesbian and gay men. ***"The effects of this discrimination are also vividly demonstrated in the pressures to be 'downwardly-mobile' (Pg. 59, Poverty, Lesbians and Gay Men, Combat Poverty Agency, 1995).***

Self-identification at work is also a barrier for members of the Traveller community and people with disabilities. There is evidence to suggest that job retention is an issue for people with disabilities. Significant numbers of people leave their employment due to lack of induction and co-operation with other employees.

Ireland's transition to an Information Society may well offer people with disabilities an opportunity to participate more fully in the mainstream labour market. Barriers such as physical access, may be overcome by the introduction of eBusiness and eOrganisations. Technology can also help to alleviate some of the physical access barriers. It is crucial that information is available in accessible formats and that access to IT is open to all for fear of creating a society where information technology causes labour market exclusion rather than inclusion.

As well as mobilising labour supply, the other major challenge facing the labour market in Ireland is the future adaptability of firms and workers. On the basis that sustainable competitiveness comes through innovation at the level of the firm, then one of the prime sources of innovation is the skill level of the workforce. Even to keep pace with trends in the market place, brought about at a rapid pace by new technology and its application, skill level of employees must be continuously updated. The benefit of continuous upgrading of skills goes beyond the performance of the individual firm. Ultimately the employability of the individual is greatly improved

regardless of the future of the business in which he/she is employed. To put it conversely an employee who does not update his skills faces a great likelihood of dropping out of the workforce if the economy and the business sector go into recession and therefore faces a greater barrier in terms of accessing new employment. To address this, practical approaches are needed to introduce “lifelong learning” in the firm and for the individual.

Boosting the quality and level of investment in in-company training is therefore an issue for employers and employees and which lends itself to a “partnership” approach. While promising work was done in this area under the ADAPT programme, the development of partnership at firm level as a means of boosting skill levels, competitiveness and innovation could be widened and deepened.

Nowhere is the issue of employee skills more potentially problematic than in the case of younger workers. One of the down sides of strong economic growth is the lure of paid employment for young people (especially in a low skill sector) versus continuing education. Are these jobs sustainable or vulnerable to economic downturn? Are there opportunities for the employees to improve their skills? If not what is the risk of a high level of youth unemployment in the future? What new approaches to upskilling can be developed to avoid such a scenario?

In the global market output and productivity are more critical than the number of hours worked. In a tight labour market recruiting and retaining the necessary skill implies that employers must meet the needs of employees in terms of flexible working options and creating a family friendly workplace. Such adaptability can also confer competitiveness advantages. New forms of work organisation are being used both to improve adaptability and to provide a competitiveness edge and to strengthen employee involvement and commitment. Partnership at firm level is at the heart of how the workplace is organised. While these approaches are already visible in the new sectors of the economy, practical demonstration of the benefits is needed in more traditional sectors.

Just like any business, the State needs to be more and more adaptable in terms of defining and reeling future skill needs. Are our education and training systems flexible enough to plan and deliver our skills requirements over the long term?

One thing is certain, whenever it happens, the current levels of economic and employment growth will turn down, tightness in the labour market will ease, putting pressure on unemployment levels. The challenges in addressing this scenario are principally those discussed in the previous paragraphs, centred primarily around the employability of the individual and the adaptability of firms.

In that scenario, another challenge is the role and effectiveness of the Public Employment service. The current ‘preventative’ strategy arising from Guidelines 1 & 2 of the EU Employment strategy is proving effective, albeit in a favourable employment climate. The important point is that the process is in place to take full advantage of the benign circumstances. However, will it continue to be successful in more challenging times as a gateway to employment, training and integration opportunities or what new approaches might be considered whereby the employment service can ensure equality of access to employment opportunities?

4.5 Pillar 4: Equal Opportunities between Men and Women

Articles 2 and 3 of the Amsterdam Treaty provides the legal basis formalising the EU’s commitment to gender mainstreaming by establishing equality between women

and men as a specific policy of the EU as well as a horizontally across all other Pillars. Men and women must have the same training and support opportunities to participate in the labour market on an equal footing. Active policies must ensure that difficulties preventing a proper combination of working life with family responsibilities are overcome and that the ability to return to work after long absences is enhanced, thereby correcting the gender imbalance in certain economic sectors.

The existing fragmentation of childcare policy and services poses difficulties for the formulation of a cohesive approach to the question of childcare and labour market issues.

Ireland has a substantial legislative framework which already contributes to the gender mainstreaming objectives of the EU employment strategy through the implementation of the Employment Equality Act, 1998 and the Equal Status Act, 2000 and through the establishment of the Equality Authority, a Director of Equality Investigations and an equality infrastructure. These provide a strong legal framework for counteracting discrimination in employment and in the supply of goods and services on a wide range of grounds including strengthening the emphasis on tackling inequalities between women and men.

Significant progress has been made in the labour market from the gender perspective. The gender gap in the employment rate has been significantly narrowed from over 24 percentage points based on 1999 figures to 22 percentage points based on more recent data. Despite the significant progress in tackling labour market gender gaps, significant differences still remain between employment rates for women and men in Ireland and barriers to women returners continue to exist. Imbalances continue to exist in terms of disproportionate representation by women in lower paid jobs, in traditionally male dominated occupations and in terms of overall childcare provision. Narrowing these gaps and addressing such barriers is a national priority and, for example, substantial efforts are underway or proposed (NDP, NEAP {Guidelines 18 to 21} and commitments in the PPF to improve childcare facilities and create family-friendly policies in order to address one of the principal impediments to higher participation by women and the greater sharing by men and women of the caring responsibilities within the home.

Operationally, equality is being mainstreamed at CIP level by including equal opportunities as part of Development Partnership and project selection criteria and it will feature as a requirement for all evaluations to be undertaken in connection with the CIP. Additionally, it is proposed to engage the Equality Authority in supporting the EQUAL national mainstreaming strategy. This mainstreaming strategy, which proposes to incorporate an all Ireland mainstreaming element as part of a **North/South co-operation measure** is discussed at Chapter 11.

It is intended that all substantive priority actions under the EQUAL CIP will contain specific gender dimensions and that suitable indicators will be developed to measure progress. The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform will provide advice and assistance through the Equal Opportunities Promotion and Monitoring Unit of that Department on suitable indicators at programme complement stage and on incorporating equal opportunities issues and gender mainstreaming into the EQUAL policy framework.

There remain many inequalities between women and men in relation to both accessing the labour market and within the workplace. The European Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for women and men express concerns in relation to a number of issues as follows:

- *Gender pay gap*
- *Representation of women in professional, managerial and executive posts*
- *Horizontal segregation into specific occupations and sectors*
- *Support services in relation to childcare and care for older people*
- *Sharing of family responsibilities*
- *The experience of atypical contracts*
- *Access to life-long learning initiatives, including part-time workers*
- *The value accorded to jobs in caring services and to jobs in the social economy*
- *The impact of new forms of work organisation on equal opportunities*
- *Women's relatively lower employment rate*
- *Eligibility conditions that pose barriers to access to active labour market programmes*

4.5.1 Equal Opportunities: general issues

Whether it is in terms of access to the job opportunities or opportunities within employment, the issue of equality between men and women needs to be continuously assessed and addressed. The ultimate objective is to ensure that all policies are gender proofed. The Employment and Human Resources Development Programme under the National Development Plan has built a process of gender mainstreaming into all of the measures. However the issue is of long-term concern and could benefit from innovative ways of addressing different aspects such as gender pay gaps, sectoral segregation, training opportunities, promotion prospects or approaches to childcare or other family- friendly work arrangements. Recent statistics have shown that, in Ireland, females are currently outperforming their male counterparts in terms of educational achievement. Employment restrictions, whether direct or indirect, because of gender are not only therefore a barrier to individual development but also represent a loss to the economy.

4.5.2 Technical Issues

The General Regulation on the Structural Funds for the period 2000-2006 contains significant new features on the integration of equal opportunities for women and men.

Articles 2 and 3 of the Amsterdam Treaty make “the elimination of inequalities and the promotion of equality between women and men” a central principle of Community policy and action. The “gender mainstreaming” approach to equal opportunities in the Structural Funds aims to ensure sustained and integrated efforts to overcome the persistent inequalities between women and men that exist in all Member States in relation to:

- **rates of inactivity, unemployment and long-term unemployment;**
- **participation in full-time, part-time and atypical work;**
- **pay and conditions of employment;**
- **rates of enterprise creation and growth;**
- **access to transport and other services;**
- **sharing of unpaid domestic and family care work.**

While some men may experience gender-related obstacles, it is women who are the most disadvantaged. Some groups of women experience particular difficulties, such

as those caring for children and the elderly, and those living in remote or marginalised communities.

The European commission has defined gender mainstreaming in the following terms:

«**Gender mainstreaming**» involves ensuring that all general measures and operations openly and actively take into account – during planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation – their effects on the respective situations of women and men. It also involves the complementary design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of specific measures and operations to promote equality and to assist women to participate and benefit equally.

Overall, plans and programmes should contribute to improved equality between men and women, and should be able to demonstrate this impact, prior to, during and after implementation.

4.5.3 Contribution of gender equality to the objectives of the Structural Funds

There is a strong relationship between the objectives of the Structural Funds and equal opportunities between women and men. For example:

- Improved opportunities of participation of women and men at all levels of the labour market contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of investments in human resources.
- Raising the vocational qualifications and skills of women contributes to improved productivity and chances of employment and promotion.
- Economic activities developed by women are often innovative responses to market opportunities and local needs.
- Improved transport and care services enable more women to access labour market opportunities, as well as creating new sources of jobs.

Several provisions in the General Regulation state the need to ensure that the Structural Funds contribute to Community objectives concerning equal opportunities for women and men. There are five areas identified by Community policy where it is particularly important to reduce inequalities and promote equality between women and men:

- Access to, and participation at all levels in, the labour market;
- Education and training, particularly concerning vocational skills and qualifications;
- Enterprise creation and growth;
- Reconciliation of work and family life;
- Balanced participation in decision-making.

4.5.4 Current Situation in Ireland

The Gender equality unit of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform refers to the factors which make it more difficult for the average woman than the average man to be promoted and/or reach higher pay levels in the context of women's position in the labour force. These factors include the major responsibility usually allotted to women for childcare and housework. The levels of women's education and training in certain fields, and the types of jobs which women undertake are also important. Fiscal and social welfare policies also have strong impacts.

Increases in recent years in female participation rates in the labour market have brought the rate close to average EU levels. In 1997, 42% of females were in the labour force compared with 45.6% in the EU average. Ireland's rate has advanced to almost 46% by Qtr. 2, 1999 and 47.1% by Qtr. 4, 1999. Although recent equality legislation and fiscal changes have had beneficial effects, a number of inequalities between men and women continue to exist as the following examples illustrate: (Source: Gender Equality Unit, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform)

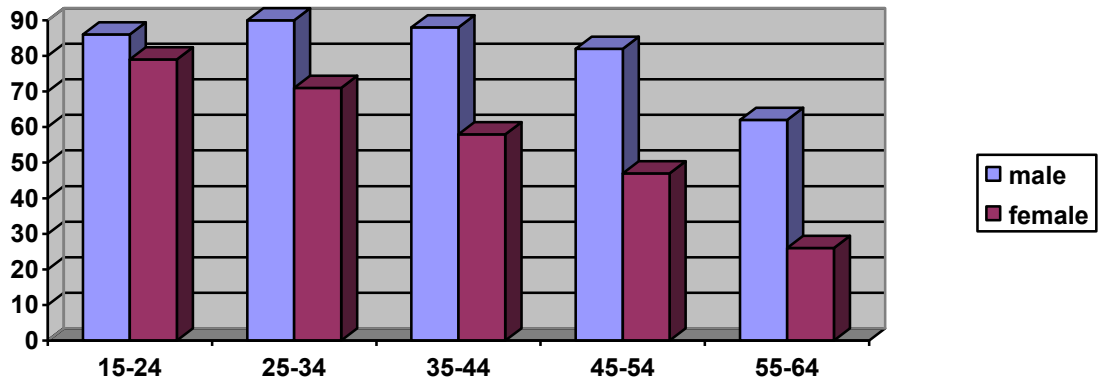
- 3% of managing directors (1998)
- 12% of parliamentary representatives (1997), and
- 13% of those in the most senior civil service positions (principal officer & above) (1997).
- Women earned 75% of the average male industrial wage (1997), so they have lower incomes and are entitled to lower pensions later, and
- 33% of people aged 25 and over on the live register for 12 months or more are female
- One third of poor households (those with an income below 60% of the average) in 1994 were made up of single adults. 50% of these households were made up of an elderly woman, compared to 20% of an elderly man.
- Females represent 26% of total representation of entrepreneurship in services

In terms of family-friendly policies:

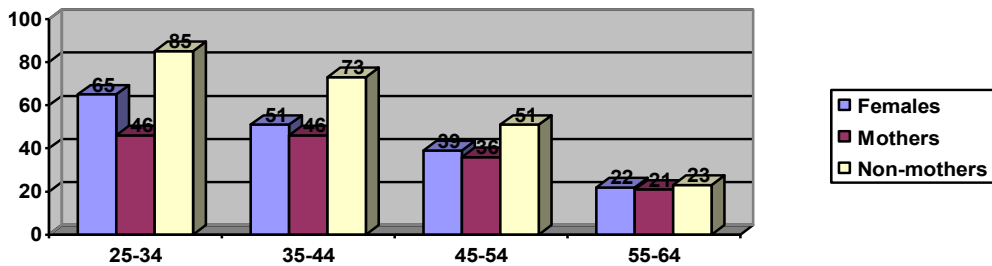
- 2.5% of organisations provide workplace childcare
- 47.7% of females aged 22-44 are in employment with children under 15 as opposed to 73.2% in the same category without children (as a % of all females with and without children respectively)
- 38.2% of females aged 50-59 are in employment as opposed to 75.4% of males in the same category
- 73.8% of females are employed part-time as a % of total part-time employment and 30.5% as a % of total female employment.

The statistics clearly show that, despite that rapid growth in female participation rates, it remains significantly low when compared to male participation rates and is still one of the lowest in the EU. In the context of the European Employment Strategy and the Lisbon Presidency conclusions (EU Summit, March 2000) there remains considerable potential for increasing participation amongst women; member states have agreed an overall objective of raising the employment rate from an average of 61% (1998) to ***“as close as possible to 70% by 2010 and to increase the number of women in employment from an average of 51% today to more than 60% by 2010.....”***

The following table gives a perspective on male and female employment rates by age based on CSO Quarterly National Household Survey, March to May 1999 (Source: NESF Report No 19, alleviating labour shortages):



As the graph illustrates, both male and female rates decrease with increasing age (with the exception of males aged 25-34) but female rates are lower at all ages and most markedly among males women than among men particularly in the initial childbearing years. The following table also shows the very evident effect of parenthood and other caring responsibilities on women’s employment. These figures point up the existence of barriers particularly in the case of mothers and older women in returning to the labour force and in overcoming obstacles in making the transition back to work and training. The age groups are broken down left to right as follows:



The NESF in its Report “*Alleviating Labour Shortages*” (November 2000) has described the barriers facing women returners as being of two types: (i) How to combine work and family responsibilities-clearly this is also a male issue – and (ii) readjusting to work and familiarity with the labour market. The NESF suggests that these issues could be addressed through the provision of time, money and services. Greater time flexibility is a crucial element in reconciling employment, childcare and other responsibilities. The second obstacle requires reselling and upskilling measures in combination with capacity and confidence-building measures in order to assist in the transition back to employment or training.

4.6 Disadvantaged and the Labour market

Given their lack of resources and access to information, it is unlikely that the reintegration into the labour market or other forms of socio-economic activity of the disadvantaged could be achieved merely by a reliance on market forces. The empirical evidence shows that active labour market strategies with strong links to the labour market improves labour market prospects of the participants. Those best equipped from amongst the long-term unemployed, for example, will be able to compete more effectively on the labour market. The ESRI study suggests that the remaining long-term unemployed will find it increasingly difficult to be re-integrated into the labour market without well-targeted and effective measures.

Both the ESRI and the Report by the ESF Evaluation Unit (“Challenges for Human Resource Development 2000-2006”) refer to the need for “re-integration paths” or a series of linked programmes culminating in programmes with strong links to the market and with a client-centred approach. The ESRI also calls for further targeting of the levels of female participation in the workforce, which are still relatively low by international standards. Similarly, further efforts are required in relation to promoting the integration of persons with disabilities into employment.

4.6.1 Labour force mobilisation of disadvantaged and marginalized groups

Efforts to mobilise greater numbers into the labour market will need to focus on a number of distinct groupings including women, unemployed, disadvantaged groups (such as people with disabilities, travellers, low literacy drug mis-users, ex-offenders, remote dwellers), immigrant workers and older persons.

Each of these groupings has distinct needs and requires different approaches. For example in the case of women, a quality and affordable childcare service is critical. Taxation and pay issues are also important, as is training, for example in IT skills, for women who have been out of the workforce for a long period of time.

Unemployed people, especially those who are long-term unemployed, may need a range of training or other programme support before they are able to take up employment. The source of disadvantage can range from a lack of basic personal skills or low levels of literacy to the development of a culture of employment among members of disadvantaged groups. Older persons need to see that there are no disincentives in returning to work and employer attitudes to the recruitment of older people need to be positive. The notion of final and permanent retirement needs to be revisited.

Immigrant workers face integration issues both inside and outside of the workforce. Equally Irish businesses need to address the challenges, and the opportunities of a multi-cultural marketplace.

Of course there may be issues affecting these groups’ participation in the labour market which are not referred to above or which may yet have to emerge. Or there may be new ways of mobilising these groups or of identifying additional sources of supply to cope with the tight labour supply. It is important, in the innovative spirit of EQUAL, that we leave open the opportunity to explore these opportunities as and when they arise.

4.6.2 Training issues

According to the ESRI, in general, low priority should be attached to training programmes where high dead-weight costs are to be anticipated, for example, in circumstances of high levels of economic activity or to where relatively well-qualified unemployed persons receive industry training where many such individuals already have good labour market prospects. This would ensure a more efficient allocation of resources and a greater measure of assistance to the disadvantaged groups. Continued training by those at work is low by international comparisons and there is evidence that companies under-invest in training of workers. Available estimates indicate that in average terms Irish companies spend only 1% of their wage bill on training compared with up to 3% in other Member States, although surveys carried out by employers organisations suggests that expenditure is in the order of 3% of

payroll. The ESRI recommends that in-company training should be directed mainly at upskilling management's human resource abilities in maintaining and motivating staff and the enhancement of employee skill levels. This type of training investment is also essential in an ever increasing competitive environment.

4.6.3 Training and Government Programme Commitments

The Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (PPF) commits to a greater emphasis on training in order to better reflect market and individual needs. In this context, the PPF acts as a useful guide to any possible actions under EQUAL. The PPF states that, in its overall appraisal of active labour market Programmes (ALMPs), the aims shall be:

- To ensure that they contribute to national competitiveness by increasing labour supply, through the integration of unemployed persons into the labour market
- To eliminate any unnecessary anomalies between various interventions and to secure the fullest possible measure of synchronisation
- To re-orient ALMPs, including the development of the training component of Community Employment so that the collective focus will be on the needs of disadvantaged groups (the long-term unemployed, lone parents, people with disabilities, travellers, refugees and asylum seekers who have the right to work and women and dependent spouses and young people who are disadvantaged) with the aim of progression onto the open labour market
- To shift the emphasis towards training and progression, including the enhancement of progression pathways between education and training and workplace through specific skills training and pre-labour market Programmes
- To develop improved methods of disseminating information on labour market measures to appropriate target groups
- To consider alternative approaches to addressing inequality of access to the labour market

The Government recently introduced a new **training fund** to raise the skills of those in employment, to give prospective employees relevant skills and to facilitate lifelong learning. The National Training Fund will be managed by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and will be resourced through a levy on employers equivalent to 0.7% of PRSI (Pay-Related Social Insurance) contributions. The Fund will support a range of existing employment training initiatives including Apprenticeship, Traineeship, company-specific training programmes, sectoral training programmes and employment-related training courses for the unemployed. It is envisaged that the Fund will also support new initiatives in the area of lifelong learning. The programmes financed by the National Training Fund will be delivered by a range of organisations, including FAS, Enterprise Ireland and the enterprise-led body, Skillnets.

4.7 Labour market participation- the challenge

The NESF in its Report, "Alleviating Labour Shortages" (November 2000) refers to the four challenges to employment policy- three of those related to participation by

- Unskilled workers (especially with low levels of education)
- Older workers
- Women

The fourth challenge relates to the right to work of people with disabilities.

The Government is committed both in its strategy contained in the White Paper “Learning for Life” (Department of Education and Science, 2000) and in the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (PPF), to market oriented training focused on employability and in promoting employment amongst the least skilled.

In relation to older workers, the NESF makes reference to the impact of the mandatory retirement age on participation in the labour market by older people with almost complete withdrawal from the market by this category of worker. Some Member States are moving towards labour market anti-discrimination measures on age grounds in response to labour shortages. Legislation in the US prohibits mandatory retirement requirements for almost all workers. The labour supply problems facing Ireland has focused on the potential for employment and employability amongst older workers and the early retired. In fact there is a substantial fall off in employment among those aged 55-64- employment rates for men and women in that category are approximately 20% lower than among those aged 45-54. The authoritative data also indicates that older workers are likely to remain unemployed for longer periods of time than their relatively younger counterparts and to ultimately withdraw from the labour market altogether.

Given the necessity to mobilise domestic labour supply, the NESF recommends that policies must urgently address both the prevention of long-term unemployed of older workers and the re-integration of older men and women into the labour market.

The particular obstacles facing women returners have been noted earlier. There is an increasing awareness among employers of the beneficial effects of family friendly policies and initiatives to encourage the retention of those who would otherwise retire due to family and other caring responsibilities. The PPF also contains a “Framework for the development of Family Friendly Policies at the level of the Enterprise” which promotes arrangements such as job-sharing, work-sharing, flexible working etc. The National Development Plan also provides for a “positive action programme” to be led by the Equality Authority on the development of employer family friendly projects and a promotional campaign to encourage the greater sharing of family responsibilities. Some £250 million has also been committed under the NDP to childcare supply measures over the period 2000-2006.

4.8 Disabilities

It is worth repeating the opening statement in the Report of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities (Report presented to Government, 1996):

“people with disabilities are the neglected citizens of Ireland, On the eve of the 21st Century, many of them suffer intolerable conditions because of outdated social and economic conditions and unthinking public attitudes. Changes have begun to come about, influenced by international recognition that disability is a social rather than a medical issue, but many of these changes have been piecemeal” .

Although the sectoral and occupational breakdown of employment for people with disabilities is not available nationally, it is a fact that they are concentrated in sectors of employment, such as sheltered workshops and in occupations where career mobility and advancement are greatly hindered. Segregation can also lead to lower levels of pay and poorer working conditions for such groups. According to the Commission’s Report, reliable statistics on the numbers of people with disabilities within the workforce are not available, nevertheless evidence suggests that the unemployment rate is significantly higher than in the labour market as a whole.

Surveys by organisations concerned with disabilities put the figure as high as 70% upwards and is exacerbated particularly for those who have left school with low level of qualifications.

The Commission called for, among other things, greater financial support to direct employment measures, including the creation of new jobs in personal services, worker co-operatives, the development of job-seeking skills, greater employment of people with disabilities by agencies funded to provide services to people with disabilities, greater formal assistance in self-employment schemes, disability awareness, access and equality training which have the potential for creating employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

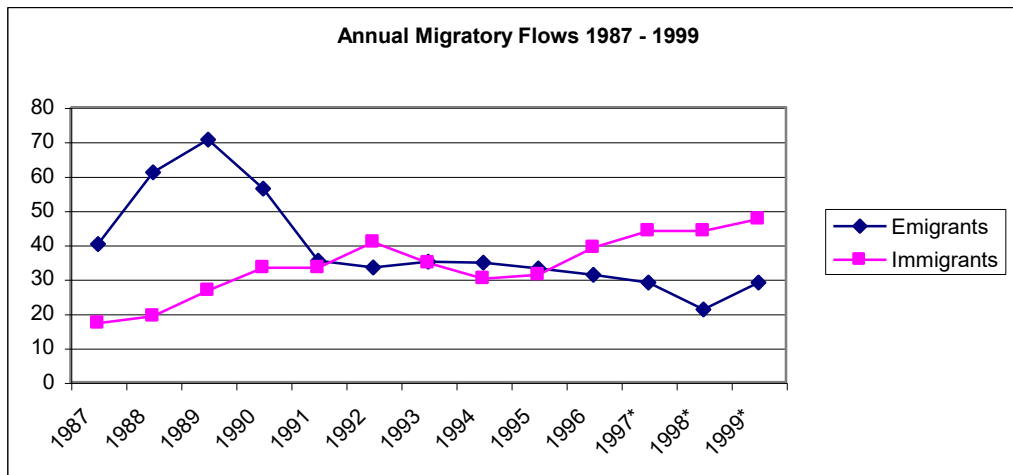
Since that Report was published, significant changes have occurred in the legislative framework dealing with equality and discrimination both in connection with the labour market and in the provision of services based on nine grounds including disability. The implementation of the Commission's recommendations are also ongoing. A range of measures are being taken to improve integrated labour market opportunities for people with disabilities. The integration of people with disabilities into the open labour market is a major objective of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment from both a social inclusion and labour supply perspective. Responsibility for training and employment of people with disabilities has recently transferred to FAS, the training and employment authority, from the National Rehabilitation Board (NRB), now defunct. According to the PPF, the new employment and training arrangements will have, as a priority, clear progression routes for people with disabilities from sheltered and supported employment to employment options in the open labour market. In addition, the social partners are committed under the PPF to stimulate awareness and promote the employment of people with disabilities in enterprises and to examine existing disincentives to taking up employment including consideration of employment status and rights.

It is important to note that participation under all actions and themes under the CIP must be "disability-proofed" including the participation by people with disabilities in all Development Partnerships, including physical access to relevant buildings, meeting places, means of transport etc. Similarly, the Managing Authority for the CIP and the Development Partnerships must ensure that any information material (publications, websites etc) are easily accessible and made user-friendly to people with disabilities.

4.9 The Labour Force, Migration Flows and integration issues

The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) in their Report, "**National Investment Priorities for the Period 2000-2006**", forecast that in the latter half of the next Decade, the decline in the growth of the labour force, coupled with continued growth in employment, will lead to substantial net immigration flows of between 5,000 and 15,000 per annum. The Table below graphically illustrates migratory flows over the period 1987 to 1999.

Annual Migratory Flows 1987 - 1999



The National Consultative Committee on Racism and inter-culturalism addressed a number of different dimensions to the needs of refugees and asylum seekers including the development of an overall approach to their integration. The Committee referred to the need to develop strategies that aim to build a more intercultural and inclusive society, for example, ensuring that the needs of refugees and asylum seekers are recognised and included in initiatives such as the National Anti Poverty Strategy and in Government/ Departmental customer service action plans as part of the Strategic Management Initiative.

The partial or de facto integration of asylum seekers in Ireland has been achieved by their dispersal throughout the country in local communities. In general, during their reception phase, asylum seekers are entitled to a range of public services. They are, however, with the exception of the category already referred to, excluded from employment. The Committee called for the development of initiatives at policy level by building a refugee dimension into mainstream policy and the development of specialised policy interventions and by addressing the needs of asylum seekers and refugees within a broader frame of the needs of all minority ethnic groups (including travellers) as well as specific initiatives. The need for cultural diversity and choice should be recognised as well as the incorporation of a gender and children dimension. Further research is also required on employment, training needs, self-employment potential and the monitoring and evaluation of specific initiatives.

Over the twelve- year period from 1987 the large scale net emigration flow has been dramatically reversed with levels of net **immigration** now averaging 20,000. A major trend reversal occurred in migration flows from about 1994 onwards. Over half of recent immigrants are Irish, with a further 30% from other EU Member States. According to Ireland's National Development Plan 2000-2006 the labour force grew by over 3% in the period 1994-1999. This rapid increase is attributable to favourable demographics, rising natural participation and net immigration. A major factor driving rapid expansion in labour growth has been the significant increase in labour participation by women.

Lower birth rates will depress the rising numbers of labour market entrants in future years. Demographic trend forecast and summary analysis is contained in **Appendix 4**. It is forecast that the labour force will grow at a reduced rate of 2% over the period of the NDP. Natural participation rates will be required to be augmented by continued immigration. In order to address specific skills shortages in the labour market, a more focused and balanced approach to immigration is being developed to meet selected skills needs. The Government decided in March 2000 to introduce a working visa system in respect of persons in selected occupational categories.

4.10 Government Programme commitments on refugees

The Programme for Prosperity and Fairness commits the Government to amend the Refugee Act, 1996 to include the appointments of a Refugee Applications Commissioner and Chairperson of the Refugee Appeals Tribunal, as well as the establishment of a Refugee Advisory Board. The Government is also committed to a target of reducing processing time for applications to a period of six months. A comprehensive strategy for the integration of refugees, including employment and training issues is being developed. The Programme also commits action with regard to the following:

- *Adequate training for public sector workers involved in the provision of services to those from culturally diverse backgrounds*
- *Representation of refugee interest groups, Government Departments on the statutory refugee Advisory Board which advises the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law reform on all aspects of asylum policy*
- *The role and funding of NGOs and community organisations to be reviewed and funding available to be allocated in a cohesive and co-ordinated manner having regard to their role in supporting asylum seekers and promoting a tolerant inclusive society*

The Refugee Act, 1996, as amended by the section 11 of the Immigration Act, 1999, is the principal statutory instrument defining the entitlements of refugees. The rights granted under the Act mirror those set out in the UN Convention related to the status of Refugees. Section 3 provides among other things, that refugees be entitled to seek and to enter employment, to carry on any business, trade or profession and to have access to education and training in the State as an Irish citizen. Other relevant legislation includes the Employment Equality Act, 1998 and the Equal status Bill which prohibit discrimination on a number of grounds in both work and non-work environment.

The recent Report to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform by the inter-Departmental working group on the integration of refugees in Ireland ("Integration-A Two-way Process") reviewed the arrangements for integrating persons granted

refugee status or permission to remain in Ireland, including the appropriate institutional structures for the delivery of these services and made recommendations to the Minister in that regard.

In the Preface to the Report, the inter-Departmental group stated:

“The integration of third country nationals living in Europe on a long-term basis will be an ongoing task for the EU and its Member States. In Ireland, this requires us to look at how we do things and how we respond to people from different backgrounds and cultures. We must continuously monitor how we respond to changes in society.

This is particularly important in the case of refugees many of whom, it must be remembered, fled their homes in fear of persecution to seek the protection of this State. If they are to settle in Irish society, it is important that barriers or impediments to their integration are identified and removed. It is critical that Irish society accepts this and is involved in the process”.

In carrying out their work, the inter-Departmental working group received submissions from NGOs, the UNHCR, the Refugee Agency, the Eastern Health Board and the National Consultative Committee on Racism and inter-culturalism. The WG also drew on international experience, in particular the position paper prepared by the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE).

In relation to existing services available to facilitate the integration of refugees and other immigrants, the inter-Departmental working group concluded that although the evaluation of measures taken previously by the State has been limited to date, it concluded nevertheless that insufficient co-operation and fragmentation amongst service providers existed. The working group recognised and welcomed the various initiatives undertaken by NGOs and community groups to help refugees overcome barriers to integration into Irish society and to create awareness of their needs. The working group concluded that the goodwill and enthusiasm existing amongst the voluntary sector should be harnessed and given direction to achieve maximum benefit for refugees and society.

4.11 Practical Integration issues

Actions or measures in support of refugees (and asylum seekers – see separate section) under initiatives and Operational Programmes, including the present CIP, must have regard to the current state of the associated domestic legal framework. Practical issues facing these groups include:

- *lack of English language skills;*
- *gainful employment;*
- *vocational training;*
- *skills/qualifications recognition;*
- *education;*
- *accessing mainstream services (health services, accommodation etc.)*

These practical issues will only be met by addressing the essential needs to the same extent as Irish citizens, where appropriate. The inter-Departmental working group concluded that apart from addressing the issues referred to above, a clear

need exists for further research before comprehensive measures can be developed to counteract these difficulties.

The Government has agreed that the Report of the Working group should form the basis and the framework for integration policy in Ireland and that its recommendations should be implemented. In particular the main recommendations are as follows:

- *Identification of a single organisational structure for co-ordinating and implementing integration policy. The Government has recently established a Reception and Integration Agency to replace the Directorate for Asylum Support Services and to incorporate the Refugee Agency. the new Agency will have responsibility for the integration of all refugees, persons granted humanitarian leave to remain and asylum seekers.*
- *Raise public awareness. Following an evaluation by the National Consultative Committee on Racism and inter-Culturalism, the Government recently approved a comprehensive public awareness campaign over three years and commencing in 2001*
- *Make mainstream services more accessible. The report recommends the provision of support at the initial stages of integration, comprehensive information and interpretation services and training of service providers.*
- *Conduct research. the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform will be commissioning a research project (2001) with a view to the development of a comprehensive strategy or integration by maximising existing resources in the State and voluntary sector involving refugees themselves.*

4.12 European Refugee Fund (ERF)

Activities funded under EQUAL in connection with asylum seekers will be complementary to actions proposed under the ERF National Programme to be implemented by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Consultations have taken place between that Department and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in order to ensure a high level of consistency between asylum seeker actions under EQUAL and the ERF and to avoid duplication of precise measures. These contacts will be maintained throughout the ongoing roll-out of the CIP. It is proposed that EQUAL/ERF liaison officers be appointed from both Departments with the responsibility of keeping each other informed in relation to actions under both Programmes and associated matters. In addition, the nominated liaison officers will be represented on the EQUAL Monitoring Committee and on the relevant steering group for the ERF.

4.13 The position of asylum seekers - EU Overview

Council Regulation (EC) No.1260/1999 which lays down general provisions on the Structural Funds obliges Member States to take into account the social and vocational integration of asylum seekers in the framework of EQUAL. The joint Action of 26th April 1999 adopted by the Council on the basis of Article K3 of the Treaty recognised the desirability of assisting asylum seekers who face repatriation with education and training which might equip them with skills of benefit to them in their home country. Each Member State is required to propose a minimum level of action aimed at asylum seekers in line with the dimension of the problem.

4.14 Position of asylum seekers in Ireland

Asylum seekers per se are not entitled to work in Ireland with the following exceptions:

- Asylum seekers who, on 26th July 1999, had-
- *Made their application for asylum before that date;*
- *applications which were over 12 months old and had not been finally determined and,*
- *had been complying with their obligations as asylum seekers (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform requirements).*

The Government decided in December 1999 that such persons should not require work permits in order to work in Ireland. All other asylum seekers are prohibited from working while their cases are being determined. Government policy has determined that the right to work is not to be extended to asylum seekers other than those to whom it has been granted. Therefore, actions taken under EQUAL, such as training for employment must be consistent with that policy.

It is estimated that approximately 3500 asylum seekers have been granted the right to take up employment while their applications are being processed. No distinction is made between refugees and asylum seekers in relation to attendance at primary and post-primary school.

The majority of asylum seekers live in Dublin and in particular in the inner city, where emergency accommodation and affordable housing in the private rented sector had been available until recently where because of demands on the housing market, considerable pressure has been put on the availability of accommodation.

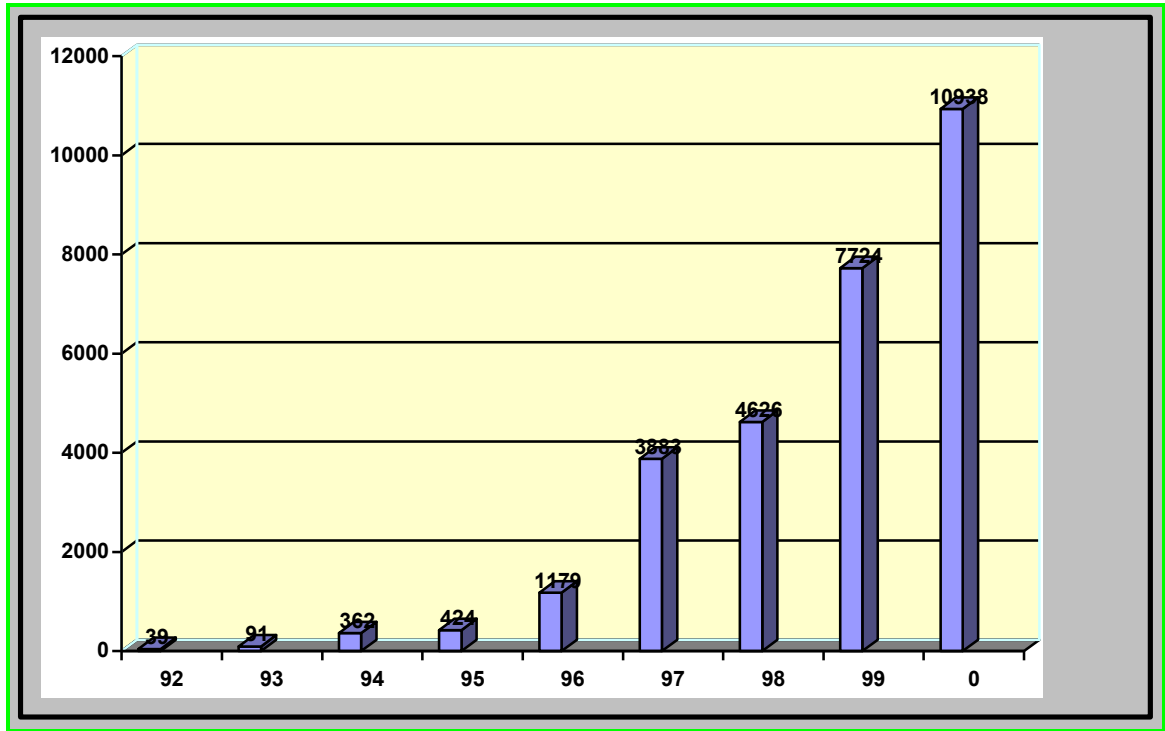
The Government announced in October 1999 that asylum seekers should be dispersed throughout the country and that their needs are to be met by direct provision, other than those who are employed or in training and awaiting placement.

Ireland's exceptional economic growth since the mid-90s (average GNP growth of 8% per annum 1994-1999) has made the country a very attractive location for returning immigrants and as a destination for asylum seekers and refugees wishing to live and work or study here. The following Table illustrates the enormous expansion in asylum seeker applications since 1992:

Asylum Seeker Applications

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
					6	7	8	(30/11)
No applications	39	91	362	424	117	388	462	6507
No applications withdrawn	3	52	222	220	550	136	803	285
No of applications resubmitted	0	0	0	0	11	53	31	7
No applications transferred	0	0	0	0	0	15	15	1

The following graph vividly illustrates the current situation over the period 1992-2000 inclusive



ASYLUM SEEKER APPLICATIONS 1992-2000 (Dept. Justice, Equality and Law Reform)

4.15 Recent developments

The Table above illustrates the huge growth in asylum seeker applications from just over 400 in 1995 to almost 11,000 on hands in 2000. The relatively huge increase in the numbers of asylum seekers has emphasised the inadequacies of the systems which are in place for dealing with their needs. The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform has recently approved the recruitment of 370 additional staff for asylum seeker case processing and appeals to deal with consequent repatriations with the possibility of the recruitment of more staff in the future subject to ongoing assessment of (i) the progress of recruitment, (ii) the scale of reduction of the backlog of applications and (iii) future trends in asylum applications. The additional resources will be used to achieve a number of strategic objectives, namely, to greatly increase processing capacity, including appeals, to deliver more speedy decisions in relation to applications for refugee status leading, in due course, to the completion to finality of the processing of all new asylum applications within six months including the elimination of the asylum applications currently on hands.

The Directorate for Asylum Support Services was established in November 1999 under the aegis of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to co-ordinate the resettlement of asylum seekers in full board accommodation in different parts of the country and to develop a National policy in relation to resettlement and direct provision.

The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform has established seven reception centres for asylum seekers, all located in Dublin. Asylum seekers are accommodated in these centres for a period of 1-2 weeks for the purposes of needs assessment, health screening, the provision of information and the processing of the

initial stages of their applications before being resettled in various parts of the country. At present there are sixty accommodation centres located in twenty Counties throughout Ireland.

4.16 FAS Asylum seekers Unit

The Training and Employment authority, FAS, has established an asylum seekers Unit as a result of the Governments decision to allow certain categories of asylum seekers the right to work while their application for asylum is being processed. This category of asylum seeker is normally referred to FAS by the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs. FAS currently handles approximately 3,350 asylum seekers of which, to date, 1000 have been placed in employment or are engaged on training courses. FAS is currently processing the remainder in order to establish their employment status (where no longer claiming social welfare) or awaiting transfer to the Unit or processing in FAS Regional Offices or asylum seekers who are awaiting a first interview.

The aim of the Unit is to provide a professional guidance and job placement service to asylum seekers that will match their skills to suitable employment. In providing this service each individual who participates is offered professional guidance interviews, skills assessment, jobs club- introduction to work in Ireland, job placement and an aftercare follow-up service. The jobs club is a short term programme that provides an introduction to the world of work in Ireland. It prepares participants for work by providing English language skills, introduction to computers and familiarisation with workplace practices and an introduction to Irish culture.

Job placement involves the placement of the asylum seeker for a short trial period with a company at no cost to the employer while the participant retains his/her social welfare entitlements. During this period employers are asked to provide a “buddy” within the company who will assist the asylum seeker to settle in to the workplace. On completion of the workplace Programme, FAS will encourage the company to offer an employment contract to the participant until his/her status in Ireland is finally determined. FAS has agreed to assist 2500 asylum seekers into employment and many local organisations and partnership groups are already working closely with the FAS Asylum Seekers Unit in that regard.

5. EQUAL CIP Priority Themes

The foregoing Chapters of the CIP have described the current situation with regard to discrimination and inequalities in particular for the disadvantaged and those groups which experience difficulties in accessing employment and remaining employed and identified the dominant issues of concern. The relevant issues have been recognised through the overall programming and consultation process. The horizontal thematic approach adopted by the European Commission, which underpins this Initiative, is indicative of the common basis for the different forms of discrimination and inequity, which exist globally. The CIP, in seeking to avoid rigidity in the thematic approach, will allow flexibility for cross-cutting between themes and adjustments as new issues arise during the lifetime of the Programme. In framing themes we have tried to avoid dead-weight/displacement in the context of mainstream ESF and labour market interventions.

In the light of the foregoing analyses and in order to optimise the scope for transnational co-operation at both Member State and Development Partnership level the CIP will operate primarily within the following selected thematic areas:

Employability (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.

Entrepreneurship (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 urban and rural areas.

Adaptability (Themes e and f)

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

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 (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

In addition to the above selected Themes, a separate measure will be aimed at **asylum seekers** consistent with Government policy.

The Fund will be proportioned as follows under each heading:

Employability.....	45%
Entrepreneurship.....	10%
Adaptability.....	20%
Equal opportunities.....	12%
Asylum Seekers.....	5%

The remaining 8% of the Fund will be dedicated to Technical Assistance Measures.

Theme (b) relating to combating racism and xenophobia in the labour market was not included because the Managing Authority believes it is inherently incorporated within Theme (a) and can be dealt with as a discrimination issue that does not necessarily require a separate response. Theme (d) relating to the social economy was not included because of the new mainstream social economy programme being operated through FAS (see outline below) and Theme (h) relating to reducing gender gaps and supporting job desegregation was not included on the basis of rational prioritisation. The issue of gender gaps/job desegregation is being examined in context of the National Employment Action Plan following specific recommendation emanating from the Joint Employment Report's assessment of the 1999 NEAP. The Department is confident that this matter can be dealt with through mainstream structures.

Social economy

Given that the Government has already established a social economy Programme, there is little scope within EQUAL to develop further aspects of the social economy. Therefore, the social economy theme per se does not feature as one of Ireland's chosen themes for EQUAL. The following is a brief outline of the social economy Programme in Ireland for information:

Following a Report by the Partnership 2000 (Programme for Government) Working Group, the Government decided to establish a new Social Economy Programme. The Social Economy Programme envisages supporting three types of enterprises

- *Community Business*
- *Social Enterprises where local demand is deficient*
- *Enterprises based on Public Service contracts*

Broadly the focus of the Programme is on economic activity providing employment opportunities and experience, whose objective is the economic and social development of a community or community of interest (e.g. travellers). In effect, the social economy model consists of a joint product- the provision of services to disadvantaged communities and the creation of employment opportunities and experience for individuals who have been distanced from the labour market.

The Programme is operated on a day-to-day basis by FAS, the Employment and Training Authority. When fully operational the current dedicated social economy Programme will provide for an annual investment of approximately £41 million. The Programme is funded primarily through a reallocation, on a phased basis, of a proportion of funding currently committed to Community Employment together with funding from the remodelling of FAS Community Enterprise Programme.

A national Monitoring Committee under the Chair of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment has been established in accordance with the Government decision to introduce a dedicated social economy Programme.

5.1 Consultation process

The Consultation process has formed an integral part in the preparation of the CIP and in determining priority Themes under EQUAL. The outcome of the consultation process has informed and fed into the choice of thematic priorities. The main aim of the consultation process was to elicit feedback and contributions to the CIP on an all-inclusive basis.

The consultation process was primarily based on written responses to the formal consultation documents that issued to the social partners during August. The consultation document was also available on the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment's website (www.entemp.ie). This documentation is reproduced at **Appendix 5**. The parties to the consultation process were as follows:

Irish Business and Employers Confederation	Léargas
Construction Industry Federation	FAS
Irish Congress of Trade Unions	Udaras na Gaeltachta
Small Firms Association	Enterprise Ireland
Chambers of Commerce of Ireland	Equality Authority
Irish Tourist Industry Confederation	Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed Irish
Exporters Association	Department of Agriculture and Food
Irish Farmers Association	Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands
Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association	Department of Education and Science
Macra na Feirme	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Irish Co-operative Organisation Society	Department of Environment and Local Government
National Youth Council of Ireland	Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
National Women's Council of Ireland	Department of Finance
Protestant Aid	Department of Foreign Affairs
St. Vincent de Paul	Department of Health and Children
Conference of Religious in Ireland	Department of Marine and Natural Resources
Voluntary and Community Sector Platform	Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs
Centres for the Unemployed	Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation
Work Research Co-operative	Department of Public Enterprise

A number of informal meetings were held with interested parties on request and other individuals and organisations made submissions on an ad hoc basis. Meetings were also held with colleagues in the Department of Higher Education, Further Education, Training and Employment (DHFETE), Northern Ireland, in order to explore and develop common areas for North/South co-operation under the Programme. The Special EU Programmes Body has also been consulted particularly in relation to the North/South dimension of EQUAL. The CIP has been developed to encapsulate as many views as possible within the very tight timeframe for submission of the CIP to the Commission and in accordance with Commission guidelines for the Programme.

It is intended to continue the consultative process with the social partners and other relevant bodies and organisations during the ongoing roll-out of the CIP. The initial consultation process elicited responses from the social partners, including Government Departments, statutory Agencies, Community and voluntary organisations and Human resource experts. Many of the organisations had previous experience with the Employment and/or the Adapt community Initiatives. The primary priorities identified were under the Employability and Adaptability pillars with social inclusion and equal opportunities measures featuring as key cross-cutting themes. The responses also indicated that the basic horizontal/integrated concept involving the Development Partnership and transnationality approach was understood.

5.2 Actions and Activities under EQUAL

The CIP does not intend to set out actions and activities under EQUAL in a prescriptive fashion- that, in our view, would be the antithesis of innovation. Nevertheless, as a guide for potential Development Partnerships, there are actions and activities which have been suggested through the consultation process and within the context of the previous analyses and general labour market policies as outlined. The following represents an indicative outline of possible areas of action and activities under EQUAL grouped together under the Four Pillars:

EMPLOYABILITY – Theme (a)

Activities or Areas of action that could be developed:

- Access to employment guidance and counselling services.
- Evolution of mainstream services which are sensitive to the needs of discriminated groups.
- Development of integrated interventions and supported progression outcomes for those most marginalized on the labour market.
- Local or sectoral approaches to identifying employment opportunities and preparing the target groups to avail of such opportunities.
- Cross-sectoral interventions to develop new ways to retain young people at risk within the school system and to underpin their progression from school to work
- Measures that seek to change the nature of the labour market to one that recognises and accommodates diversity.
- Reviewing and enhancing recruitment and selection criteria
- Measures to develop an accommodating workplace ethos
- Targeted pre-labour market programmes that facilitate access to mainstream skills training
- Mainstream specific skills training that accommodates the needs of those that are facing barriers due to discrimination and realise outcomes in terms of access to employment

ENTREPRENEURSHIP – Theme (c)

Activities or Areas of action that could be developed:

- Enterprise development supports should be made available to support refugees and migrants who wish to set up their own businesses.
- Measures that support access to self employment and local and community access to finance initiatives for those that are labour market disadvantaged could be developed

- Mechanisms to promote equality of access to public self-employment programmes for categories currently under-represented on public programmes, including refugees and relevant asylum seekers
- Social partner involvement in developing mechanisms to support the establishment and development of enterprises including social type enterprises in disadvantaged urban and rural areas

ADAPTABILITY – Themes (e) and (f)

Activities or Areas of action that could be developed:

- Initiatives targeted at those in employment with low educational attainment
- These initiatives could include a confidence building component. The role of the employment service is key. The Local Employment Service offer in- work support to both the employee and employer after they have assisted someone in obtaining work. Services such as this, could be available to all who are labour market disadvantaged due to discrimination and inequality.
- Complementary accreditation systems, recognising prior learning, incorporating new forms of assessment and procedures for the recognition of qualifications attained outside the EU
- Company led proposals that extend and pilot work around the lifelong learning/work-based learning concept into smaller and medium sized companies
- Identification and development of further appropriate political and institutional arrangements that can promote and deliver partnership at organisational and enterprise level requiring structures, systems and resources with the capacity to do so
- support company led projects that implement integrated IT strategies including the development of relevant ICT systems requiring computer literacy training at all levels in the enterprise towards goal and/or context oriented innovations
- Initiatives to create more flexible workplaces.
- Research on the adaptability needs of older people
- Developing job descriptions
- Supports are needed to assist people who have experienced barriers in accessing employment to enable them to remain at work and to avail of training and career opportunities
- The development of diversity management strategies aimed at creating an inclusive workplace that values diversity
- In-work systems to promote greater mobility and opportunity amongst those in low quality, low paid or vulnerable employment.
- Innovative ways in which IT is made available to all. Using existing networks of representative organisations , or places where marginalised groups already access IT would be important in this regard.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN – Theme (g)

Activities or Areas of action that could be developed:

- To address the specific inequalities as outlined between women and men, specifically actions for facilitating the reconciliation of family and working life
- Innovative ways to address childcare and other care issues
- Opportunities for returning to work and new flexible ways of working for both sexes using ICTs and incorporating both employee and employer perspectives
- Awareness programmes for business on the promotion and benefits of family-friendly work policies

ASYLUM SEEKERS

Approaches to an asylum seeker measure(s) under the CIP

Actions providing support under the asylum seeker Theme will operate, in the first instance, within the current state of the law and procedures in existence in Ireland for the reception and assistance of asylum seekers having regard to the employment status or otherwise of the asylum seeker and those who remain eligible to work on obtaining refugee status.

The overall approach will adopt the view that the phase of reception for asylum seekers should be recognised as an integral part of the process for assisting asylum seekers. The actions will also seek to emphasise the need for an anti-racism and intercultural approach as a major principle in informing integration policy involving statutory and non-statutory agencies at local and national level. Ireland has only recently become an asylum seeker receiving country, although the State finds itself in the position where it is now in second place within the European Union in terms of asylum seeker applications received as a proportion of total population. There is, therefore, very good potential for transnational actions to be developed, in terms of the transfer of best practice and learning, with Member States such as France, United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden which have a much longer history in reception and integration policy.

Activities or Areas of Actions that could be developed (subject to status and current Government policy):

- The development and enhancement of the services provided by the Asylum Seekers Unit in FAS
- The provision of culturally appropriate provision in active labour market policies, specifically with regard to language and specific models of work practice
- The provision of follow-up services for those placed in employment and/or training
- The harnessing and development of entrepreneurial and other skills and competencies to assist towards integration and/or transition to employment whether on the domestic labour where relevant market or elsewhere
- Further research into addressing gaps or barriers in mainstream provision
- The provision of mechanisms for streamlining access to vocational or further education

6. Other Key Relevant National Policy Areas

6.1 Partnership Model for Equal

One of the major principles underpinning the operation of the EQUAL Community Initiative Programme (CIP) is one of partnership and co-operation at national and transnational levels. Domestically, Ireland has a very sophisticated model of social partnership which cascades down through the socio-economic fabric of Irish society and is encapsulated at political level through the various national partnership agreements such as the Programme for Competitiveness (1994-1996), the Partnership 2000 for Inclusion, Employment and Competitiveness (1997-2000) and the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (2000-2002). Most commentators have agreed that the partnership approach has significantly contributed to Ireland's economic success, extraordinary employment growth, wage restraint and competitiveness. Co-operation and partnership will be the cornerstones that support the other elements of the Initiative and will be critical to maximising national policy impact and the identification of best practice and innovation.

Under Framework 1 of the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (Living standards and workplace environment) the social partners commit themselves to the following key objectives:

- *To enhance organisational capability to contribute to competitive advantage*
- *To improve the environment for work in tandem with the achievement of production and service excellence*
- *To build on existing workplace relationships through the establishment or deepening of the partnership process at enterprise level*

The PPF refers to results of research carried out over the past few years together with initiatives and Programmes undertaken during the previous partnership agreement (Partnership 2000) which confirms the progress that has been made in working towards improved employee relationships. There is a growing volume of partnership activities at enterprise level but greater progress is desirable on a wider scale across the economy in order to increase employee involvement, productivity and employment. Employers' organisations and Unions have agreed to build on the existing valuable experience gained through the National Centre for Partnership, the Union-Employer partnership ADAPT Community Initiative projects and to disseminate other similar work. In the context of the PPF, the following topics are relevant in this area:

- *competitiveness, adaptability, flexibility and innovation in the enterprise*
- *better systems of work organisation*
- *training and personal development which is linked to lifelong learning*
- *measures to promote equality of opportunity and family friendly working arrangements*
- *problem solving and conflict avoidance*
- *occupational safety, health and welfare issues*
- *information and consultation*
- *time off, facilities and training for staff representatives*
- *forms of financial involvement*

Most of these topics could also appropriately be dealt with through activities under EQUAL.

The highly developed partnership model in Ireland has also made a significant contribution to the development of a broad consensus amongst the social partners

and major commentators, such as the NESC, NESF and the ESRI, on key public policy priorities and issues in the human resources and labour market development arena. These have been identified by the ESF Evaluation Unit in their Report “Challenges for Human Resource Development 2000-2006” as follows:

- *a need to achieve social inclusion while the economy and labour market permits;*
- *a need to meet the skill needs of the economy at all levels;*
- *a need to develop and implement a policy of lifelong learning with a particular emphasis on addressing literacy needs as well as skills deficits of people in low paid employment;*
- *a need to actively promote equal opportunities including flexible work practices, childcare and desegregation of training and employment;*
- *a need to shift the focus more towards “soft supports”, such as mentoring, training and flanking measures such as counselling and literacy tuition;*
- *a need to strategically develop the social economy.*

The Programme for Prosperity and Fairness agrees **“to create a society in which access to the labour market is open to all”** and agrees to the objective of mobilising labour supply by tapping into potential pools of labour and to enhance opportunities for women and other disadvantaged groups.

As a result of Ireland’s economic prosperity there are more resources available, which can allow for a wider range of policy choices. These choices have the capacity to create a full employment society, one that allows all people to participate equally. However, to address the existing inequalities a concentrated and focused exercise is needed where an identification of the specific barriers remaining are tackled.

6.2 Educational attainment

ESRI research has shown that, on average, in the first half of the 1990s over 20% of the labour force had reached only a primary level of education and just over 20% had completed third level education. By the years 2006-2010, more than 90% of the labour force will have reached Junior Certificate level or better and over 70% will have achieved at least a Leaving Certificate level with over one third achieving third level education. The assessment of the NEAP 1999 highlighted the relatively poor national levels of adult literacy as a barrier to return to work. The assessment also referred to the need for a greater emphasis on increasing the participation of the older long-term unemployed and the lower skilled in suitable mainstream education and training programmes and in strengthening employment opportunities in new growth sectors through suitable life-long learning initiatives and improvements in the overall “enterprise environment”.

The following Table shows the educational attainment of the labour force (April 1999):

Educational Level	Men		Women		All	
	At Work	Unemployed	At Work	Unemployed	At Work	Unemployed
Primary	16.4%	38.5%	9.3%	20.1%	13.5%	31.4%
Lower Secondary	22.8%	30.0%	16.2%	30.2%	20.1%	30.1%
Upper Secondary	27.0%	17.5%	31.2%	25.9%	28.7%	20.8%
Further Education	11.2%	6.6%	13.7%	11.0%	12.2%	8.2%
Third Level Non Degree	6.7%	2.5%	10.7%	6.7%	8.3%	4.1%
Degree or above	13.9%	3.6%	16.8%	4.5%	15.1%	3.8%
Other	1.2%	0.7%	1.4%	1.1%	1.3%	0.8%
Not Stated	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.3%	0.8%	0.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Absolute Numbers	920.1	59.3	637.3	37.4	1557.5	96.7

Source: Quarterly National Household Survey Q.2, 1999 (Special Tabulation)

The Table illustrates the following significant findings:

Employed:

- The proportion of women employed who had attained a degree or higher at 16.8% is higher than for men at 13.9%
- A higher proportion of men in employment have an educational attainment level below Upper Secondary (40%), compared to women (25%).

Unemployed:

- Both unemployed men and women are more likely to have a lower educational attainment level than those employed - 68.5% of unemployed men and 50.3% of unemployed women had received less than upper secondary education.

6.3 Information Society

The European Commission presented its contribution to the eEurope Action Plan at the Feira Summit on 19/20 June, 2000. It sets out a strategy to address key barriers to the uptake of the internet in Europe and ensure that the conditions are set for a decisive move towards the new economy. It proposes that Member States and the Commission bind themselves to achieving the following three key objectives quickly:

- A cheaper, faster, more secure internet
- Investing in people's skills and access
- Stimulating use of the Internet

The eEurope Initiative proposes three primary cross-cutting objectives:

- Bringing every citizen, home, school, business and administration on-line
- Creating a digitally literate and entrepreneurial Europe
- Ensuring a socially inclusive Information society

The Government plans to accelerate Ireland's transition to an Information Society with a view to increasing economic competitiveness, employment, social inclusion and participation. The PPF commits Government to increase IT access to all by providing a phased roll-out community-based access to the Information Society with particular regard to the Partnership areas and the recommendations arising from the Information Society Commission's examination of *IT Access for all*. Resources will also be dedicated further develop the schools *IT 2000 Programme* and related initiatives with the objective of ensuring that all pupils have access to ICT facilities in keeping with their educational needs. The Government is also committed to developing Ireland as a "telework-friendly" location. Telework options are to be introduced into mainstream public service employment and, in addition, all publicly funded organisations will develop a teleworking policy for implementation by 2002.

In parallel with the Employment and Human Resources development Operational Programme, the NEAP points to increased ongoing investment to provide a phased roll-out of community-based access in the Information Society context. This relates particularly to the Partnership Areas and to the recommendations arising from the Information Society Commission's examination of *IT Access for All* referred to above. Government is actively pushing for low-cost Internet access for Irish businesses and consumers alike in order to dramatically increase Internet usage levels.

6.4 Poverty-proofing

The National Anti-poverty Strategy (NAPS) establishes a direct link between low levels of educational attainment and unemployment, particularly long-term unemployment. Nearly three quarters of long-term unemployed have no, or low, levels of educational attainment. Only 17.3% of those unemployed for more than one year have attained a Leaving Certificate. Despite the economic or perhaps as a direct result of increased prosperity early school leaving remains a problem. The NEAP proposes an early school leaving strategy to include a range of actions at second level including the establishment of a National Educational Welfare Service and the implementation of the integrated plan to tackle educational disadvantage (Employment Guidelines 5 to 8).

The aims and objectives of the CIP needs to be complementary and supportive of the NAPS and at Programme Complement stage each priority action will require to be poverty-proofed.

6.5 Rural development

Ireland is still predominantly a rural country, with 42% of the population living in towns and villages below 1,500 in population or in the countryside. However, between 1971 and 1996, the rural population increased by 7% while the urban population grew by 36%. A wide-ranging strategy on rural development was set out in the 1999 White Paper on Rural Development. This emphasises, amongst other things, the importance of human resources development to the promotion of a sustainable rural population and to the reversal of the rural "brain-drain". All relevant elements of National Development Plan expenditure are expected to support public strategy in this field. Furthermore, measures in the Employment and Human Resources Development Operational Programme provide supports for training in the agriculture, food, forestry and seafood sectors as well as Gaeltacht industry.

The new LEADER+ Community Initiative contains a major emphasis on innovative or pilot type rural development and will continue with a bottom-up approach with area-

based, local action groups implementing local development plans. Given the Governments commitments in relation to social inclusion in the context of rural development contained in the white paper, the potential for complementarity between EQUAL and Leader+ is significant. In addition the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural development will be represented on the EQUAL Monitoring Committee.

As in the case of poverty-proofing above, each relevant priority action will be "rural-proofed" at the programming complement stage.

6.6 Equality

The Employment Equality Act, 1998 prohibits discrimination in relation to employment and training and mandates the Equality Authority established under the Act to combat such discrimination on nine grounds:

- Gender*
- Marital status*
- Family status*
- Disability*
- Sexual orientation*
- Age*
- Religion*
- Race*
- Membership of the travelling community*
- And, overall, to promote equality of opportunity*

The Structural fund Regulation provides that the Fund's operations should assist in eliminating inequalities and to promote equality between women and men. The European Employment Strategy also contains a guideline requiring Member States to work towards a labour market open to all.

In the current tightening labour market situation there is a drive towards expanding labour supply and tapping into all potential labour pools and current inactive sources of employment. This necessitates identifying and addressing discriminatory practices in connection with the ability of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to partake fully in the labour market.

The government is committed in the PPF to mainstream gender equality issues across all Operational Programmes of the National Development Plan. This will include gender impact assessment and the development of indicators to promote equal opportunities between women and men in respect of all OPs and measures, including a mandatory requirement to include equal opportunities among the project selection criteria for all measures.

To assist in the achievement of these objectives under EQUAL, the Equal Opportunities Promotion and Monitoring unit established within the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and part-funded through the ESF, will provide advice and assistance on meeting the gender mainstreaming requirements. Under the HRD OP, the ESF will also provide co-funding to an Equality Authority study Programme into the extent of and the need for action in support of groups at risk of exclusion or discrimination in society.

As indicated previously, the Equality Authority will also, under the CIP for EQUAL, support the implementation of a mainstreaming strategy, incorporating a North/South dimension, under Action 3 of the Commission Guidelines for EQUAL.

6.7 Territorial Employment Pacts

The **Territorial Employment Pacts** are EU Initiatives aimed at reducing employment in the areas in which they currently operate. A total of 89 pacts exist EU-wide. For Northern Ireland, the District Council of Newry and Mourne was selected and in the Republic the areas selected were Dublin City, Limerick, Westmeath and Drogheda/Dundalk. The new ESF Regulation (1260/1999) provides a strong role for activities in the area of local development, in particular Article 2.2: *“Within the policy fields set out in paragraph 1 the Fund shall take account of support for local initiatives concerning employment, in particular initiatives to support local employment and Territorial Employment Pacts”*.

Quite clearly, the learning and development of the existing Territorial Employment Pacts will inform activities under EQUAL, in particular the activation of “bottom-up” local initiatives and the cementing of local and territorial (geographical) partnerships and the creation of a climate of co-operation. The Pacts must also adhere to actions within the scope of the four pillars of the European Employment Strategy.

In their interim evaluation of the Territorial Employment Pacts, the Consultants (Fitzpatrick's and Mentor) concluded that each TEP considers the assumption of a strategically focused role in research and development in the local economy. In this context, the Consultants have suggested that the TEPs could, amongst other things, gather data on, for example, relevant EU Programmes and disseminate data to local potential participants; design and implement a research programme aimed at gathering local economic data which would inform initiatives aimed at addressing issues of job supply and demand at local level.

These co-ordinating-type activities could feed into development partnership actions under EQUAL and inform the mainstreaming strategy at local and national level.

6.8 Complementarity in local service delivery

The CIP provides that EQUAL should provide added value and be complementary to, in particular, the NEAP and employment and human resources development activities delivered under the Community Support Framework, and provide for close complementarities with other Community Initiatives, including LEADER+ and the Territorial Employment Pacts. In that regard, the DPs should engage in actions and activities for which funding is not already provided for under the CSF in order to maximise the efficient allocation of public resources and to avoid duplication.

The establishment, by Government, of County and City Development Boards, aims to ensure the cohesion, from a County perspective, of the various local development initiatives being delivered by public authorities and by the community and voluntary sectors. Their role is essentially to minimise and avoid overlap in meeting community needs. Accordingly, each selected DP will be required to contact the relevant County or City Development Board with a view to informing the Board(s) of its selection for ESF funding under EQUAL and other details of its proposed activities and membership. In addition, where groups seek to deliver EQUAL in addition to LEADER+, the Area-Based Rural Development Initiative, or any other locally based measures under the Regional Operation Programmes within the CSF (the Regional Programme for the Border, Midland & Western region (Objective 1), and the Regional Programme for the Southern & Eastern region (Objective 1 in transition)), they will be required to put in place appropriate monitoring and control systems in order to avoid overlap. Furthermore, a separate administration will be required for activities carried out under each of the separate Programmes.

7. SYNTHESIS OF RELEVANT LESSONS FROM EMPLOYMENT AND ADAPT

7.1 Overview of EMPLOYMENT and ADAPT

The rationale which drives the implementation and roll-out of the Community Initiative Programmes is the ability to learn from experiences gained in their operation – both successes and failures. The experiences gained through the previous EMPLOYMENT and ADAPT Initiatives have been recently evaluated by Fitzpatrick's Associates in Ireland. These evaluations together with the parallel European-wide evaluations (NEI/FHVR and PLS) have directly informed the objectives and operations of EQUAL particularly as regards:

- Innovative actions
- Linkages to the NEAP and the EES
- Partnership
- Empowerment
- Thematic approach
- Mainstreaming/Dissemination

The evaluations identified and assessed the manner in which the fundamental criteria underpinning EMPLOYMENT and ADAPT were understood, defined and operationalised in the implementation of the Programmes in Ireland. The evaluations have also fed into the EU-wide evaluation based on frameworks for national evaluators prepared by PLS Consult. The research approach comprised five main elements: desk-based research, consultation with the four TSS, the Co-ordinating structure for EMPLOYMENT and National Co-ordinators, consultation with national policyholders, focus groups with project promoters and individual project case studies. The Consultants were also requested to provide, on the basis of their findings, recommendations for the implementation of the EQUAL Community Initiative.

7.2 Primary lessons/recommendations addressed in the CIP

The Consultants concluded that, although the previous Community Initiatives raised awareness levels of target groups and built capacities in community/voluntary groups and individuals, their impact on national policy was less pronounced. While the Initiatives had generated considerable learning "on the ground", there were factors which inhibited the transfer of innovative models to mainstream policy and systems. Insofar as **EMPLOYMENT** is concerned, the principal recommendations are as follows:

Transnationality:

- Closer involvement of TSS in cementing transnational partners utilising an EU-wide database
- Extension of the Project development Phase and adequate resources provided
- Transnational mentoring by experienced project promoters
- Transnational exchange of partners
- Participation by small organisations

Innovation:

- A need for guidelines on appropriate level of assistance to be provided to project promoters in preparation of applications

Sources of payment delays to be determined and eliminated or provision of interim payments
Ensure that grassroots organisations as a source of innovation are not excluded – guidelines may be needed to protect smaller organisations from being “swamped”.

Mainstreaming:

Extend, if possible, the TSS contracts until end 2000 to continue dissemination activities linked to specific workplans
Fewer projects should be approved under EQUAL whilst ensuring “bottom-up” approach
Should be stronger “top-down” approach to project selection combined with an open category to prevent “colonisation” by the mainstream
Agreement of policy areas should require a commitment by relevant policymakers to a formal assessment of potential value of learning arising
Thematic groups should be operationalised early in the Initiative
Centrally appointed evaluators will identify project learning and place it in relevant policy context
The mainstreaming forum should be continued but convened from the start of EQUAL
Commitments at senior level within mainstream organisations are necessary to follow the learning through into their organisations
A small EQUAL policy innovation unit should be established charged with identifying and assessing innovative approaches to labour market interventions arising from EQUAL

The additional recommendations insofar as ADAPT is concerned primarily included the following:

- Further innovation in helping workers to adapt to change and in helping companies, particularly SMEs, to adapt to change and ensuring that training systems support workers’ and firms’ real needs
- Direct linkages to Adapt issues in the NEAP from a mainstreaming perspective
- The need for a process to allow project outcomes in one Member State to inform companies, social partners and policymakers in the other Member States.

Innovation

Many of the above recommendations are also echoed in the final EU-wide evaluations. Quite clearly the evaluations point towards a more comprehensive and complex approach to **innovation** where different actors are involved and where process, goal and context-oriented innovation are addressed in parallel.

For the EQUAL selection phase a more in-depth analysis of the innovative content will be required. The EU-wide evaluations suggest that this might be done by involving independent experts and potential users in the selection process. Ideally, all Development Partnerships should have the optimum structure and components such that the best available expertise and other resources are brought to bear on addressing the problems identified by EQUAL and finding innovative solutions to these. The scope for community based organisations to innovate is good because of their closeness to the target groups and the provision of client-sensitive forms of delivery and the design and implementation of approaches based on empowerment and participation. Many small organisations are already repositories of good practice and innovation gleaned within the context of the Employment Community Initiative in particular. The provision of qualitative data on innovation to be supplied by the Development Partnerships will assist in focusing on the innovative process.

Transnationality and the search for partners will also be assisted by the active involvement of national authorities through co-operation at Member State level and input into the European database established for this purpose. The most important framework conditions for successful transnational partnerships at DP level are as follows:

- Ex-ante strategy: the partners know each other in advance
- The partners remain the same during the selection rounds
- Complementarity
- Experience of transnational co-operation
- Common timetable
- Clear division of responsibilities

Mainstreaming will involve the active participation of policymakers from the beginning in the mainstreaming strategy (described at Chapter 10) in order to integrate innovative project results into policy formation. The achievement of continuity based on the lessons learned from the EMPLOYMENT and ADAPT Initiatives and addressing issues beyond purely labour market perspectives where they interact with employment will be a feature of the present CIP. The EQUAL Guidelines very clearly point towards building on the lessons drawn from those Initiatives. These are discussed briefly below in the context of the final evaluation (1999/2000) of EMPLOYMENT and ADAPT carried out by Fitzpatrick's Economic Consultants. The final evaluations of Employment and Adapt initiatives were completed between the end of 1999 and the first quarter of 2000. These evaluations also coincided with the final European-wide evaluations carried out by NEI B.V and FHVR on behalf of the Commission and submitted in March 2000. In relation to the Irish evaluations carried out by Fitzpatrick's, the Consultants made a broad range of recommendations based on their assessment of the operation of the Initiatives in Ireland 1995-1999. The report measured performance against the prime Initiative criteria of transnationality, innovation and mainstreaming as well as providing commentary on the overall management effectiveness of the implementation of the Initiatives in Ireland. The lessons learned and the recommendations drawn from both evaluations provide a valuable launch pad from which to devise and implement the EQUAL strategy. A summary of Fitzpatrick's conclusions as far as **Employment** is concerned is contained in the following Table :

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Conclusion</u>
Overall initiative	has achieved its stated objective. However, national policy and practice could have gained more if better mainstreaming structures had been in place.
Transnationality	mainly at low level of sophistication, i.e. exchange of information between projects. Sophistication increased in Round 2. Generated wider benefits for projects, incl. for participants.
Innovation	Most common innovation involved new or improved pathways for the target groups into the mainstream labour force. No shortage of innovative projects as raw material for mainstreaming.
Mainstreaming	Widespread at project and local/regional practice level. more difficult at national level due to project timeframes, complexity of policy context, culture of mainstream agencies and a lack of resources. However, it improved significantly over time.
Management effectiveness overall	Overall system worked well. Use of support structures and the CSEI was innovative and effective.
Transnationality	Good support from NSSs within budgetary and time constraints. System of finding partners, while improved in Round 2, still had problems.
Innovation	management system was supportive. Some ambiguity about monitoring/support roles of NSSs. payment delays caused real problems for small projects.
Mainstreaming	Learning process for all parts of structure. NSSs and CSEI did well although, in hindsight, thematic groups

and publications should have started earlier. Monitoring Committee not used for mainstreaming - the Mainstreaming Forum should have started earlier. Low interaction by mainstreaming Departments/agencies.

In the case of the **Adapt** initiative, the Consultants found that, in general, the Adapt projects worked well “on the ground” and the Initiative was well managed. However, transnational partnership remained at a low level of depth and were not core to project activity. The Consultants indicated that the full impact of Adapt to influence policy on human resource development was not fully realised which arose from an underestimation of the challenge involved in the mainstreaming task and the lack of clear designation of responsibility for mainstreaming work.

A further synthesis of the strategic lessons learned from Employment and Adapt of relevance to the thematic priorities under EQUAL follows:

7.3 Adapt: Work based learning in a Life Long Learning Context

The priority pillars and themes or measures of Equal will benefit from the strategic lessons of Adapt in virtually all areas. For the purpose of this discussion, they are all dealt with under Adaptability, but they also impact significantly on the employability and entrepreneurship pillars.

A number of projects in the Adapt Initiative focused on the learning needs of employees in companies who have limited formal qualifications but a wide range of on-the-job learning experience. It was recognised that more often than not the education and training response for these employees focused on the narrow function to be carried out, without much importance being attached to the employees need to know about the broader business environment in which he or she operates. Experienced older workers developed practical and innovative learning tools that facilitate the development and continuous use of life long learning skills. The learning skills acquired by participants on these projects enable them to continuously adapt to workplace change.

The Adapt Thematic Impact project – EQUATE studied the results of twenty-six projects that looked at how workers furthered their education while working full-time. Research included flexible paths to qualification, flexibility in time, place and delivery. Taking into account skills acquired in conventional educational/training setting and those acquired in the workplace, comparisons were made between systems of formal recognition of the learner worker.

Many of the successful pilot projects applying to life-long learning have taken place in larger companies. There is a need to support life-long learning in SMEs that have less specialised resources. The implication of the concept for in-company training, the training function, and trainers needs to be further explored. Equally the implications of the life-long learning concept for those in work who have little or no formal qualifications and/or low literacy levels needs to be further explored.

7.4 Social Partnership at the Enterprise Level

Adapt supported a number of projects that piloted and evaluated the implementation of Social Partnership at organisational and enterprise levels. An agreed definition and guidelines for good practice were published; a suite of seven diagnostics /audits have been designed to benchmark the current status of partnership in organisations and training materials were designed and piloted.

Under EQUAL the challenge may be to identify and develop further appropriate political and institutional arrangements that can promote and deliver these tools at enterprise level. This requires structures, systems and resources with the capacity to do so.

7.5 New Areas of Employment/New Job Profiles

Between 1998 and 2000 Adapt supported practical projects that profiled, trained and accredited new jobs in developing employment areas such as computer localisation, ICT cable installation and teleworking. Given the ever increasing pace and rate of change in the workplace and the supply and demand within the labour market, the need to identify, profile and develop appropriate training/ education responses and accreditation for these new jobs continues to exist.

There is also evidence from companies in Adapt that the impact of change on their external (the market place) and internal (impact of information new technology and new forms of work organisation) environments is resulting in changes in established job profiles and function boundaries.

7.6 Change Management in Vulnerable SMEs

A range of company led change management programmes were successfully implemented in indigenous SMEs in threatened traditional sectors under the Adapt Initiative. A key factor in the successful management of change in these cases was giving the resources and responsibility for the change management project/programme to an experienced manager within the company. They in turn were able to use and manage the appropriate external specialist resources and/or education and training provider system to support the change management programme. SME led projects listed staff training needs arising from the impact of information technology as the main challenge facing them. Companies were enabled, through the projects, to access and employ, at the appropriate level, an experienced independent resource to tackle this broader business problem in a more strategic manner.

Adapt projects also addressed the impact of information technology on SMEs and larger companies with older traditional workforces. Specifically, projects addressed the challenges of developing the required level of computer literacy within this target population. A wide range of programme content to develop and build computer literacy have been successfully developed, piloted, implemented, and evaluated. These innovative projects have taken place in a wide variety of companies and work climates across a number sectors.

7.7 Managing Diversity

Managing diversity means enabling every member of the workforce to perform to his or her potential. A significant innovative project in managing diversity was designed, piloted and evaluated under the Adapt Initiative by An Post. The aim of this project was to gain competitive advantage through diversity management. They researched diversity management and they developed a competency framework and development programme for senior managers, all using maximum collaboration within their consortia. Their consortia included representatives of An Post's suppliers, customers and other influential bodies in their business environment in what was essentially a development partnership. This project followed on from a first phase Adapt project that trained a core group of employees at middle management

level to become skilled implementers of equality actions with a view to further development of an 'equality culture' in the organisation.

7.8 Strategic lessons from Employment

Since 1995, EMPLOYMENT in Ireland has supported over 250 organisations to pilot innovative actions under three measures: **employment creation, systems development and the delivery of training**. These organisations were drawn from all sectors, including the statutory and private sectors, social partner organisations, the educational and training sectors, and the community and voluntary sector. The result of the activities supported by EMPLOYMENT has been a substantial amount of learning with regard to effective approaches to combating inequality and disadvantage on the labour market. That is reflected in the fact that almost 200 of the supported projects were recommended by the EMPLOYMENT Mainstreaming Forum to various government Departments as meriting particular attention in the context of mainstreaming the policy lessons.

In consequence of the success of EMPLOYMENT, much learning has been generated that is relevant to the design and implementation of EQUAL. That learning pertains to two broad areas:

- learning generated by EMPLOYMENT is relevant to the specific issues and concerns addressed in the selected themes for EQUAL
- learning generated by EMPLOYMENT is relevant to developing complementarities between EQUAL as an instrument of innovation and the concerns, objectives and approaches of mainstream policy.

7.9 Relevant areas under the Four pillars

Within each of the Priority areas the following is relevant:

Employability

Given the concerns of EMPLOYMENT, there was a very substantial focus on problems and solutions that are relevant to this Priority theme. The following outlines the main learning from the relevant projects:

- Interventions based on a precise specification of the needs and circumstances of the target groups and the tailoring of actions to address those needs and circumstances are most effective in enabling people experiencing exclusion to participate in labour market programmes.
- Multifaceted / integrated approaches that include educational / training provision, work experience, flanking measures (personal supports, guidance) and additional supports such as childcare, transport etc are necessary to address the wide ranging needs of the excluded,
- Cross-sectoral approaches combining as appropriate the different models, philosophies and methodologies of the statutory, educational, community and youth sectors have been shown to be effective in developing comprehensive approaches and pathway approaches, especially for women and young people.
- Community based mechanisms for developing new forms of outreach and activation and providing ancillary supports are required to reach the 'hard to reach' and to support their participation in programmes including mainstream programmes.

- Programmes providing high quality and accredited training with career counselling, linked to identified employment opportunities in growth sectors, including high-tech sectors have been shown to be effective in moving those locked out of the labour market into quality employment.
- Interventions incorporating the deployment of trained and specially designated personnel with special expertise in addressing the needs of the target groups are most effective in addressing the ongoing needs of these groups and in supporting their participation and progression.

Entrepreneurship

Since 1996, over 60 EMPLOYMENT projects were supported under the measure for employment creation. These demonstrated innovative and client centred ways of promoting self-employment and enterprise creation, including social enterprises. Key characteristics are a package of measures and provisions, forming a continuum from outreach to business start-up fine tuned to the specific circumstances of beneficiaries and the local market context.

The key learning is presented below:

- Social enterprise models, incorporating the identification of market need / opportunity, developing the enterprise and providing training and other supports have been shown to be effective in enabling the target group to harness the identified market opportunities and to generate employment.
- Self employment supports have been piloted, based on a client-focused, hand-holding approach designed to enable clients to explore the option of self-employment and to understand the implications of this form of economic activity and negotiate the supports in place within mainstream policy. Specific inputs include raising awareness, providing training, mentoring, brokerage and other supports necessary. These types of supports have been demonstrated as improving the interface between public policy in the area of self-employment and the specific target groups catered for by EMPLOYMENT.
- Integrated localised approaches promoting co-ordination across relevant agencies such as Area Based Partnership Companies, FAS, LES, CEB and community based providers of enterprise training and micro-finance have proven effective in delivering a more cohesive, client friendly and appropriate service in the area of self-employment and enterprise development.

Adaptability

The promotion of lifelong learning has been a feature of EMPLOYMENT projects generally, while inclusive work practices have been prevalent within Horizon.

Key learning includes:

- Multi-sectoral approaches, incorporating education and training sectors, public providers and community organisations have demonstrated integrated and comprehensive approaches to promoting life-long learning, new methods of developing progression routes and integrated pathway approaches that underpin progression within and across educational sectors.
- New methods of teaching, combined with new forms of assessment and of accreditation have been shown to play a key role in furthering the educational and training careers of individuals and in promoting more equitable forms of lifelong learning.

- EMPLOYMENT has shown that within the sphere of employment, involvement of the social partners is necessary in order to drive in-company lifelong learning systems. In particular, awareness training for employers, trade unions and management has been shown to be crucial. So to have models involving the social partners and employees in the design of workplace systems of life long learning.
- People with disability often require specific forms of support, such as job assistants and other forms of in-work supports, to enable them participate in life-long learning systems.

Equal opportunities for women and men

EMPLOYMENT NOW has addressed the issues of gender gaps and reconciling family and professional life. Comprehensive in-company models focused on all issues relating to gender equality and participation have been piloted. These included a range of components including equality audits, needs analysis, identification of barriers, employee development, management training, career development training modules, awareness raising and strategic partnerships with third level institutions. The specific learning from these models has been:

- Workplace interventions that promote the value of diversity within processes of organisational change have proven effective in bringing about organisational cultures more conducive to reducing gender gaps.
- The provision of training to employers and employees has been successful in raising awareness, in facilitating the redesign of job descriptions and in developing more flexible forms of work.
- Specific training for women in the work place has been successful in promoting their participation in decision-making structures of trade unions and other representative organisations. Special systems of guidance provision for girls and women incorporating non-traditional vocational choices for young women, gender training for guidance providers and special measures, including role models has helped to demystify non-traditional career choices for girls.

8. KEY PRINCIPLES FOR EQUAL

The EQUAL CIP identifies and sets down certain key principles that will inform and underpin the Programme roll-out and selection of project activity and promoters:

8.1 Partnership and Representative capacity

The Commission guidelines clearly state that EQUAL will be implemented by partnerships established at geographical or sectoral level called Development Partnerships (DPs). The former must bring together participants in a particular geographical area to jointly define and respond to a labour market problem in that area. The participants may include regional or local authorities, public bodies, private enterprises, social partners, NGOs, academic institutions and community and voluntary groups. Sectoral Partnerships will address inequalities and discrimination in connection with the labour market in a sectoral context. Partnerships must be representative and broadly based in terms of membership and have, as a minimum requirement, the capacity to design, implement and monitor project activities.

8.2 Mainstreaming potential

The Commission's Guidelines emphasise the need to make an impact on national policies and stress, in that context, the importance of consistent horizontal and vertical mainstreaming. This will require relatively large-scale projects with mainstreaming potential that are capable of yielding robust findings within a reasonable timeframe. Provision might be made in this context to mainstream elements of a project on a "rolling" basis. For example, elements relating to a successful recruitment strategy could be mainstreamed in advance of those related to training, promotion etc.

8.3 Innovation

The CIP will provide a good opportunity to test new approaches to policy and policy measures and this can apply to the process as much the substance. Projects should, therefore, be able to identify those innovative elements from the outset that are suitable and relevant in an Irish labour market context.

8.4 Transnationality

EQUAL is based on the principle of transnational co-operation. The opportunity offered to identify and build suitable transnational partnerships will add significantly to the level and quality of innovation. Much depends on the effectiveness of the transnational partnerships and their ability to capture and disseminate learning across Member States. At least one partner from another Member State must be identified. Partnerships will be encouraged to include as a partner a Development Partnership from Northern Ireland in the interest of building cross-border co-operation in the human resources development field. Such co-operation should be complementary to project work undertaken within the framework of the EHRD OP ("main OP"), Interreg Community initiative and the Peace Programme.

8.5 Integrated approach

Inequalities and discrimination frequently coexist and one may serve to reinforce the other. Likewise, the inequality or discrimination may have several roots and action in one area may not suffice to remedy the situation. Projects displaying an integrated

approach which would seek to address inequalities and discrimination across a number of grounds and which reflect the complexity of the labour market will be particularly suitable under EQUAL.

8.6 Accountability and transparency

Project partnerships must have the managerial and financial capacity to ensure proper accountability for all Community and national funding. Transparent procedures in terms of decision making, monitoring and evaluation and dissemination of findings and research are also vital.

9. KEY ACTIONS UNDER EQUAL

9.1 *Introduction*

The EQUAL CIP will fund activities under four separate Actions as follows:

Action 1 Setting up Development Partnerships and transnational co-operation
Action 2 Implementing the work Programmes of the Development Partnerships
Action 3 Thematic networking, dissemination of good practice and making an impact on national policy
Action 4 Technical assistance to support actions 1, 2 and 3

Actions 1 and 2 are sequential but action 3 may commence at the end of Action 1 where useful experience or lessons have been learned from Action 1 and should be disseminated. Action 4 will provide funding and support from before the commencement of Action 1.

The indicative funding under the Four Actions as a percentage of total funding available is as follows:

Action 1	5%
Action 2	75%
Action 3	12%
Action 4	8%

9.2 *Call for Proposals*

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, as the managing authority for the EQUAL CIP, in consultation with the Monitoring committee and with the assistance of the Technical Support Structure (TSS), intends to launch the first (of two) calls for applications **for entry into Action 1 of the EQUAL Programme** in the Spring of 2001. The call will be advertised in all National newspapers and publicised on the D/ETE/EQUAL website and disseminated individually to Social Partner participants. It is proposed that the TSS will prepare application/guidance forms which should, following approval by the managing authority, be available on the web also. It is envisaged that 45% of funding will be absorbed in the First Round selection. It is projected that both Rounds should be of two to two and a half years duration.

9.3 *ESF and other eligible activities*

The ESF supports activities to develop human resources as part of a pathway approach to labour market integration. Eligible activities are cited in Article 3 of ESF Regulation No. 1262/1999. In addition, in accordance with Article 21(2) of Regulation No. 1260/1999, the decision on the contribution of the ESF to Community initiatives may extend that scope to include measures that can be funded under the ERDF,

EAGGF Guidance or FIFG Rules. Therefore, capital expenditure linked to the EQUAL priorities/measures may be eligible as well as, for example, action to tackle rural disadvantage undertaken by DPs. It is proposed that, as a general rule, expenditure on capital items shall respect discrete eligibility Rules in that regard drawn up and approved by the Managing Authority in consultation with the ESF Financial Control Unit. Exceptions to the general rule may be made depending on the circumstances and the nature of activities of specific DPs.

9.4 The Development Partnership Concept

Reference has been made to the highly sophisticated model of social partnership which has contributed to and underpinned Ireland's economic success in recent times. Most commentators agree that this model has provided the impetus for broad social consensus through the co-operative spirit and contributed significantly to the development of joint strategies amongst the stakeholders and social partners in bringing about tangible benefits in terms of tackling social exclusion and in developing policies which address equality of opportunity and access to education, employment, health, housing and social services. The implementation of the EQUAL Initiative will draw on the national partnership approach and the particular institutional arrangements in place which support this level of partnership as a model of good practice in promoting the interests and active participation of target groups within the Development Partnership itself.

The essence for the success of the Development Partnership under EQUAL will be the creation of administrative structures and mechanisms within the DP which ensures the active involvement of the target groups in the design and delivery of Programme activities. The Commission EQUAL Guidelines state that *"the active participation of those targeted for assistance shall be positively assessed"* and in the implementation of the Programme activities that *"particular attention will be given to the involvement of those suffering from discrimination and inequality"*. At DP level, **empowerment approaches** must involve participants in all aspects of project planning and implementation and provide opportunities for self-management at individual and group level. Many EMPLOYMENT projects have, for example, addressed the lack of empowerment, trust and motivation as a prime contributor to social exclusion and ultimately long-term unemployment. The lack of empowerment often prevents some of the most disadvantaged groups from participating in training, education and employment programmes.

In short, in order for the Development Partnership as a concept to work properly, the "distances" between project management and participants are to be reduced and the issues being addressed must be tackled in a more integrated fashion by creating new structures or the development of existing models (social partnership or EMPLOYMENT and ADAPT models) of consultation and co-decision making. In this regard, the work and expertise of NGOs should be capitalised on by drawing on their long-term relationships with disadvantaged groups and their experience as project promoters.

The objective of Action 1 is, essentially, to facilitate the creation of durable and effective DPs and to ensure that transnational co-operation will have a real added value. Action 1 will last for a period of up to six months. Action 1 closely describes the actions previously completed under the Project Development Phase of previous Community Initiatives. This phase was identified as being fundamental to the success of the Initiatives. Its critical role is acknowledged in Final Evaluation of ADAPT and EMPLOYMENT by Fitzpatrick Associates

Key elements should remain and be further developed to anchor the more focused role of national partnerships within Equal. In essence, it is important to recognise that the development of partnerships in an Irish context is not new. It will be important to avoid re-inventing learning about DPs that is already available both nationally and internationally.

Internal and external communication at DP level will be essential in order for the DP to function effectively and to deliver its message and participate in mainstreaming mechanisms where relevant. Arrangements within the DP should provide for:

- Familiarity with each organisations' aims, organisational structures and cultures
- Agreement on a means of communication
- Establishment of good personal relationships
- Establishment of mechanisms for feedback and evaluation and any reorientation of the DP and its work programme
- The adoption of a gender mainstreaming approach

9.5 Formation of the Development Partnership

The process of formation will begin by a core group of organisations known as "Development Partnership Initiators" (DPIs). The DPIs will already have formulated certain basic ideas and activities fundamental to the future organisation and operation of the DP including mechanisms for the inclusion of additional organisations and groups over the lifetime of the Programme. In this regard, the DP application should also describe how new partners may join and participate in the DP.

The DPIs will complete and submit the application for entry to Action 1 of the Programme. During Action 1, the selected DPs may admit other organisations and will finalise their consolidation of the new organisation by establishing management and communication structures, core operational activities and project or projects which they wish to carry out under a specific EQUAL Theme or Themes. The DPs will also consolidate arrangements for transnational co-operation and agree with transnational partners on arrangements for future work throughout the Programme.

9.6 Role and contribution of Partners

Each DP will essentially be formed from and respond to clearly identified needs in defined geographical areas or sectors of interest. Therefore, the DPIs must engage with and select, as appropriate, partners who will complement the integrated approach under EQUAL for tackling discrimination and inequalities in connection with the labour market. The formation of a steering Committee or similar co-ordinating mechanism is recommended. A separate EQUAL DP identity is desirable which would incorporate all of the organisations involved (including the use of stationery, establishment of website etc.) is desirable in order to encourage joint ownership and collective responsibility within the DP.

The DP must therefore consist of different organisations such as social partner groups, NGOs, employment and guidance services, education/training providers, public authorities, private enterprises and grass root organisations. Furthermore, in order to enhance the impact and mainstreaming potential, the involvement of regional and local authorities, including Government Departments and Agencies, is recommended.

The DP shall determine in advance which partner or partners shall undertake specific activities (including co-ordination of transnational activities) on the basis of qualifications, experience, expertise and competencies. These activities should as far as is practicable be widely distributed amongst the partners in the light of technical expertise available to the partners through their own organisations where possible. The DP shall determine which organisation shall be responsible within the DP for management of the fund and for disbursing the fund within the DP in accordance with the joint agreement of all partners concerned. This partner shall be named as the “designated partner”. This partner shall, on behalf of the DP, be responsible to the managing authority for the correct and proper use of the fund and for the submission of payment claims on the basis of eligible expenditure in accordance with the agreed activities of the partners.

The DP’s agreement on these issues should act as a base for the finalisation of the Budget and the work plan to be submitted by the DP at the end of Action 1 through the Development Partnership Agreement. Each DP must at application phase present its proposed Budget for Action 1 and an indicative Budget for Actions 2 and 3. At the end of Action 1 the DP presents a final Budget in relation to activities under Actions 2 and 3 to include match funding sources and amounts.

9.7 Monitoring and Evaluation at Development partnership level

Development Partnerships must co-operate and participate in the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of EQUAL at both National and European level. In that regard the DPs must comply with the minimum financial and physical data collection requirements as described in Chapter 12 of the CIP. For these purposes each DP must establish appropriate mechanisms for ongoing evaluation and monitoring to be submitted in the Development Partnership Agreement. Efficient monitoring mechanisms will also contribute to the development of a coherent dissemination and mainstreaming strategy. Each DP will be required to explain at the end of Action 1 how they intend to participate (subject to selection) in Action 3 of the Programme.

9.8 DP assessment of issues to be tackled

The DP must explain its rationale and an analysis of the problems/issues to be addressed within its chosen theme(s) at application phase for entry to Action 1. The analysis will ultimately form part of the DP Agreement required at the end of Action 1. It will incorporate identification of the factors causing the inequalities and discrimination to be addressed within the chosen theme(s) and relate to the sector or geographical area concerned. The DP will also propose how, strategically, it proposes to tackle the particular problems identified and an impact assessment of the activities of the DP having regard to the strategic objectives of EQUAL. The DP should also draw on the lessons learned from EMPLOYMENT and ADAPT in its overall analysis with specific reference to innovative actions under those previous Initiatives. In addition, as a horizontal activity, the DP will devise a strategy for addressing gender mainstreaming and promoting equal opportunities in all aspects of its activities. This will have implications for the DP’s recruitment of both beneficiaries and staff, communications strategy and monitoring and evaluation activities. The following is a summary of DP activities and requirements:

Summary of DP activities and requirements

Formation/organisation

- ◆ DP Initiators
- ◆ DP Partner search and consolidation
- ◆ Allocation of DP roles and tasks
- ◆ Arrangements for addition of new partners
- ◆ Mechanisms for ensuring empowerment and co-decision making
- ◆ Arrangements for active involvement of target groups

Financial/Administrative functions

- ◆ Nomination of “designated partner”
- ◆ Preparation of Budgets (Actions 1-3) including allocation of match funding
- ◆ Submission of work plan

DP Rationale/Strategy

- ◆ Rationale of DP
- ◆ Selection of Themes
- ◆ Assessment/analysis of issues to be tackled
- ◆ Strategy of DP
- ◆ Objectives/likely impact
- ◆ Innovative actions
- ◆ Gender mainstreaming mechanisms

Transnationality

- ◆ Expectations for transnational cooperation
- ◆ Transnational work Plan and Budget
- ◆ Designation of responsibility for transnational activities

Monitoring/Evaluation/mainstreaming

- ◆ Mechanism for ongoing assessment in compliance with data requirements
- ◆ Collection of information and data
- ◆ Identification of lessons and best practice
- ◆ Participation of DP in networking, dissemination, mainstreaming activities

9.9 Selection/Assessment Criteria

The EQUAL Initiative is explicitly linked to and acts in complement to and in support of the European Employment Strategy Pillars and guidelines and the National Employment Action Plan. Each DP must, therefore, as a minimum respect the coherence of the National and European Employment policy. Furthermore, in setting out priorities for actions under EQUAL, the DPs must also have regard to Ireland’s Policy Frame of Reference (PFR) which analyses the priorities for use of the structural funds’ assistance over the period 2000-2006 and in particular the European Social Fund (for reference see Appendix 3 of the CIP). Each DP must also display the potential to meet the strategic and operational criteria for funding under EQUAL. In addition, horizontal criteria will be applied so as to ensure sufficient regional and thematic representation. In summary these are:

Strategic Criteria	Operational Criteria
Innovation Partnership Transnational Partnership Dissemination, networking and impact. Empowerment Gender perspective	Demonstration of Need Project Strategic Plan Operating Structure Budget –incl. identification of match funding Role of each partner Evaluation

Horizontal Criteria
Regional Spread Thematic Spread

9.10 Selection Stages

A selection/vetting procedure will be required at each stage of approval for funding under Actions 1 to 3.

The initial vetting/assessment for application for entry to Action 1 will be co-ordinated by the Managing Authority with the support of the technical support structure (see Action 4 below), and a selection sub-committee of the Monitoring Committee and made available to the projects during this phase. Feedback will be given at networking meetings and where necessary, revised proposals will be expected within one month of initial approval of the application for entry into this phase. Unsuccessful applicants will be given reasons for non-selection.

Key elements from the operations of the Project Development phase will remain and be further developed to anchor the more focused role of national partnerships within EQUAL. Experience from previous Community Initiatives indicates that the primary focus for this phase is on ensuring that projects and DPs research the needs which the projects plan to address and to develop an appropriate strategy to meet these needs.

The nature and operations of DPs will take account of the core purpose for which they are being set up, the nature of the agencies involved, the respective roles and contribution. DPs will need access to specialist technical assistance in this phase. The types of expertise required include human resource management, change management, and project management.

9.11 Completion of Action 1

In summary, on completion of Action 1 the DP will demonstrate a common strategy in the form of –

A. Development Partnership Agreement which, as a minimum, will contain:

- an assessment of current labour market exclusion, discrimination and inequality within the thematic field and geographical or sectoral area concerned
- objectives and priorities for action, reflecting the learning from previous relevant action in the geographical/sectoral area
- a detailed work programme accompanied by a realistic Budget
- a clear identification of the role of each partner, including the arrangements for steering and managing the partnership and administering the financial support
- a mechanism for on-going assessment including the presentation of data and information on the DP and the analysis of the results
- the commitment of the DP to collaborate on Action 3
- the DPs strategy for implementing a gender mainstreaming approach.

The Development Partnership Agreement will be a binding document signed by each Partner expressing their agreement and commitment to implementing the jointly developed strategy and will be made available publicly. Because of the experimental nature of the EQUAL Initiative, the CIP does not propose to determine a single Model DP Agreement. The Document may take the form of a legally binding agreement underpinning the creation of a new legal entity or simply a memorandum of understanding between the Partners.

B. A Transnational Co-operation Agreement

The Transnational Co-operation agreement will be a Document signed by all the Partners and will contain at least the following elements:

- a transnational work programme and associated budget;
- the role of each transnational partner; the common methods of decision making and the organisational arrangements for implementing the common work Programme;
- the methodologies for monitoring and assessment of joint activities

At least one Partner from another Member State must be identified by the DP, preferably working in the same thematic field. In addition, transnational co-operation may be extended to activities supported in a non-member State eligible for funding under the PHARE, TACIS or MEDA Programmes. The Managing Authority proposes, in consultation with the Managing Authority in Northern Ireland, in the interest of North/South co-operation, to encourage applicants, where relevant and feasible to form a transnational partnership in the first instance with a partner in Northern Ireland in addition to a transnational partner(s) in other Member States.

9.12 Transnational Co-operation: Distribution and evaluation at European level

So that EQUAL can fully play its role as a laboratory of development and of promotion of new implementation methods for employment policies, close co-operation is required between all Member States, the social partners and the

Commission, in order to successfully exploit the potential for impact on the European Employment Strategy of good practice developed throughout the European Union.

The work programme of this co-operation (thematic studies, periodic evaluation, discussion forums, etc.) and its methods will be determined in parallel with the increasing pace of the Initiative. To this end, each year, a detailed work programme of the European level actions will be established in close co-operation between the Commission and the representatives of the management authorities. One of the first tasks, following the drafting of CIPs and the start of the DPs, will consist of a European inventory of the situation regarding discrimination and inequality in employment.

Within the frameworks of networking and national distribution of good practice (Action 3), the management authority will be responsible for encouraging, organising and supporting the work of the DPs required to take part in the actions at European level (Note: The travelling expenses incurred by this participation in actions at European level will be covered by the Budget envisaged for Action 3).

9.13 Transnational co-operation (at the level of the DP)

At the end of the Action 1, as referred to above, each DP has to conclude a *transnational co-operation agreement* with at least one DP in another Member State. In addition, this co-operation will also be able to stretch to similar projects financed in a non-Member State under the PHARE, TACIS or MEDA programmes. On an exceptional and duly justified basis, co-operation could also be extended to another partner external to EQUAL provided that the potential value added is clearly ascertained and this associated partner brings the proof of its capacity to cover its own expenditure carried out within the framework of this co-operation. Partners outside EQUAL will be called "associated transnational partners" and their participation will be submitted for approval by the Management Authority.

Within the framework of transnational co-operation, each DP shall be in contractual relation, for those issues concerning itself, with the Managing Authority to which it gives account. Nevertheless, the various DPs (transnational partners) are connected among themselves by a *transnational co-operation agreement* which specifies the objectives and common work methods of their "co-operation network". This *agreement*, mixing partners of different countries brought together around a joint project, obviously exceeds the national scope of each partner and requires methods of management at European level.

To this end, the Commission will set up on its own servers, via a Web interface, the tools necessary to present, update and allow the approval of the various *transnational co-operation agreements*. The DP which assures the secretariat of the *co-operation network* will enter the data concerning the transnational partners and the agreements concluded. An electronic validation by the various contracting transnational partners and by the various Management Authorities concerned will be necessary.

Each *co-operation network* will choose for itself a name which identifies it, and will specify in its transnational co-operation agreement:

- The dependent partners and the possible associated partners
- The objectives pursued by co-operation and the value added expected by each partner

- The detailed work programme (nature of the activities, budget allocated to each activity, timetable of implementation)
- The role of each one of the DPs or associated partners or other projects (financial amount allocated to co-operation; responsibilities in relation to implementation);
- The collective decision-making methods (description of the mechanism)
- The management methods (co-ordination, secretariat)
- The mechanisms of evaluation of co-operative efforts

It is intended that funding for transnational activities should not exceed 15% of a Development Partnership's overall Budget.

9.14 Selection for Action 2

Selection for funding under Action 2 will be carried out by the Managing Authority with the support of the Technical Support Structure and the selection sub-committee of the Monitoring Committee.

In order for selection to be confirmed following the initial Action 1 Phase, a DP must submit two primary documents in accordance with the criteria laid down under Action 1:

Development partnership Agreement
Transnational co-operation Agreement

The selection under Action 2 will confirm selection for EQUAL funding over the lifetime of the DP. The Work Programme will cover a period of 2 to 3 years and the possibility exists for further funding if warranted based on results. The DP must also demonstrate the following conditions:

Transparency: The DP must demonstrate access to the necessary co-financing and accept that the results obtained will be public property.

Representative Capacity: The DP must have the ability to mobilise a variety of actors in a spirit of co-operation: Public Authorities, employment service, NGOs, business sector (in particular SMEs) and the social partners. The DP must indicate how the active participation during the life of the DP of NGOs and small innovative organisations is to be ensured.

Co-operative Spirit: The DP must be able to demonstrate a capacity and willingness to operate in a transnational co-operative context in its implementation of the various elements of the Work Programme. Furthermore, the DP must be prepared to co-operate in networking, dissemination and mainstreaming activities at both National and European level.

Each DP will be evaluated against the approved objectives and strategy by an external evaluator. Information for evaluation will have to be collected at DP level, per Theme ("Measure") and per Action and distinguished between national and transnational activities.

Project management supports should be put in place, where necessary, through technical assistance subject to ESF eligibility Rules in force.

9.15 Contractual arrangements

The Managing Authority will offer contractual terms to the DP. The contract offer will set down specific terms and conditions associated with the offer of funding which must be signed by the partners or a designated signatory and returned to the Managing Authority.

9.16 Selection for Action 3

The selection process for funding under Action 3 will follow procedures outlined in respect of Actions 1 and 2.

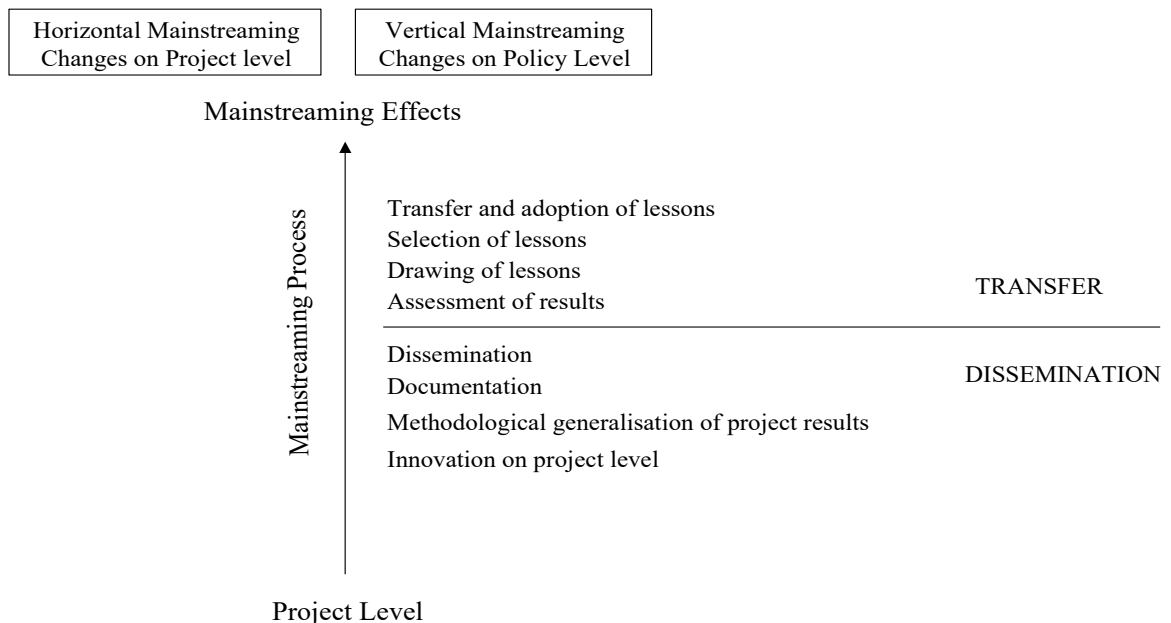
EQUAL seeks to test out new ways of addressing issues of discrimination and inequality in the labour market. Innovation is a key aspect of projects within EQUAL. Mainstreaming is about change and the management of change. It is a means of realising the benefits of innovation. It involves incorporating the outcomes of innovation into the provision and policies of mainstream organisations in the public and private sectors.

DPs which are selected for funding for participation in Action 3 will have, as a minimum, analysed, processed and documented the results of their activities and will have demonstrated the innovative nature of their results and their mainstreaming potential. Selected DPs operating within individual associated Thematic areas are recommended to adopt Thematic clusters or a Thematic networking approach in order to maximise impact and mainstreaming success. The DPs will be supported in managing these activities throughout by the Technical Support Structure which will provide co-ordination and assistance in pursuing the dissemination/mainstreaming strategy.

Funding for mainstreaming and dissemination under Action 3 will be provided only to Development Partnerships which, on the basis of a selection process to be determined by the Managing Authority in consultation with the Monitoring Committee, respect, as a minimum, the core elements outlined above having regard to the degree of innovation and mainstreaming potential to be determined by the partners involved in the selection process.

10. Mainstreaming Overview

Mainstreaming must be considered in two dimensions, one concerning its potential results and the other as the process leading to mainstreaming effects and consisting of different steps. This process starts with innovation at the project (DP) level, includes dissemination and transfer activities and finally - in the best case, results in mainstreaming effects. The effects of mainstreaming can be changes at project level or at policy level. Insofar as employment policies are concerned, visible policy change can relate to a number of aspects of the delivery of active labour market policies. For example, there may be effects on implementation regimes (i.e. improved standards of training, greater co-operation in delivery, changed monitoring systems, elements of competition within Programmes etc.), incentive regimes (i.e. motivation-oriented measures such as financial incentives or policy regimes (i.e. changes in relative importance of target groups or areas, changes in Programme management participation, new policy approaches or change of legal framework or provisions). Horizontal mainstreaming may take place between organisations active in the same or a similar field within the framework of the Development Partnerships under EQUAL (i.e. the development of multiplier effects). Vertical mainstreaming affects the policy level and leads to changes in the content, the mode of implementation or the incentives linked with active labour market policy. It requires a concerted strategy to ensure that analysis and debate occurs at strategic and/or policy level on the basis of project results. It is at this juncture where a formal mainstreaming mechanism can have greatest effect. As mainstreaming aims to influence not only the EQUAL project organisations, but also broader systemic entities, e.g. the regional and local training sector or regional and national policies, the active involvement of different actors is required. Local and regional project organisations, public employment services, public authorities from different levels, implementing agencies are all examples of actors possibly involved. **The following diagram illustrates the process:**



10.1 Mainstreaming elements

In the context of EQUAL there are four elements to mainstreaming. These are:

- incorporating innovation where projects become part of the practice and provision of mainstream organisations achieving a wider coverage than the initial project location.
- practice learning where projects identify new and effective ways of organising provision that become part of the practice of mainstream organisations.
- policy learning where projects identify new understandings and new thinking that shapes the policy making of mainstream organisations.
- inclusion where projects targeting specific groups identify strategies that can be pursued by mainstream organisations to secure the inclusion of these groups in their mainstream provision.

During the programming period 1994-1999 (Employment and Adapt), while both previous initiatives recognised the need for transnational links and expressed the hope that the sharing of know-how across participating projects would generate a multiplier effect, no common mechanisms for mainstreaming promising innovations or successful practices were put in place at EU level. In Ireland, a National Policy Mainstreaming Forum was established under EMPLOYMENT with a view to extracting useful learning from projects and applying it to policies and measures.

This Forum comprised representatives of all relevant Government Departments, support structures and Agencies. It agreed a definition of mainstreaming in the following terms:-

“Mainstreaming --- is extracting the important lessons from the Employment Initiative and applying them to policy and practice. It envisages the creation of a process whereby this can be achieved and a mechanism to review progress”.

Under the Integra Initiative a further mainstreaming action was developed. This involved a range of activities under a mainstreaming project entitled “We Can”. It aimed to promote a belief that social inclusion was possible and to create a positive disposition to mainstreaming. It was a focused effort to ensure that the achievement of inclusion would be a central political priority. It highlighted achievements and learning within Integra and communicated these to a wider public.

The issue of mainstreaming has been addressed in a more determined way in the successor to Employment and Adapt. The EQUAL Community Initiative, embodies a significantly wider commitment to the concept of mainstreaming. The European Commission guidelines to the Member States state that successful **innovation** should be disseminated widely in order to achieve the maximum impact on policy and, where appropriate, it should inform the National Employment Action Plans.

Innovation in this context is defined to include:

- Process-oriented innovations covering the development of new methods, tools, or approaches as well as the improvement of existing methods;
- Goal-oriented innovations centring around the formulation of new objectives, and

- Context-oriented innovations relating to political and institutional structures.

The requirement to 'mainstream' successful innovation within a Member State is matched by a commitment to disseminate results across the European Union. Member States are required to encourage and establish mechanisms which will facilitate mainstreaming at both 'horizontal' and 'vertical' levels respectively. The former refers to applying the results to bodies active in the same or similar fields, while the latter means applying them at the regional or national levels, including in the National Employment Action Plan or within Structural Fund programmes.

10.2 Foundations for a mainstreaming strategy

It is proposed to develop a mainstreaming strategy in co-operation with the Northern Ireland National Authority and the Special EU Programmes Body (see Chapter 11 below). Co-operation will be a feature in cross border projects. A co-operative approach to the mainstreaming strategy is also valuable for the following reasons:

- Broadening the range of projects from which learning could be extracted allowing a focus across all projects on the island.
- Achieving economies of scale and synergies through joint development of mainstreaming tools and resources
- Mutual learning through the engagement with the different equality infrastructures in each jurisdiction and the different equality strategies being pursued.
- Strengthening/cementing the North/South dimension of the Programme

The dissemination of information about the programme, project selection and partnership design will provide further important foundations for the mainstreaming strategy.

In relation to project selection, mainstreaming is identified as a key element within criteria established such as:

- the relevance of project activity to public policy and to the overall aims of EQUAL.
- the transferability of private sector focused activities.
- the extent to which the project environment allows for more general lessons to be drawn.
- the quality of the mainstreaming activities proposed
- the capacity within the partnership to realise mainstreaming outcomes
- the extent to which the partnership sufficiently reflects the representation of the wide range of interests needed to maximise the project's ability to generate the dissemination of new learning

Projects submitted should be required to identify a budget for a mainstreaming strategy in line with the strategy outlined for the full EQUAL CIP.

The project development phase should have a specific focus on building a partnership for mainstreaming. Project activity under Action 2 would require to be disseminated through the use of information and communication technologies (ICT's) and be reviewed on a regular basis.

10.3 Three stranded approach

The experience of the previous rounds of Community Initiatives demonstrates the need for a structured three stranded approach to mainstreaming:

1. Dialogue
2. Public profile
3. Practices within mainstream organisations

Each strand requires both a public and a private sector focus. Furthermore, the mainstreaming activities to be pursued at project level should be coherent with this three stranded approach

1. The ***dialogue strand*** would build on the previous Mainstreaming Forum established under the EMPLOYMENT Initiative by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. The Forum provided an arena where the profile of the EMPLOYMENT Initiative was raised with policymakers and led to a significant number of Departments and Agencies reacting to and, notably, adopting some practices and learning arising.

It is proposed, in consultation with the SEUPB and the Managing Authority in Northern Ireland, to implement this strategy under the auspices of the SEUPB, and to establish fora North and South which would meet, as necessary, jointly within the SEUPB context. The key relevant Government Departments, state agencies, social partners and project partners will be represented on the Fora.

The Fora would be charged with the following core functions:

- preparation of necessary background papers and research
- development of cross project initiatives to assist mainstreaming
- preparation of an annual input into respective Employment Action Plans

Evaluation strategies will need to have a specific focus on mainstreaming outcomes. The dialogue strand would need to have a particular involvement in these wider evaluation strategies.

2. The ***public profile strand***, building on the “We-Can” mainstreaming project under the Integra Initiative, would seek to build a wider public and political consensus behind any change or innovation suggested by the experience of the project work under the EQUAL Programme .

This strand would have a number of dimensions including:

- the use of ICT's to communicate and disseminate learning from the projects.
- the use of the media, formal and informal, as arenas of debate for the issues emerging from the programme.
- the development of a communication strategy about EQUAL, the groups that experience discrimination and inequality in the labour market, and the responses that are being developed to improve their situation.
- the engagement of key institutions and organisations in debating the outcomes from EQUAL and how these can best be mainstreamed.
- the development of a dissemination initiative targeted at the private sector and generating debate with this sector.

3. The ***practices within mainstream organisations strand*** would build on a range of mainstreaming initiatives currently being developed. These include the requirement to gender mainstream under the Structural Fund Regulations.

The European Union has defined gender mainstreaming as *“not restricting efforts to promote equality to the implementation of specific measures to help women, but mobilising all general policies and measures specifically for the purpose of achieving equality by actively and openly taking into account at the planning stage their possible effects on the respective situations of men and women”*.

This process is to be supported under the National Development Plan by an Equal Opportunities Promotion and Monitoring Unit, being established by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, and an Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion Co-ordinating Committee, reporting to the CSF Committee.

Another such initiative focuses on the wider equality agenda and is reflected on a commitment under the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness. This is a commitment to work on the recommendations of the Equality proofing report produced by a working group of the social partners convened by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. One of these recommendations includes an exploration of approaches to equality proofing under the Employment Action Plan.

It is clear that effective mainstreaming requires a commitment from relevant Government Departments, state agencies and the private sector to taking actions that assist mainstreaming outcomes. These actions will reflect the type of activities suggested by this wider equality mainstreaming context that is emerging.

Mainstream organisations responsible for mainstreaming outcomes need to be identified at an early stage through the mainstreaming fora and, where practicable, they need to be involved or closely liase with appropriate Development Partnerships. Actions necessary for mainstreaming outcomes include:

- *developing data systems to enhance the visibility of groups targeted under EQUAL;*
- *in-service training to enhance understanding and capacity in relation to realising outcomes for these groups;*
- *developing proofing systems adequate to exploring the impact of current and new policy and provision on these groups.*

10.4 Action 4: Technical Assistance

In line with ongoing Commission guidance and following ESF Heads of Mission discussions on EQUAL Programming elements, it is recognised that Technical assistance will constitute a priority axis within all CIPs. Funding for Technical Assistance will support the implementation of the CIP by enabling professional services to be provided both to the Managing Authority and to the Development Partnerships. Effective Technical Assistance will be a crucial element to the success of the Programme in view of the complex and innovative approach resulting from the EQUAL core principles of partnership, empowerment and mainstreaming.

The EQUAL Commission Guidelines (No.61) stipulate that Member States have to present a description of the arrangements for technical assistance expected to be required to implement the CIP, both the types of activities and the procedures for selecting those who will carry them out.

Technical assistance will be available to support the implementation of the CIP and will be used particularly :

- to advise on and facilitate the consolidation of partnerships and the search for suitable transnational co-operation partners (Action 1);
- to collect, edit and disseminate the experience and results, including annual reports of the DPs (Action 2);
- to support the thematic networking, the horizontal dissemination activities and the setting up of mechanisms for policy impact (Action 3);
- for co-operation in European networking and to ensure the sharing of all relevant information with the other Member States and the Commission (Actions at European level).

Technical assistance will also be available to support the monitoring, audit and evaluation of actions both within Member States and at the European level. The Technical Assistance Priority must respect Commission Regulation No. 1685/2000 laying down detailed Rules for the implementation of Council Regulation No. 1260/1999 as regards eligibility of expenditure of operations co-financed by the Structural Funds and in particular Rule No.11 thereof.

In that regard, the categories of management, implementation, monitoring and control expenditure eligible for co-financing are generally sub-divided as follows :

1. Basic administrative and financial Technical Assistance activities (Rule No. 11.2) :

- expenditure related to the preparation, selection, appraisal and monitoring of the assistance and of operations ;
- expenditure on meetings of monitoring committee and sub-committees related to the implementation of the assistance, including attendance of experts and other participants
- expenditure related to audits and on-the-spot checks of operations

2. Complementary Technical Assistance activities (Rule No. 11.3) :

Other expenditure under Technical Assistance which can be co-financed includes actions such as studies, seminars, information actions, evaluation and the acquisition

and installation of computerised systems for management, monitoring and evaluation.

Taking into account Commission EQUAL Guideline No. 46, the Technical Assistance Budget will be in the form of three separate measures as follows :

Measure 1	EQUAL Guideline 46	Support for thematic networking, dissemination and mainstreaming and providing advice and support to the DPs regarding the principles and methodology of EQUAL, in particular the thematic priorities, partnership approach and transnational co-operation
Measure 2	Eligibility Rule No. 11.2	Management, implementation, monitoring and control of the CIP, notably activities related to preparation, selection, appraisal and monitoring of operations, to meetings of monitoring committees and to audits and on-the-spot checks of operations
Measure 3	Eligibility Rule No. 11.3	Studies, seminars, information actions, evaluation and the acquisition and installation of computerised systems for management, monitoring and evaluation. Salaries of Civil Servants are not eligible

Measure 1 will mainly provide support related to the DPs and thematic work, whereas measure 3 will mainly cover activities at the Programming level.

Taking into account the ceilings laid down in Rule N° 11.2.5, as well as in No.48 of the EQUAL guidelines, the following Budget spread will be applied across the three Technical assistance measures:

Activity	Indicative budget
Measure 1: support activities “specific to the content and approach of EQUAL” such as thematic <i>networking, dissemination of results, and mainstreaming</i> , and support to the Development Partnerships	3%
Measure 2: “basic TA activities” as specified in rule N° 11.2, common to all mainstream programmes, including <i>preparation, selection, appraisal and monitoring of operations, meetings of monitoring committees, and audits and on-the-spot checks of operations</i>	2%,
Measure 3: “complementary TA activities” as specified in rule N° 11.3, common to all mainstream programmes, including <i>studies</i> ,	3%

<i>seminars, information actions, evaluation, and the acquisition and installation of computerised systems for management, monitoring and evaluation.</i>	
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Although the ceiling of 5% specified in Rule no. 11.2.5 for the ESF contribution to the total of measures 1 and 2 above must be adhered to, the maximum amount of Technical Assistance is 8% overall. The Managing authority considers that this maximum higher rate is required because the technical assistance Budget will not be significant relative to the small EQUAL Budget overall including the additional complex administrative and technical requirements such as the establishment and upkeep of a new EQUAL database, reinforced financial control procedures and a concrete commitment to setting up mainstreaming/dissemination mechanisms nationally. Inflationary pressures in the economy generally but particularly in the services area are also an additional consideration.

10.5 Technical Support Structure

Contract for a **technical support structure** (TSS) to carry out technical assistance activities will be awarded in compliance with National and Community rules on public procurement as specified in Council directives 92/50/EEC of 18 June, 1992, as amended by Council Directive 97/52/EEC of 13 October, 1997 and will, accordingly, be based on competitive tendering.

The technical support structure will have two fundamental roles:

- Supporting the effective implementation of EQUAL
- Contributing to the achievement of the objectives of EQUAL at national and at EU level

At National level the TSS will provide ongoing information to the managing authority concerning DP progress in relation to financial, physical and operational indicators in accordance with relevant national and Commission guidelines. Key tasks will involve establishing and maintaining appropriate and effective system of project monitoring (and associated databases) and establishing effective communication with the Managing Authority.

It will also facilitate liaison and communication between DPs and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and ensure complementarity at operational level between the projects, between other Community Initiatives and Programmes and with other relevant and interested organisations. This will be organised through regular meetings, site visits, thematic seminars, workshops and publications.

The TSS will also adopt a liaison role with the mainstreaming forum as proposed and assist in the preparation of Reports on issues or themes identified.

In relation to the DPs, the TSS will facilitate the achievement of DP aims and objectives and provide assistance in meeting all reporting requirements including financial. The TSS will also facilitate the transfer and assimilation of lessons arising at national level to a European level and will involve inputting at meetings organised at the request of the Commission and preparation of associated documentation.

Where necessary, the Managing Authority, will in compliance with its obligations under Commission Regulation (EC) No.2064/97 of 15 October, 1997 and in

accordance with public procurement requirements specified above, select a competent service provider to perform certain tasks, on behalf of the Managing Authority, concerning audits and on-the spot checks of activities and operations (Measure 2 of Technical assistance). Similarly, the evaluation process and acquisition and installation of IT systems will, where necessary, be carried out by competent service providers (Measure 3 of Technical Assistance) on behalf of the Managing Authority.

The tender for the ongoing evaluation at the level of the CIP will be published after the adoption of the CIP by the Commission.

11. CO-OPERATION BETWEEN NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE REPUBLIC

11.1 Introduction

In pursuance of the North/South provisions of the Belfast Agreement, the CIP contains arrangements for co-operation on common policy areas at Development Partnership level and at operational level between CIP Managing Authorities in Northern Ireland and the Republic. In the first instance, an all-Ireland mainstreaming strategy has been proposed. The second North/South strand will invite and encourage the establishment of cross-border Development Partnership links in the context of transnational co-operation and/or as active cross-border thematic actions within the DPs.

11.2 Special EU Programmes Body

The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), one of six North/South implementation bodies established under the Belfast Agreement, is, in law responsible for the preparation, for the approval of the North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC) in close consultation with the Finance Departments (North and South), and other relevant Departments, detailed Programme proposals for the Community Initiatives. For practical purposes the NSMC agreed at its meeting on 16 June, 2000 that the SEUPB would delegate its functions in that regard to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the Department of Higher, Further Education, Training and Employment who will be the managing authorities for EQUAL in the Republic and in Northern Ireland respectively. In accordance with the practical administrative arrangements devised, the NSMC approved the EQUAL proposals on 15th November, 2000. The SEUPB will have an administrative role in the operation of the cross-border dimension of EQUAL and the other Community Initiatives LEADER and URBAN. It will also be responsible for monitoring and promoting the implementation of the Common Chapter which puts in place a framework for increased co-operation between both economies and across all sectors over the period of the National Development Plan where it is appropriate and mutually beneficial.

The SEUPB will, in the interest of North/South co-operation, continue to explore with the Managing Authorities in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland and in consultation with the Commission, the potential for extending its operational remit under EQUAL as the Programme develops. In this regard, the SEUPB will, in particular, and as far as practicable, seek to establish coherence between its operational involvement in the Interreg 3 and the Peace Programme and EQUAL.

The Employment and Human resource Operational Programme has identified particular areas with good potential for co-operation North/South. In the labour market and training fields there has been a series of joint operations between FÁS and the Training and Employment Agency (T&EA) in Northern Ireland (now part of the Department for Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment – DHFETE) over recent years. The boards of the two agencies have met together formally on a number of occasions. There is, similarly, significant ongoing co-operation between the respective Departments of Education, third level and other educational institutions and bodies, on a range of educational matters.

Both the education and training fields have seen recent Ministerial bilateral. A range of co-operative ventures and contacts between the various other sectoral interests involved in the Operational Programme and their Northern Ireland opposite numbers

have taken place over the last funding period. Similarly, ongoing and regular contact and co-operation takes place at Official level in relation to the development of all Community Initiative Programmes and other associated areas of common and mutual interest.

At the first meeting of the North South/Ministerial Council (Special EU Programmes) in June 2000 the Ministers agreed in relation to the 2000 - 2006 CSF period that:

“The European Commission and the Authorities of Ireland and Northern Ireland emphasise that the provision of €400 million for North/South Co-operation is a minimum and all parties are committed to optimising the level of, and accompanying investment in, North/South co-operation. This objective will be kept under specific and continual review both in the development and implementation of the Operational Programmes North and South and by the EU Programmes Body in the ongoing discharge of its responsibility in this area.”

Accordingly, the Managing Authority, in co-operation with the SEUPB and the Managing Authority in Northern Ireland, in adopting this objective in the context of EQUAL, will endeavour to maximise the scope for North/South co-operation in the Development Partnership process and within priorities and measures to be implemented under this CIP.

The North South/Ministerial Council also agreed that Operational Programme Managing Authorities would issue invitations to the Special EU Programmes Body to nominate a representative for membership of the Operational Programme Monitoring Committee in order that it can fulfil its mandate in relation to monitoring North-South Co-operation.

In addition, the Annual Report to be prepared for monitoring purposes will include a separate section dealing with the development of North-South Co-operation in the Operational Programme.

11.3 North/South implementation of mainstreaming strategy: Equality Authority/Equality Commission Role

As part of the National and wider North/South mainstreaming strategy for EQUAL it is proposed that the Equality Authority in the Republic and the Equality Commission in Northern Ireland would play a primary role in implementing such a mainstreaming strategy on behalf of both National Authorities under the umbrella of the SEUPB. As far as the Equality Authority is concerned, it would bring important added value to this implementation role:

- expertise in relation to the wider equality agenda and labour market inequalities.
- Active involvement in the “We-Can” Integra mainstreaming project
- a strong partnership relationship with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and a mutual interest in engaging with EQUAL to foster increasing North/South co-operation.
- complementarity with the research role accorded to the Equality Authority as part of the Equal Opportunities Promotion and Monitoring Unit being set up under the National Development Plan.
- responsibility for the unit being established to assist in equality outcomes under the Human Resources Operational Programme with particular regard to refugees, people with disabilities and Travellers. This unit is also part of the Community Support Framework.

12. CIP OPERATIONAL ISSUES

12.1 Management structures

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment is the National Authority in Ireland for the European Social Fund. As Managing Authority for the EQUAL CIP the Department must in particular:

- Develop and co-ordinate policy on the Initiative including the development of linkages, where appropriate, with other Community Initiatives and with National Operational Programmes
- Co-ordinate policy with other Government Departments and Agencies in respect of the Initiative
- Liaison with European Commission and other Member States on policy and progress and communication with technical support unit on such matters
- Chair and provide Secretariat for the CIP Monitoring Committee
- In conjunction with the Technical Support unit, assemble and supply statistical, financial information and comprehensive information to the Monitoring Committee on issues relevant to the operation of the Initiative
- Seek to ensure that ESF support is accounted for and managed in accordance with relevant Community rules
- Arrange for certified and verified payment requests and progress reports to be submitted to the Commission in compliance with Community rules
- Issue rules and procedures from time to time to Project Promoters, Technical Support Unit and other relevant bodies and organisations, as necessary, in order to ensure compliance with, in particular, financial control in accordance with ESF and Structural funds Regulations.

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment will be assisted in carrying out these management tasks by appropriate technical expertise as required and the Technical Support Structure.

Detailed elements of the management structures and associated matters is contained in **Appendix 6**.

12.2 State Aid schemes

The EQUAL Commission guidelines require that the CIP provides a description of the information needed to check compliance with Article 87 of the Treaty as regards the state aid status of the measures planned to implement the priorities under the Programme.

In general, in the case of structural funding, any project involving the grant of State aid can be approved only if:

- The aid granted under the measure satisfies the “de minimis” rule (threshold figure for aid below which Article 87(1) does not apply on the basis that small amounts of aid do not have an appreciable effect on trade and competition between Member States).
- The aid is granted under a notified and approved aid scheme, or
- The project concerned has been notified separately and authorised by the Commission on an ad hoc basis.

No payments of aid will be made until the Commission has approved the aid in question by formal decision, unless the State Aid falls within the *de minimis* rule or other block exemption.

The “de minimis” threshold of 100,000 Euro in aid over a three year period applies to the total amount of aid granted to a single company under all aid measures which are covered by the “de minimis” Rule. Accordingly, adequate mechanisms must be established to facilitate monitoring and control of cumulation of “de minimis” aid. Those responsible directly for the implementation of the measures in question will be required to report details of all individual “de minimis” payees and payments made under this measure to the National Authority.

At Project development stage it will be necessary to identify any operations that might constitute state aid within the meaning of Article 87.1 of the Treaty. For example, certain types of employment and training aid are within the scope of Article 87.1 as are certain infrastructural measures. Measures related to the unemployed or students or which involve the provision of public service goods in the form of basic or general education or training for students or the unemployed are considered to be outside the definition of state aid.

Aid will be paid in accordance with EU Rules and with the Commission Notice On the “de minimis” Rule For State Aid (OJ C 68, 6.3.1996) and Regulation 994/98/EEC, in particular. Accordingly, individual payees will be informed, before payment, that the support is of a “de minimis” nature, the implications of that will be outlined to them and they will be required to verify that all “de minimis” aid received by them will remain within the threshold. In this context, while the total amount of “de minimis” aid to the same recipient must not exceed €100,000 over a three year period, it is noted that the application of more than one aid scheme to a given investment project must respect the rules set out in the Commission Communication on the cumulation of aids for different purposes (OJ C.3, 5.1.1995). DG COMP has indicated, in relation to that Communication, that the controls on the cumulation of aid for different purposes applies in general and not merely to “de minimis” aids. Any new aid schemes and new notifiable ad hoc grants not foreseen in the initial decision approving the CIP will be notified to the Commission.

Training, Employment and Regional Aid and Specific Sectors

The Commission’s Framework on Training Aid issued in November 1998, covers both specific and general training supports whether provided directly by firms or by public/private training centres. Exemptions are provided for aid given by way of educational and initial training (including apprenticeships and day release schemes) and the training of unemployed people including traineeships in enterprises.

Approved levels of Aid under EU Framework on Training Aid		
	Gross % Aid	
	Specific Training	General Training
Standard Rate (large firms outside assisted areas)	25%	50%
Supplements to Standard Rate for ...		
SMES	+10%	+20%
Art 87.3(a) regions	+10%	+10%
Art 87.3 (c) regions	+5%	+5%
Beneficiaries ; disadvantaged workers	+10%	+10%

Insofar as a variety of other aid regimes are also controlled under the Treaty such as Employment Aid and Regional Aid, none of the Themes (measures) set out under

this CIP are considered to be of a nature covered by either regime and are not therefore considered to require notification in either of those contexts. Many training measures are not caught by State aid Rules in that most training forms part of the tasks normally carried out by the State and benefits people and workers in the general labour market and does not favour certain undertakings or the production of certain goods within the meaning of Article 92(1) of the Treaty.

Examples are

- Schooling and initial training (apprenticeships and day release schemes)
- Training or re-training of unemployed people, including traineeships in enterprises
- Measures directly targeted at workers or at certain categories of worker affording them the opportunity of receiving training unconnected with the firm or industry in which they work

However, given that separate sectoral aid regimes are also applicable across the European Union in relation to the following sectors and that some of the Themes (measures) may relate specifically either to 7(Agriculture) or 8(Fisheries and Aquaculture), they require notification and clearance or approval prior to implementation.

<u>EU Sectoral Aid Regimes</u>	
<u>Steel</u>	<u>Shipbuilding and repair</u>
<u>Motor vehicle Industry</u>	<u>Synthetic fibres</u>
<u>Transport</u>	<u>Coal</u>
<u>Agriculture</u>	<u>Fisheries and Aquaculture</u>

The position on each of these measures is identified below.

Notifiable Measures

Activities under the Equal Themes which relate to the unemployed or students or involve the provision of public service goods in the form of basic or general education or training for students or the unemployed are considered to be outside the definition of aid.

State Aids–Block Exemptions

In present EU legal circumstances and in the event of changes to existing measures or in the event of new measures being put forward within this CIP, the Commission will be informed by the implementing body/Managing Authority, as appropriate, under existing procedures of any intention to use further such exemptions as de minimis. No other decisions have been taken at this point on the possible future approach to block exemption by the Commission in such areas as de minimis, SME's and Training Aid. The situation will be reviewed and changed if and as necessary during the tenure of this CIP.

In the event of changes to existing measures or of new measures being put forward within this CIP, these will be notified by, where relevant, the implementing body to the Commission where required under the notification rules in force. Pending clearance or approval by the relevant Commission authorities and following the approval of such changes in the CIP by the Monitoring Committee, the revisions will be formally notified to DG Employment for a modification decision. The introduction of a new measure with an aid effect or an ad hoc amendment to an existing measure

of approved aid will, in any event, require modification of the assistance by a formal Commission decision. In the event that such modification involves a co-funded measure, eligibility of expenditure for ESF support will be from the date on which the modification request is sent to DG Employment in accordance with Article 30 of Regulation 1260/99/EEC.

12.3 Monitoring Committee

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment will be assisted in discharging its responsibilities by a Monitoring Committee. The primary role of the Monitoring Committee is to ensure that ongoing implementation of the CIP is in line with the strategic plan for EQUAL.

The Monitoring Committee shall:

- *approve the Programme Complement and any ongoing adjustments*
- *monitor the impact and implementation of the Initiative*
- *review progress in achieving the specific objectives of the CIP*
- *ratify project selection criteria*
- *to advise on appropriate communication and publicity strategies*
- *consider and approve annual and final reports prior to submission to Commission*
- *approve proposals to amend Commission decisions on Fund support*
- *propose adjustments or review of Funds support to the managing authority and approve reprogramming decisions*
- *consider mid-term and other relevant evaluation recommendations*

The Monitoring Committee shall establish its own Rules of procedure, including any appropriate organisational arrangements. The Monitoring Committee will be provided with qualitative and quantitative reports on the operation of the Initiative at regular intervals. The Monitoring Committee will meet, as a rule, at least twice a year.

The Monitoring Committee will meet as soon as possible after the Commission decision on the contribution of the Funds (Article 35.1). Membership of the Operational Programme Monitoring Committee will comprise representatives from:

- the Managing Authority,
- the Department of Finance,
- relevant Government Departments
- the Special EU Programmes Body.
- each of the four Social Partner Pillars
- relevant statutory Bodies including FAS and
- the Equality Authority
- ERF Liaison Officer
- Commission representatives, the Central Evaluation Unit, Equality Unit of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law reform and the National Development Plan and Structural Funds Information Officer will serve on the Monitoring Committee in an advisory capacity.

Where feasible and appropriate, membership of the CIP Monitoring Committee will additionally contain representatives of implementing agencies and sectoral interests. Gender balance will be promoted on the Monitoring Committee. The Managing Authority will provide the chairperson for the Monitoring Committee.

The Managing Authority will also arrange for consultation on behalf of the Monitoring Committee, as appropriate and necessary, with regional authorities or local bodies (e.g. Territorial Employment Pacts, social economy projects etc).

12.4 Financial plan

The Financial Plan for EQUAL is structured within the framework of the 4 Pillars of the European employment strategy, in addition to a Technical Assistance Priority and an asylum seeker Priority. The chosen themes within the 4 Pillar priorities will count as measures and the three Actions will be grouped together within each measure. There will be three measures within the Technical Assistance Priority as referred to at Chapter 10.4 above and a separate measure within the asylum seeker priority.

Accordingly, the indicative Financial Plan by year and in aggregate is set out in **Appendix 7**.

12.5 Evaluation/Monitoring

Ongoing evaluation of the CIP will be conducted in order to assess its effectiveness having regard to EQUAL objectives and operations particularly in the fields of:

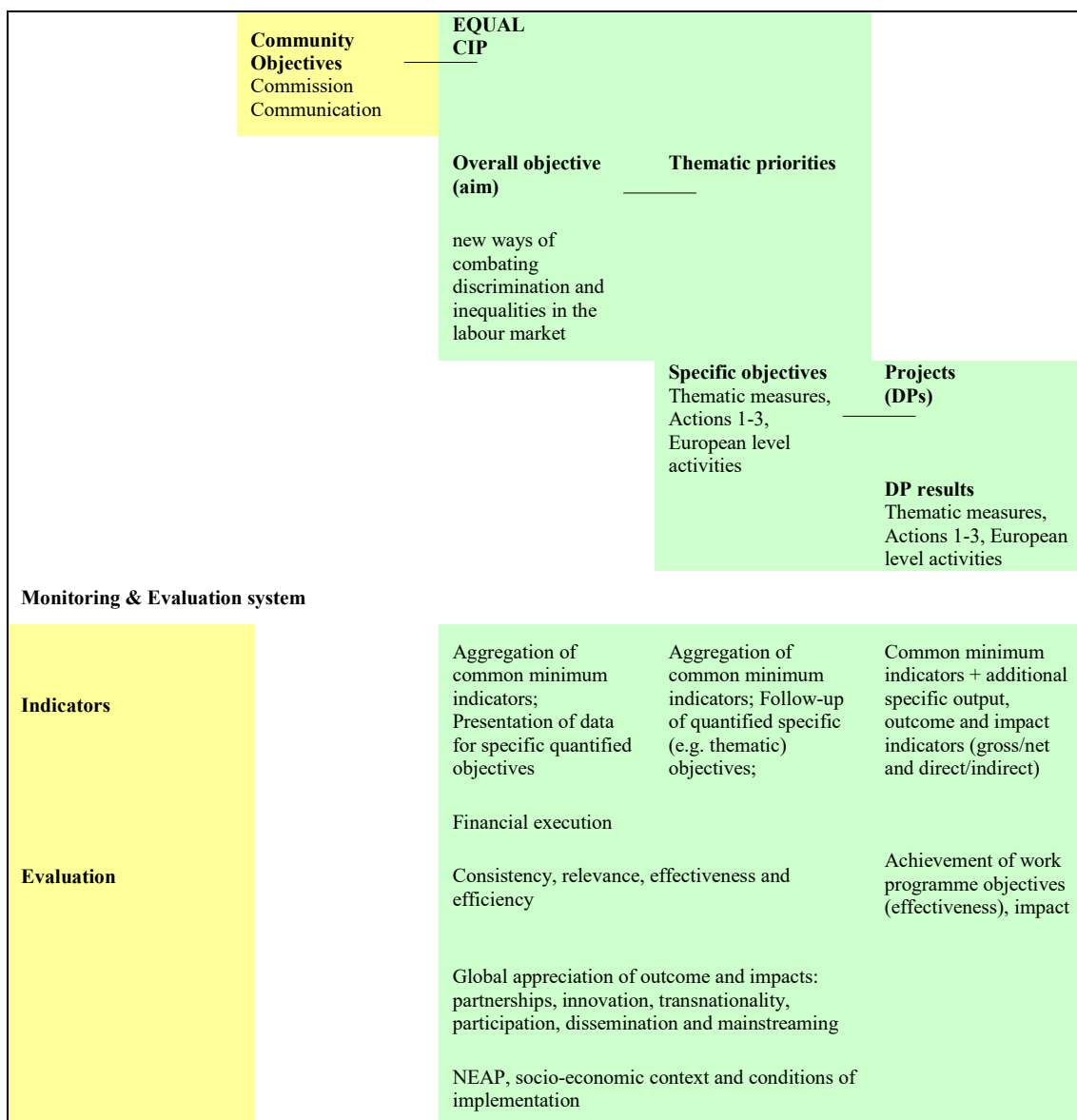
- innovative actions and new ways of delivering employment policies in order to combat all forms of discrimination and inequality in connection with the labour market
- links to the European Employment Strategy (and the NEAP) through the thematic approach to testing new ways of delivering employment policies
- the partnership approach
- mainstreaming potential and effectiveness

At CIP level, the General Regulation requires a **Mid-Term Evaluation**, to be carried out by an independent evaluator and submitted to the Commission by the 31 December 2003 at the latest. As a continuation, it shall be **up-dated and completed** no later than 31 December 2005 so that it can feed into the preparation of future assistance.

The ex-ante evaluation contained within the present CIP will form the basis for future external evaluations, in particular the mid-term evaluation. The ex-post evaluation will be carried out not later than three years after the end of the Programming period.

12.6 Framework for monitoring and evaluation

The EU Commission has proposed guidance and recommendations for systems of monitoring and evaluation for the EQUAL Initiative having regard to the indicative methodology as referred to in Articles 36 and 42 of the General Structural Funds Regulation 1260/99 (Document entitled: "*Guidelines for the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of the Community initiative EQUAL for the period 2000-2006*"). The following is a schematic diagram outlining the framework for monitoring and evaluation based on the general characteristics of the EQUAL Initiative. Development Partnerships will be required to collect qualitative and quantitative data at all levels of the programme related to the fields referred to below.



The evaluation will concern itself with key areas across the three Actions for EQUAL such as:

- *partnership*
- *transnationality*
- *Innovative solutions*
- *Empowerment/participation*
- *Thematic approach*
- *Dissemination/mainstreaming*

The framework builds on the experience gained from monitoring and evaluation of the ADAPT and EMPLOYMENT Initiatives in the period 1994-1999, both in the Member States and at the European level through the national mid-term and final evaluations and the EU-wide evaluation of these Initiatives. The framework reflects the specific features of EQUAL, in particular:

- ◆ The emphasis on the process/mechanisms of change which transpires from the general objective: EQUAL will act as a testing ground to develop and disseminate *new ways of delivering* employment policies in order to combat all forms of discrimination and inequality in connection with the labour market;
- ◆ the closer links to the European Employment Strategy through the *thematic approach* to testing new ways of delivering employment policies and the *partnership approach and finally*,
- ◆ the clear focus on *mainstreaming* both nationally and across the European Union.

The Commission has also produced a checklist for initial mid-term evaluation 2003, end of 2003 and final assessment 2005 as follows:

The mid-term evaluation would initially cover the following aspects:

- Analysis of the definition of CIP-level and thematic objectives and their operationalisation in the programme complement, the programme consistency as a whole, the application and coherence of selection criteria, an assessment of the adequacy of the activities and the dynamic of the implementation of the programme,
- Analysis of the monitoring systems: examination of the coverage, the relevance and the reliability of the systems of indicators, availability of quantitative and qualitative information, links with the national systems, collection methods;
- Evaluation scope and feasibility: methods, type of analysis, proposal for the sampling of measures (which will be the subject of detailed evaluations), data collection methods (surveys, interviews, etc).

At the end of 2003 at the latest, the mid-term evaluation would cover the following principal points:

- Analysis of the interventions on the basis of financial (input) and physical (output) indicators, checking of achieved objectives, appraisal of 2000 - 2003 results according to the evaluation criteria, analysis of the effects of the measures and their emerging impact;
- Analysis of the interventions' context: socio-economic environment, operational context, link with the national plans for employment and the national social policies;
- Analysis of implementation conditions: the partnership, selection of actions (procedures, criteria), the use of technical assistance, information and visibility, management, financial and administrative channels, control;
- Evaluation of key topics and transverse/horizontal topics;
- Summary and conclusions which take account of contextual changes and implementation methods.

Recommendations in the Mid-Term Evaluation should aim to strengthen the effectiveness of interventions and implementation at the time of the mid-term reprogramming of the interventions

The Final Assessment in 2005 would involve:

- Update of the mid-term evaluation;
- Evaluation of the mid-term reprogramming;
- Analysis and Conclusions on the emerging impact of the interventions.

Recommendations in the Final Assessment should aim to feed into the preparation of assistance beyond 2006.

12.7 Evaluation approach

The impact of EQUAL would mainly refer to **structural effects** or impacts relating to the performance of (formal and informal) systems (e.g. in terms of effects on the formulation and implementation of policy and practices, establishment of durable partnerships, changes in training systems, changes in corporate or social attitudes, capacity building in organisations). An assessment of effectiveness and efficiency will however also require to assess, at the DP level, the **effects on persons or companies** who participate in the interventions (e.g. in terms of employability, capacity to integrate, adaptability, entrepreneurial aptitude, empowerment, gender equality) or job creation where relevant.

The information on outcomes (short-term/immediate effects at the end of the activity) and impacts (medium and long-term effects) recorded at the different levels of the programme, should try to distinguish between these types of effects and to identify direct/indirect and gross/net impacts in the analysis.

The overall evaluation approach would essentially be **qualitative** and a list of examples of specific evaluation questions for the key aspects within the three Actions of EQUAL is given in **Appendix 8**.

The information should be drawn mainly from the monitoring systems in place, the European database, the partnership agreement documents and other DP documentation including self-evaluations. This information will be completed/accompanied by targeted surveys and/or case studies by an independent evaluator. Such surveys/case-studies could target direct and indirect beneficiaries, key actors involved in the Initiative and policy influencers at the periphery or outside and/or look into particular issues/priorities.

12.8 Evaluation at the European level

The Commission will be responsible for synthesising the main findings and conclusions of the national CIP evaluations. The Commission will organise technical meetings and partnership meetings to discuss methodological issues and the progress of the evaluations. The Commission may also undertake additional EU-wide evaluation work to examine particular (e.g. thematic) issues across the Union and/or to support the further development of evaluation methodology.

The evaluation of the mechanisms to create an impact at Union level will be organised by the Commission in close co-operation with Member States. On the basis of the national CIP evaluations, it will provide a synthesis of the set-up and implementation of the national thematic networking, dissemination and mainstreaming structures and activities (**Action 3**). The evaluation will specifically look at the links and interactions between the transnational co-operation at DP-level, the national thematic networking and the networking at the European level.

An analysis of the actual and potential impact of (a selection of) the transnational discussion fora/seminars/conferences/activities organised at the European level should be carried out to cover the main question of their contribution to the effective dissemination and mainstreaming of national results/identified good practices into practices, procedures and policies at regional, national and Community level.

The evaluation will also provide an assessment of the implications of EQUAL to National Employment Action Plans and other Community Programmes.

12.9 Monitoring systems and indicators

The Mid-Term Evaluation, and its update, the Annual Report and the on-going follow up of the implementation and progress of the programme is dependent on the existence of appropriate, systematic and timely monitoring information. It is important to ensure a comprehensive flow of quantitative (financial and physical) and qualitative information through all of the levels of the programme from the start of the programme.

For accountability purposes, the Commission has indicated that it is necessary for at least a minimum of input (financial) and output (physical) information be available in order to give a picture of the "volume" of the activities generated by the Initiative across the EU. The **minimum quantitative and qualitative data** needed for EQUAL is outlined in **Appendix 9**. These are considered as a set of common minimum indicators to be **annual, exhaustive and aggregated** from the Action and Thematic (measure) level to the CIP level.

12.10 Data collection, follow-up and Annual Report

Consolidation of data at European level

To facilitate the transnational work of the projects, to allow the co-ordination of the programmes at European level and to satisfy the needs, in particular as regards monitoring and evaluation, the Managing Authority will take part in the common electronic system of data collection set up by the Commission for the specific management of the EQUAL Initiative called: "EQUAL Common Database" (ECDB).

On the basis of preparatory work between the Commission and the Member States, precise data fields have been identified constituting the exhaustive list of the common quantitative data to be transmitted at the European level. The agreed data fields are contained in **Appendix 10**. In addition to this data, consolidated at European level, the DPs will in addition be required to transmit complementary data in summary form intended for the national level alone. (Article 62 of the EQUAL guidelines).

The Managing Authority in conjunction with the Technical Support structure will collect the physical data from the DPs and will transfer the data concerning the DPs as well as those collected at the level of the programme, to the ECDB, on the basis of the technical protocols defined by the Commission. The data on Actions 1, 2 & 3 will be updated continuously by the Managing Authority and will be transferred to the Commission at least once per month. The data relating to the annual report will be transmitted at least once a year and at the latest on 30 June following the reference year.

The Commission, by means of suitable computer systems, will make available on the Internet the essence of the information transmitted by the Member States. This will make it possible to consult the activities of each DP at individual level, as well as the consolidated situation concerning implementation at the level of all the programmes. For the closed fields (typologies), the Commission's application will allow consultation of the fields concerning transnational co-operation in the 11 official languages.

12.11 Annual implementation report (Article 37 of Regulation No. 1260/1999)

The Commission is seeking a high level of consistency in the annual reports of the various Member States for the good monitoring of the overall implementation of the Initiative and to co-ordinate the networking efforts at national and European levels.

The quantitative minimum common data concerning implementation, to be transmitted at the time of the annual report, will be covered by the transmission to the ECDB. The other relevant indicators of situation, result or impact, as anticipated by this CIP, will also be communicated, by means of the annual report.

Insofar as the implementation of EQUAL will be progressive, a common format cannot be determined in advance. Each year, in good time, a common structure for the annual reports will be determined in close co-operation between the Commission and the Managing Authority. This common structure does not prevent the Managing Authority and the Monitoring Committee from adding to it any element that is judged relevant.

12.12 Evaluation: organisational issues

The timetable of the mid-term evaluation and its update presupposes that evaluation work is foreseen at the very start of the programming period, with appropriate funding available under technical assistance. Accordingly, the evaluation mandate/terms of reference will be prepared as soon as possible so that the mid-term evaluation can be launched in parallel with the on-going roll-out of the Programme.

The evaluator/evaluation team will be selected in accordance with normal tendering requirements and in compliance with the EU directives on public procurement.

In accordance with the partnership principle the evaluation will be operationalised through the setting up of an "**Evaluation Steering Group**" with the following mandate:

- It is a technical group, composed of persons responsible for the evaluation representing the main stakeholders, the Commission and the independent evaluator(s) once selected.
- It prepares the mandate for and selection of the evaluators. It gives opinions on the evaluation reports. It accompanies the evaluation work, it prepares the decisions on validation (in particular regarding the quality and the fulfilment of the mandate), on dissemination and on publication of reports. It also has a function in co-ordinating the evaluation in the event of a multi layer evaluation mechanism. It identifies topics to be studied in greater detail (e.g. in thematic evaluations).

The partnership framework will determine the procedures for validating and agreeing on reports. As a general rule, evaluation results will be made available to the general public.

13. Programme Complement

The general structural funds regulation (Council regulation No. 1260/99) requires that, in addition to the Operational Programme, Member States are required to prepare a “Programme Complement”. The Programme Complement will be prepared and presented to the Monitoring Committee for approval by the managing Authority. The Programme Complement will be sent to the Commission for information.

The Programme Complement (Article 18.3) will set out for each measure:

- Details of the measures under the CIP Priorities
- Main objectives of the measures
- Ex-ante evaluation of measures in accordance with Article 41.3, quantified where they lend themselves to quantification and indicators
- Project selection criteria (Article 35.3)
- Composition of Project Selection Boards
- An indicative Financial plan which will include EU co-financed and non co-financed expenditure in a standard format as determined by the Department of Finance
- Details of budgetary provisions and description of expenditure arrangements (co-financed/non-co-financed)
- The Information and publicity arrangements.
- Arrangements between the Commission and the Member State for the computerised exchange of data.

In essence the Programme Complement;

- amplifies and details the contents of the CIP
- stresses the prime responsibility of the MC in the new funding period
- initiates the flow of payments
- provides a basis for necessary ongoing modifications

14. Information and Publicity Strategy

The EQUAL Guidelines calls for the greatest possible degree of participation from public and private bodies, NGOs, community and voluntary sectors, target groups and all of the social partners. Through public awareness dissemination about the Programme, the Managing Authority will actively seek the participation, to the greatest extent, of all parties and will facilitate the exchange of views and co-operation. The information and communication Plan will be detailed in the Programme Complement but will include:

- Information days widely advertised in print media
- A web site with partner search facilities.
- Preparation and distribution to relevant organisations of an information pack.

The amounts set aside for information and publicity will be specified in the Technical Assistance measure of the Programme Complement.

The contribution of the Structural Funds and the NDP to EU co-financed and non-co-financed expenditure will be acknowledged as appropriate. It will be the responsibility of the Managing Authority to ensure that the information and publicity requirements of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1159/2000 are met. The communications action plan, referred to in point 3 of the Annex to regulation No. 1159/2000, will be set out in the programme Complement. In general, the EU logos where relevant, will be displayed in equal prominence in all publicity material, application forms, letters of offer or grant approval as well as on signs for projects as required under the Commission Regulation on Information and Publicity. The Managing Authority will be assisted by the National Development Plan and Structural Funds' Information Officer in developing and implementing the information and publicity strategy. Given the need to highlight the ESF's strategic role in the implementation of the European Employment Strategy, in determining the annual work programme for the Information Unit, particular attention will be paid to publicising the ESF appropriately. To this end, information and publicity for ESF-funded activity will continue to be co-ordinated through officials from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, under the auspices of the National Development Plan/Community Support Framework Information Office.

APPENDIX 1: Summary Analysis of Strengths and Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats in the broad labour market context

The CSF and the Employment and Human Resources Development OP provide a detailed analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the Irish economy.

The principal strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) of the Irish economy from a labour market perspective are summarised as follows:

SWOT analysis

Strengths

Stable Macroeconomic Environment
Social Partnership Agreements on Key Socio-Economic Issues
Consistency of Key Policy and Strategic Directions
High Employment Growth/ Low Unemployment
High Productivity Growth
Ability to Attract Foreign Direct Investment
Percentage of Age Cohorts at Third Level
Competitive Salary levels

Weaknesses

Openness to International Trade
Geographical Location /Limited Market Scale
Dependence on Overseas Firms
Dublin/East Growth Over concentration
Uneven Inter-Regional Growth
Internal Road and Rail Infrastructure
Need to Move–up Production Value Chain
Urban Rural Social Exclusion Pockets
Poor Education of Older Groups

Opportunities

e-Commerce, ICT Services
Increased Female LM Participation
LM/Social Inclusion of Disadvantaged
Irish ‘Diaspora’ and Availability of Qualified Immigrants
Late Demographic Ageing
Globalisation of Economy

Threats

Limited Labour and Skill Supplies
Under investment in SME Training
Euro/£ Exchange Rate Movements
Dangers of Inflation
Failure to Adapt Skills at market speed

The analysis points to the importance of addressing a number of central themes of relevance to the EQUAL Programming context including:

- the need to maintain the key elements of the social consensus underpinning social and economic progress and, in particular, the minimising of unemployment,
- the need to increase female participation, upgrade older peoples skills and to increase social inclusion generally for mobilisation, growth and increased productivity growth as well as equity reasons,
- the need to exploit the ability of ICT to offset geographic location disadvantages,

- the need to find new ways of increasing skills, competitiveness and profitability in Irish SMES.

APPENDIX 2: NEAP underlying *policy mix Objectives* and proposed activities under each priority are as follows:

EMPLOYABILITY

- o Prevent the drift into long-term unemployment.
- o Re-integration of the long-term unemployed and other disadvantaged persons and groups into the labour market and access to training and similar measures.
- o Tackling educational disadvantage and early school leaving by, specifically:
 - *Early intervention measures to provide additional supports for young people at risk*
 - *Curricular reform*
 - *Provision of “second chance” education (e.g. Youthreach, back to education Allowance and Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme for unemployed particularly long-term unemployed adults)*
 - *Establishment of an Adult Literacy Training Fund to support access to life-long learning*
- o Increase participation rates in the labour market to increase the sources of supply particularly with regard to female participation rates and women returners.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- o Maintenance of a competitive, transparent and flexible business environment to facilitate and support the development of new enterprises, particularly SMEs.
- o Ensuring the continued success in the areas of technological development, traded services and the services sector.
- o Enhancing the role of Local Government in local economic, social and cultural development and promoting the emergence and consolidation of the social economy
- o Accelerating the transition to the information society and economy with a view to increasing economic competitiveness, employment and social inclusion

ADAPTABILITY

- o Sustaining competitiveness through adaptation by addressing life-long learning issues in response to rapid technological change.
- o Development of enterprise-led training processes and solutions.
- o Addressing skills shortages, particularly IT competencies and IT literacy
- o Development of appropriate measures to create family friendly workplaces and reconciliation of family and workplace practices, e.g. Through childcare infrastructure.
- Examination of the issue of organisational flexibility, new forms of work and reward and recognition systems.
- Enhancing the partnership approach

EQUALITY

- o Development of the equality strategy in implementation of the National Development Plan 2000-2006 by:
 - *Adoption of a gender mainstreaming strategy in project selection, gender dis-aggregated outcomes and gender balance on monitoring committees.*
 - *Introduction into all Structural Fund Programming of specific measures to assist women while taking into account the respective situation of men and women.*
 - *Development, at the level of the enterprise, of equal opportunities policies and practices.*
 - *Facilitation of equality of opportunity for access to the workplace by women and men through, for example, adequate childcare facilities. Development of active labour market programmes and measures under the NDP to increase female participation and encouraging women returners*

APPENDIX 3: Policy frame of Reference for Human Resources

In laying down general and horizontal legal provisions governing the Structural Funds 2000-2006, the Structural Funds Regulation of 21 June 2000 (1260/1999) provides in Article 1 that the Structural Funds (and other existing financial instruments) shall, among other things, support the adaptation and modernisation of policies and systems of education, training and employment (**Objective 3** priority). Ireland has submitted its Objective 3 Policy Frame of Reference (PFR) to the Commission together with the National Development Plan. The Objective 3 PFR provides the link between the Employment Strategy and Structural Funds support. The PFR identifies the key Human Resource Development priorities set out in the NDP which are: activating, mobilising and enhancing the quality of labour supply while preventing the drift into unemployment and long-term unemployment including those exposed to social exclusion. The PFR analyses the priorities for the use of the structural funds' assistance over the period 2000-2006 and in particular the ESF. The PFR strategy has been instrumental in framing the ESF measure-level co-funding priorities outlined in the Employment and Human Resources Development Operational Programme 2000-2006 recently submitted to the Commission.

In summary these are:

⇒ **Active labour market measures**

Early school leaving (prevention and progression, including literacy/numeracy)

Strengthening the preventive strategy in employability, particularly through the development of the public employment service

Reintegration of the long-term unemployed through more targeted and flexible interventions

Tackling adult literacy/numeracy

Promotion of wider third level access for disadvantaged students

⇒ **Equality of access to labour market**

Promotion of social inclusion measures including local development

⇒ **Lifelong learning**

Promoting a lifelong learning framework for education and training

⇒ **Adaptability and Entrepreneurship**

Development of in-company training (particularly SMEs)

Development of models of traineeship and apprenticeship

⇒ **Gender Equality**

Promotion of a gender-mainstreaming strategy

Childcare provision

APPENDIX 4: Demographic Trends

Ireland's demographic trend is forecast to undergo major changes in the period between now and 2006. According to latest estimates from the Central Statistics Office, Ireland's population is 3.744 millions of which 40% are under the age of 25 years. The following Table shows population by age group (April 1999 estimates):

Table 3

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of total</i>
0 to 14	829.3	22%
15 to 24	657.9	18%
25 to 44	1073.1	29%
45+	1,184.4	31%
TOTAL	3,744.7	100%

The Irish population is, on average, younger than the European norm. The median age of the Irish population is presently 30 years approx. whereas it is generally closer to 40 years in most other European countries. People aged 15 years and under constitute a greater proportion of the population in Ireland than either the EU average or that in any other EU Member State (23% compared with average 17% in the EU). Over 65's make up a relatively small percentage of the Irish population at about 11.4% as compared with an EU average of 16%.

The ESRI predict that the numbers of 13 to 18 year olds will decline by about 10% with further falls in the latter end of the Decade. Similar falls are forecast for the Third level educational system (19 to 20 year olds). While this has obvious implications for future priorities in expenditure on education, it will also impact on labour supply in an already tightening labour market. In addition, a trend is developing whereby poorly qualified young people are taking up low-skilled employment in the current economic boom. The CSO's First Quarter 2000 QNHS Results confirms that the underlying increase in the labour force remains strong with annual growth of 82,000 in the year to First Quarter 2000 which is comparable to growth figures of the previous two Quarters. The demographic effect (i.e. increase in the population of working age) contributed about 38,300 to this growth while the remaining 43,800 was due to higher participation in the labour force. The increase in participation rates is accounted for primarily by increases in the participation of young people (under 25s) and married females age 25 to 54. Since the early 1980s there have been increasing retention rates in the second-level education system – a target rate of 90% retention to Leaving Certificate was set in the early 1990s. However, the statistics indicate that the proportion of second level school students securing Leaving Certificate standard has remained just above 80% for the last three years.

The long-term implications of any downturn in economic growth could have serious consequences for those with poor levels of educational qualifications and lead to the creation of a pool of unskilled unemployed facing the prospect of long-term unemployment and drift into dependency.

APPENDIX 5: Consultation Questionnaire

EQUAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT
(SOCIAL PARTNERS)

Initiative formally launched 14th April 2000 by the Portuguese
Presidency of the European Union

Dear Colleague

A key challenge facing policy makers over the coming years is the need to mobilise all available sources of labour supply to meet general and skills shortages arising in the Irish labour market.

A single human resources Community Initiative to replace EMPLOYMENT and ADAPT will operate for the period 2000 - 2006 with assistance from the European Social Fund. This new Initiative - EQUAL - will aim to develop co-operation in order to promote new ways means of combating all forms of exclusion, discrimination and inequalities in connection with access to the labour market and those already in employment.

The total amount of European Social Funds available to Ireland will be 32 million Euro (over £25 million) over the period. The new Initiative will form part of an overall strategy of ensuring that the fund reflects the policy objectives of the Employment Action Plan and the EU Employment Guidelines. EQUAL will operate in a number of thematic fields grouped under the four Pillars of the European Employment Strategy - entrepreneurship, employability, adaptability and equal opportunities for women and men mainly through geographical or development **Partnerships**. These may include combinations of relevant public authorities, N.G.O's, trade unions, employees, employer groups, local/regional authorities, training/educational establishments and client target groups. Proposals from Partnerships will only be funded where they contain an integrated and strategic approach to the problems common to different forms of discrimination and inequality rather than focusing on a single issue or specific target group.

The Commission has engaged Member States in strategy meetings to discuss commonality and areas for co-operation amongst MS on the themes under the EQUAL Initiative. In accordance with the Belfast Agreement there will also be co-operation between Northern Ireland and the Republic on a North-South element or elements of the EQUAL Programme. That Agreement established a special EU Programmes Body to oversee Community Initiative Programmes such as Interreg 3 and Peace 2 and any North/South elements to EQUAL and the remaining Community Initiative Programmes. A strategic focus for North/South co-operation has been provided by the setting up of a North/South Ministerial Council as part of the new institutional framework within which North/South co-operation can take place.

The EQUAL Community Initiative was formally launched under the Portuguese Presidency on 14th April 2000. Member States have four months from the date of publication (5th May 2000) of the Commission Guidelines in the Official EU Journal within which to submit a draft Community Initiative Programme (CIP). The Commission has given the 15th September 2000

as the final date for submission of the Programme. A five month negotiation period with the Commission follows. The Commission has proposed (best scenario) that, following agreement on all CIPs, it is intended that first calls for partnership proposals are made by end-February, 2001. Subsequently, a preparatory phase to last not more than six months is proposed within which the selected Development Partnerships are to be formed and transnational partners consolidated. This is referred to as Action 1 in the Commission Guidelines. A copy of the commission Guidelines is also attached for your information.

Successful Partnerships will move to the activity phase (Commission proposes end-September 2001 as commencement date) to last an initial period of between two and three years (Action 2 of the Guidelines). A dissemination/mainstreaming phase has been proposed by the Commission as a separate activity under the Guidelines (Action 3). Useful experience or lessons from Action 1 should be disseminated also.

The broad priorities which arise in EQUAL are transnationality, innovation and mainstreaming. The projects funded under EQUAL must be experimental and novel and suggest new ways and approaches for addressing all forms of discrimination and inequalities in connection with the labour market. EQUAL must also be firmly linked to national priorities and the National Employment Action Plan, in particular, from the outset in order to enhance the potential for feeding the lessons learned into the mainstream of policy and practice.

In summary the action time table as proposed by the Commission is as follows:

5th May 2000- OJ publication

15th September: Community Initiative Programme Document drafted by Member states

Commission negotiations on CIP completed within at most five months

End-February: Call 1st Round projects

End May 2001: DPs proposals submitted (re setting up DPs and transnational co-operation agreements)- Action 1 of Guidelines

May - September 2001: Selection process completed

End Sept. 2001: Projects commence - Action 2 of Guidelines

The purpose of this letter is to invite your comments on the operation and implementation of the EQUAL Community Initiative in Ireland. In order to assist you in this process I append a Questionnaire document and some further background material (including a Frequently Asked Question Document prepared by the Commission on the proposed Programme).

You may use the Questionnaire document in order to frame your response but please feel free to provide additional commentary on any other issue(s) which you regard as relevant to the Programme. The Document is also available on the Department's website www.entemp.ie and you may respond by e-mail if you wish.

We would like your comments by 1st September in order to finalise a draft CIP for submission to the Commission.

However, the CIP will undoubtedly be refined over the following months based on the views of the Commission and other interested parties.

Yours sincerely

Tommy Murray
EU Initiatives Section

Please respond by post or E-Mail by 1st September, 2000 to:

Tommy Murray
EU Initiatives Section
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Room 409
Davitt House
Adelaide Road
Dublin 2

NB: Please note that any responses received may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act

E-mail: Thomas_Murray@entemp.ie
Telephone: 6313190
Fax: 6313262

EQUAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVE
CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Q1: ORGANISATIONAL DETAILS

Q2: IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CURRENT LABOUR MARKET SITUATION WHAT SHOULD BE THE OVERALL AIM OR AIMS OF EQUAL IN IRELAND ?

Q3: IN THE CONTEXT OF CURRENT LABOUR MARKET PROBLEMS AND GIVEN THE CURRENT LABOUR MARKET SITUATION AND THE RELATIVELY SMALL AMOUNT OF FUNDING- WHAT PRIORITY THEMES SHOULD BE ADDRESSED IN ORDER TO ENSURE MAXIMUM ADDED VALUE?

Q4: IN THE CONTEXT OF THE THEMES , DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS AND THE FOUR ACTIONS UNDER EQUAL HOW SHOULD NORTH/SOUTH CO-OPERATION BE DEVELOPED?

Q5: HAVE YOU INFORMATION REGARDING POTENTIAL TRANSNATIONAL PARTNERS IN OTHER MEMBER STATES ? IF SO, PLEASE ELABORATE.

Q6: FROM YOUR ORGANISATION'S PERSPECTIVE, WHAT ARE THE KEY ISSUES WITHIN THE FOUR PILLAR PRIORITIES AND THEMATIC SUBTHEMES THAT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED UNDER EQUAL?

Q7: HAS YOUR ORGANISATION BEEN INVOLVED WITH THE PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT AND ADAPT COMMUNITY INITIATIVES? IF YES PLEASE INDICATE WHAT LESSONS NEED TO BE CARRIED FORWARD INTO THE EQUAL PROGRAMME

Q8: IS YOUR ORGANISATION INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN AN EQUAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP? IF SO, PLEASE INDICATE WHETHER ON A GEOGRAPHICAL OR SECTORAL BASIS OR BOTH

Q9: GIVEN THE INTEGRATED AND HORIZONTAL NATURE OF EQUAL HOW CAN THE OBJECTIVES OF A BOTTOM-UP AND ALL INCLUSIVE APPROACH BEST BE MET IN THE PROGRAMME, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO THE PARTICIPATION OF SMALLER ORGANISATIONS AND GROUPS?

Q10: THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM EQUAL ARE TO BE MAINSTREAMED AT BOTH THE HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL LEVEL. WHAT OVERALL MAINSTREAMING STRATEGY AND MECHANISM(S) SHOULD BE ADOPTED TO BEST ACHIEVE THIS AIM?

Q11: DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER VIEWS ABOUT THE DIRECTION OF THE PROGRAMME OR ON ANY OTHER ASSOCIATED TOPICS NOT COVERED ABOVE?

APPENDIX 6: Management structures

Managing Authority role:

(1) Co-financed expenditure

The responsibilities of the Managing Authority with regard to the management and monitoring of the EU co-funded element of the CIP are defined under the relevant Articles of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999. These include:

- A. chairing and providing the secretariat for the Monitoring Committee (Article 35.2);
- B. assembling statistical and financial information required for monitoring the Operational Programme. The relevant information will be supplied to the Monitoring Committee, and, in a computerised format to be determined by the Department of Finance in agreement with the European Commission, to the NDP/CSF Managing Authority (Department of Finance) and to the European Commission; (Article 34.1)
- C. drawing up the annual implementation report for approval by the Monitoring Committee and submission to the Commission (Article 34.1);
- D. after submission to the European Commission of the annual report, reviewing with the Commission and the Department of Finance the main outcomes of the previous year and preparing with the agreement of the Department of Finance the Member State's response to any recommendation from the Commission. (Article 34.2);
- E. organising in co-operation with the Commission, the Department of Finance and the CSF Evaluation Unit, the mid-term evaluation of the Programme (Article 42);
- F. submitting payment claims to the Paying Authorities for the Structural Funds in compliance with any instructions which these authorities may issue;
- G. ensuring the correctness of operations financed under the assistance. This involves ensuring that implementing bodies and final beneficiaries properly account for and manage EU funded expenditure and that these bodies maintain a separate accounting system or an adequate accounting code for such expenditure;
- H. ensuring compliance with EU policies, particularly regarding competition policy, public procurement, publicity, the environment and equality (Article 34.1);
- I. ensuring the preparation and implementation of a CIP Communications Action Plan for Information and Publicity (Articles 34.1 and 46);
- J. preparing the programming complement for approval by the Monitoring Committee any subsequent adjustments to the complement (Article 34(3)).

(2) Non-co-financed expenditure

The Managing Authority will also carry out the responsibilities and functions above for non-co-financed expenditure under the CIP, except for those at d, f and g which will apply exclusively to EU co-financed expenditure. For monitoring purposes the Managing Authority will be required to produce information on expenditure which will include EU co-financed and non co-financed expenditure in a standard format in consultation with the Department of Finance.

The Managing Authority will have primary responsibility for the correctness of management and implementation of those operations under the CIP financed by Structural Funds (Article 34.1, Council Regulation 1260/99). It is responsible for gathering reliable information, ensuring proper accounts are kept, that the operations are correct and compliance with Community rules.

Audit Arrangements

Commission regulation No. 2064/1997 sets out detailed arrangements for the minimum level of financial control throughout the EU for the financial management of the Structural Funds including the ESF and is an integral element of the EU's policy of sound and efficient management by the year 2000 (SEM 2000) which came into effect in 1997. The Department of Finance Circular 23/98 sets out the financial management and control procedures generally required for the Structural Funds while the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment Circular 1/99 refers specifically to requirements in respect of the European Social Fund.

The system-based audits of EU co-financed expenditure required under Article 3.1 (a) of Commission Regulation 2064/97 will be performed by the Internal Audit Unit of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, which is independent of the Unit responsible for the management and payment of the Structural Funds Assistance. The ESF Financial Control Unit will be responsible for random audit checks of Fund related expenditure in both the Development Partnerships established under EQUAL and within the Managing Authority.

Before the Structural Funds Assistance is wound up, the Head of the Internal Audit Unit will be responsible for presenting to the Commission a declaration summarising the conclusions of the checks carried out during previous years and shall assess the validity of the application for payment of the final balance and the legality and regularity of the transactions covered by the final certificate of expenditure (Article 38.1 (f) of the Regulation).

Financial Management Roles

Without prejudice to the Commission's responsibility for implementing the general budget of the European Communities, Ireland shall take responsibility in the first instance for the financial control of assistance. Financial management and control will involve a series of interlocking certification and verification operations across different tiers of management. The specific roles and responsibilities of these different tiers are outlined in this Appendix. Management and financial provisions may require adjustment in order to comply with any future rules enacted under Art 53 (2) of Regulation 1260/99.

Where the designated Managing Authority and Paying Authority is the same body, complete separation of the two functions will be ensured.

Paying Authority

As the Paying Authority, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment will, in relation to the Structural Funds co-financed expenditure, be responsible for:

- submitting not later than 30 April of each year expenditure forecasts to the Commission for the current and following year (Article 32.7).
- managing the payment on account of Funds,
- drawing up and submitting certified payment applications to the Commission on the basis of expenditure actually incurred by the Final Beneficiaries
- ensuring that the final beneficiary receives the EU contribution as quickly as possible; (Article 32.3) and final (Article 32.4)
- recovering sums due to the Funds and for the application of financial corrections where they arise as a result of the discovery of administrative errors, or from events

arising from the management of the programmes or from the establishment of irregularities under Article 39.

The Paying Authority will, on behalf of the Member State, be responsible for ensuring that the Managing Authority exercises its responsibilities in ensuring that payments are legal and regular, and for preventing and detecting irregularities. It will certify that expenditure declarations are accurate and resulting from accounting systems based on verifiable supporting documentation (Article 38.1 a, c, d and e, Council Regulation 1260/99). The Paying Authority will require the Managing Authority to provide adequate assurance that Community rules are being complied with before claims are certified and submitted to the Commission.

The Managing Authority may delegate part of its functions in relation to the day-to-day management of EU co-financed expenditure to a third-party provided that sound financial management systems are in place. In that event, the delegated function and normal functions of the third party will be carried out by a separate Unit. The Development Partnerships, through the designated lead Partner, will be responsible for submitting eligible expenditure in the format (both electronic and hard copy) required by the Managing Authority in order for payment claims to be made by the Paying Authority.

The designated lead partner will be responsible for ensuring that all payment claims for Structural Fund expenditure submitted are supported with receipted invoices or accounting documents of equivalent probative value, and that a clear audit trail exists. They will also be responsible for ensuring that only eligible expenditure actually incurred, in respect of co-financed measures/projects, is submitted to the Managing Authority. It will be the responsibility of the Managing Authority to ensure that control checks are carried out on at least 5% of expenditure transactions (Article 3.1(b) and 3.2 of Commission Regulation 2064/97). These controls will be carried out as an independent function.

Use of Euro

The Euro must be used for all grant letters of offer, project approvals, and payment claims in respect of EU co-financed expenditure (Article 33, Council Regulation 1260/99). All financial reports in respect of both EU co-financed and non-co-financed expenditure must be in Euro. The Paying Authority may issue Structural Funds payments received in IR£ during the period to 1 January 2002.

Irregularity Reporting

The Department of Finance will be responsible for reporting irregularities, notified to them by the Managing Authority, to the Commission (Article 38.1 (e), Council Regulation 1260/99).

Integrated Data Management System

Article 18 of Council Regulation No 1260/99 requires that Operational Programmes contain a description of the arrangements agreed between the Commission and the Member State for the computerised exchange, where possible, of data required to fulfil the management, monitoring and evaluation requirements in respect of Structural Funds assistance. A computerised system is being developed in the Department of Finance for this purpose. The system will be used to monitor all NDP expenditure and associated indicators. Information will be collected and codified at project level for ERDF, the Cohesion Fund, and Community Initiatives and other non

EU co-funded capital projects and at measure level for other Structural Funds. [With respect to codification, it is proposed that the Managing Authority will furnish with the Programme Complement the link between each measure and the corresponding category(ies) in the Commission's list of fields of interventions]. The system will facilitate the collection of financial information on a monthly basis and physical monitoring on a quarterly basis. Data will be inputted by the DPs, through the TSS and mechanisms are being developed to support such data transmission.

Double Funding Checks

All Development Partnerships will be required to maintain either a separate accounting system or an appropriate accounting codification capable of providing a detailed and complete audit trail of all receipts and expenditure and transactions involving Community assistance. The integrated data management system will also be used as a tool for checking and preventing instances of double funding of the same or similar activities and operations. In that regard, project promoters and the Development Partnerships will be requested to declare, in the first instance, all sources of funding related to the activities and operations concerned.

The NDP/Structural Funds Computer System is designed to support programming, financial and physical monitoring and the making and monitoring of payments. It is based on a client/server application giving Government Departments and the Regional Assemblies access to a central database. All required financial and physical progress information, appropriately codified, including annual reports to enable the European Commission to fulfil its responsibilities under the Structural Funds Regulations will be relayed electronically to the Commission by the Managing and Paying Authorities, as appropriate. The frequency of electronic transmission will conform to the management requirements as agreed between the Commission and the Managing Authority and the Department of Finance.

Because it is intended to use the same integrated data management system for all Operational Programme as well as management, monitoring and evaluation data purposes, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, as ESF Payment Authority and as Managing Authority for the CIP and the mainstream OP is in ongoing contact with the Department of Finance in relation to the development and deployment of this system. These contacts are aimed at ensuring that the system addresses ESF as fully as needs require and that it provides a fully functional basis for national and Operational Programme–level management of ESF funds.

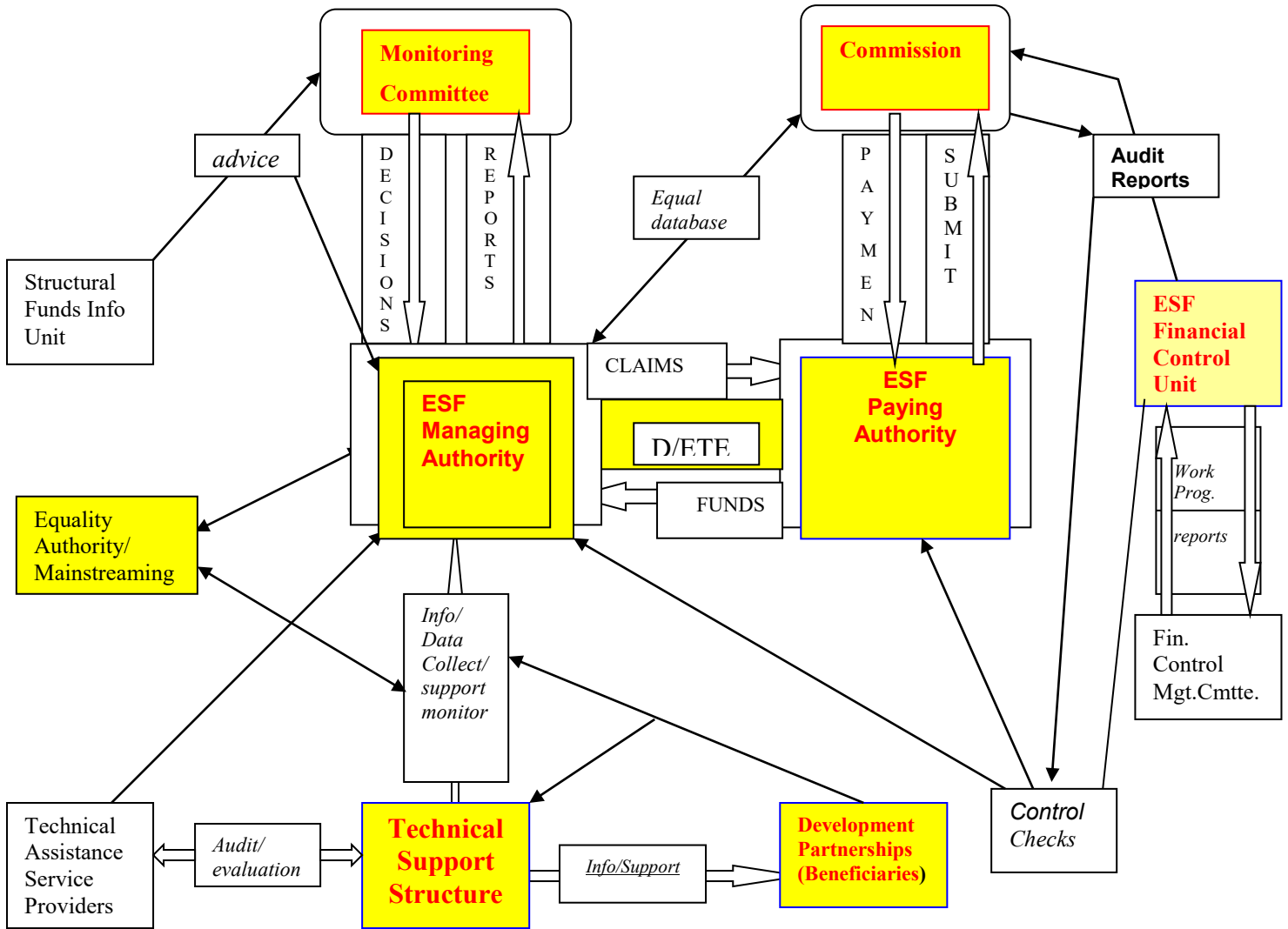
Organisation Flow chart

Appendix 6.B summarises graphically the various relationships between organisations detailed in this CIP.

Appendix 6.C summarises graphically the Financial management and Control Arrangements for drawdown of ESF Funds.

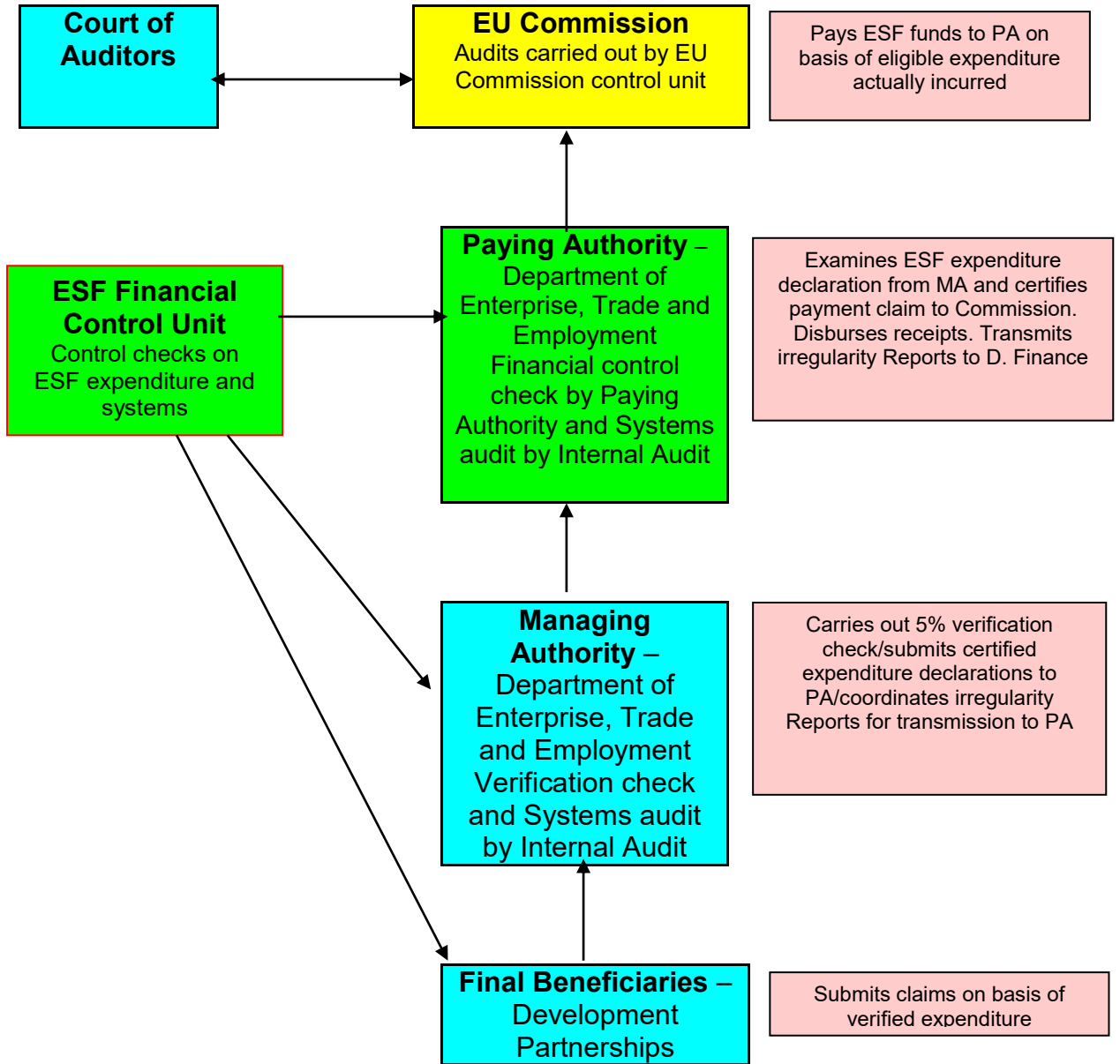
APPENDIX 6(B) FLOW CHART

MAIN FUNCTIONS OF ORGANISATIONS IN CIP



Note: The Managing Authority and the Paying Authority are both contained in the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

Appendix 6.C Flowchart
 Financial Management and Control Arrangements for drawdown of ESF Funds



APPENDIX 7

Financial table for Operational Programme by priority and by year
Commission Reference No Operational Programme

Member State: IRELAND

Title: Community Initiative EQUAL - IRELAND

meuro

Priority / Year	Total Eligible Cost (+2+9+10) 1	Total Public Elig. Cost (3+4) 2	ESF partic. 3	National public participation					Private Elig. Cost (est.) 9	Revenue (est.) 10
				Total (5+6+7) 4	Central 5	Regional 6	Local 7	Other (to be specified) 8		
Priority 1 (Pillar 1)	20.34000	19.32300	15.25500	4.06800	4.06800	0	0	0	1.01700	0
2001	3.12000	2.96400	2.34000	0.62400	0.62400				0.15600	
2002	3.44160	3.26952	2.58120	0.68832	0.68832				0.17208	
2003	3.41760	3.24672	2.56320	0.68352	0.68352				0.17088	
2004	3.42720	3.25584	2.57040	0.68544	0.68544				0.17136	
2005	3.47040	3.29688	2.60280	0.69408	0.69408				0.17352	
2006	3.46320	3.29004	2.59740	0.69264	0.69264				0.17316	
Priority 2 (Pillar 2)	4.52000	4.29400	3.39000	0.90400	0.90400	0	0	0	0.22600	0
2001	0.69333	0.65867	0.52000	0.13867	0.13867				0.03467	
2002	0.76480	0.72656	0.57360	0.15296	0.15296				0.03824	
2003	0.75947	0.72149	0.56960	0.15189	0.15189				0.03797	
2004	0.76160	0.72352	0.57120	0.15232	0.15232				0.03808	
2005	0.77120	0.73264	0.57840	0.15424	0.15424				0.03856	
2006	0.76960	0.73112	0.57720	0.15392	0.15392				0.03848	
Priority 3 (Pillar 3)	9.04000	8.58800	6.78000	1.80800	1.80800	0	0	0	0.45200	0
2001	1.38667	1.31733	1.04000	0.27733	0.27733				0.06933	
2002	1.52960	1.45312	1.14720	0.30592	0.30592				0.07648	
2003	1.51893	1.44299	1.13920	0.30379	0.30379				0.07595	
2004	1.52320	1.44704	1.14240	0.30464	0.30464				0.07616	
2005	1.54240	1.46528	1.15680	0.30848	0.30848				0.07712	
2006	1.53920	1.46224	1.15440	0.30784	0.30784				0.07696	
Priority 4 (Pillar 4)	5.42400	5.15280	4.06800	1.08480	1.08480	0	0	0	0.27120	0
2001	0.83200	0.79040	0.62400	0.16640	0.16640				0.04160	
2002	0.91776	0.87187	0.68832	0.18355	0.18355				0.04589	
2003	0.91136	0.86579	0.68352	0.18227	0.18227				0.04557	
2004	0.91392	0.86822	0.68544	0.18278	0.18278				0.04570	
2005	0.92544	0.87917	0.69408	0.18509	0.18509				0.04627	
2006	0.92352	0.87734	0.69264	0.18470	0.18470				0.04618	

Priority 5 (A-S)	2.26000	2.14700	1.69500	0.45200	0.45200	0	0	0	0.11300	0
2001	0.34667	0.32933	0.26000	0.06933	0.06933				0.01733	
2002	0.38240	0.36328	0.28680	0.07648	0.07648				0.01912	
2003	0.37974	0.36075	0.28480	0.07595	0.07595				0.01899	
2004	0.38080	0.36176	0.28560	0.07616	0.07616				0.01904	
2005	0.38560	0.36632	0.28920	0.07712	0.07712				0.01928	
2006	0.38480	0.36556	0.28860	0.07696	0.07696				0.01924	
Tech. Ass.	5.42400	5.42400	2.71200	2.71200	2.71200	0	0	0	0.00000	0
2001	0.83200	0.83200	0.41600	0.41600	0.41600				0.00000	
2002	0.91776	0.91776	0.45888	0.45888	0.45888				0.00000	
2003	0.91136	0.91136	0.45568	0.45568	0.45568				0.00000	
2004	0.91392	0.91392	0.45696	0.45696	0.45696				0.00000	
2005	0.92544	0.92544	0.46272	0.46272	0.46272				0.00000	
2006	0.92352	0.92352	0.46176	0.46176	0.46176				0.00000	
Total	47.00801	44.92880	33.90000	11.02880	11.02880	0	0	0	2.07920	0

Note: All funding is ESF related
i.e. an estimate for non co-
financed expenditure has not
been included

Intervention rate for 2001 - 2006
is 75%. Technical Assistance is
at 50% intervention for all years

Financial table for Programme Complement by priority and by measure

Commission Reference No Operational Programme

Member State: **IRELAND**Title: **Community Initiative EQUAL - IRELAND**

Priority / Measure	Total Elig. Cost	Total Public Elig. Cost	ESF particip.	National public participation					Private Elig. Cost	Revenue
				Total	Central	Regional	Local	Other (to be specified)		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Priority 1 (Pillar 1)			45%							
Theme a Obj. 1			45%							
Theme b Obj. 1			0%							
Priority 2 (Pillar 2)			10%							
Theme c Obj. 1			10%							
Theme d Obj. 1			0%							
Priority 3 (Pillar 3)			20%							
Theme e Obj. 1			10.0%							
Theme f Obj. 1			10.0%							
Priority 4 (Pillar 4)			12%							
Theme g Obj. 1			12%							
Theme h Obj. 1			0%							
Priority 5 (A-S)			5%							
A-S Obj. 1			5%							
Tech. Ass.			8%							
Total			100%							

APPENDIX 8:Overall evaluation approach	
ACTION 1: Setting up DPs and transnational Co-operation (TC)	
National and Trans-national Co-operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the types of <u>partners</u> participating in the DP and TC (enterprises, public bodies, social partners, NGOs...+geographical/sectoral) and what is their background (co-operation prior to EQUAL and nature of their links)? What difficulties were encountered in forming the partnerships and how long did it take? • Preliminary assessment/formulation of hypothesis of the <u>potential of the co-operations</u> , based on the representative capacity of the DP/TC in relation to the objectives and expectations on the co-operation and the financial and other commitment of each partner by using the DP and TC Agreements and other documentation. • Monitor and analyse <u>partnerships/projects that are abandoned</u> during or at the end of Action 1, registering numbers and types and analysing reasons for not being able to successfully finalise the first phase.
Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How/to what degree have the <u>expectations</u> in terms of testing/developing new modes been explicitly formulated, documented/motivated and quantified? • Have the ways in which the <u>national and transnational co-operation</u> should <u>contribute</u> to the testing/development of the method/approach been adequately specified and quantified? What is the role of each partner? • What evidence is there of empowerment /<u>participation</u> of the groups at which the project is targeted in the definition/planning stages?
Dissemination & Main-streaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a <u>strategic plan</u> for dissemination and mainstreaming activities? • Have the ways in which the <u>national and transnational co-operation</u> should <u>contribute</u> to the dissemination/mainstreaming activities been specified? Role of each partner?
Thematic approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What evidence is there of a <u>gender perspective</u> being applied in the definition/planning of work programmes and activities? • Specific questions in relation to the link between the DP activities and the selected themes, <u>sub-themes and specific objectives</u>

ACTION 2: Implementing Work programme

- Examine the type and intensity of the realised co-operations, achieved documented activities of the DPs and outcomes of the co-operation, looking into reasons for deviations from original plans.

- What can be said about any explicit contribution of/links between (different types of) national and/or transnational co-operation and project outcomes (degree of innovation, effectiveness of activities, empowerment/participation, dissemination/mainstreaming)?

- Try to identify determinant factors affecting the degree and type of innovation

- Assess the actual contribution of the national and transnational co-operation to the achieved results

- Assess the potential of the achieved results to increase the effectiveness of national policy delivery if transferred, using quantitative follow-ups (outcomes, drop-out rates etc.) in combination with qualitative sections ('softer' outcomes for individuals and organisations in terms of e.g. confidence and capacity building, changes in corporate attitudes etc.)

- What evidence is there of empowerment effects/participation of the groups at which the project is targeted in/through the implementation? What has their reaction to EQUAL been?

- Have project outcomes been documented in a systematic and suitable form to facilitate dissemination and mainstreaming?

- What has been the intensity and content/type of DPs contribution to the national thematic networking?

- Analysis of any local/regional/national dissemination and transfers already initiated by the DPs?

Specific involvement of transnational partners?

- What evidence is there of a gender perspective being applied in the implementation of work programmes and activities?

- Specific questions in relation to the link between the DP activities and the selected themes, sub-themes and specific objectives

ACTION 3: Thematic networking, dissemination and mainstreaming

- a) Analysis of the system for quality check and methodological generalisation of DP results? How is good practice identified?
- b) Have strategies for horizontal (practices at local/regional/national level) and vertical (policy at regional/national level) mainstreaming been put in place with formal/informal routines for the dissemination to relevant actors? At what level (DP/local/regional/national)? Obstacles/barriers?
- c) Which actors have been involved in the process?
- d) What evidence is there of actual/potential horizontal and vertical mainstreaming? Obstacles/barriers? Indications of the importance of the transnational co-operation as a factor in the process?
- e) What evidence is there of a potential for further dissemination and mainstreaming at the European level?
- f) What evidence is there of a gender perspective being applied in the dissemination and mainstreaming strategies and activities?

APPENDIX 9: Monitoring Quantitative/Qualitative Data

<u>Minimum (input and output) Quantitative Data</u>	<u>Accompanying Minimum Qualitative Information</u>
<p>Action 1, Setting up partnerships: Data to be collected/registered at the end of Action 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total and Average Amounts spent to set up DP/TC - Average Time spent to set up DP/TC - Average Number of partners in DP/TC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geographical or sectoral DP, themes - Type of national and transnational partners: public authority (national, regional, local); education/training body; chamber of commerce/industry/craft; employment service; services/enterprises/NGOs...- list to be agreed), countries
<p>Action 2, Implementing work programmes: - Amounts spent with distribution by core activities (list to be agreed) and separation for transnational co-operation activities (e.g. meetings with transnational partners)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where applicable, number of beneficiaries (persons/companies/other) in the core activities and distribution by gender and status in the labour market, asylum seekers (persons), size and sector (companies)* - Number of transnational meetings attended/time spent in events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classification/encodage of the principal type of innovation pursued <i>during the year</i> according to the general typology in <u>Annex A</u> - Classification/encodage of the principal TC activity carried out <i>during the year</i> according to the general typology in <u>Annex B</u>
<p>Action 3, National networking, dissemination & mainstreaming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amounts spent for specific preparation and participation - Number of events attended/Time spent in events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Type of event (meeting/conference/other)
<p>DPs participation in European level networking, dissemination & mainstreaming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amounts spent for preparation and participation - Number of events attended/Time spent in events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Type of event (thematic review/discussion forum/other)

ANNEX A: GENERAL TYPOLOGY OF INNOVATION (Source: European-wide evaluation of "EMPLOYMENT", final Report by NEI/FHVR; point 25 EQUAL Guidelines)

The following overall categories of innovation can be distinguished:

- Process-oriented
- Goal-oriented
- Context-oriented

Process-oriented innovations

Focuses on the process of reaching the objectives, through the *development of*

new methods/tools/approaches or the improvement/adaptation of existing ones

Goal-oriented innovations

Centre around the *formulation of new objectives/new subject-areas/new uses/new target-groups*, thus mainly focusing on the objectives and results of the activities

Context-oriented innovations

Refer to the political and institutional structures within which the activities take place and the objectives are pursued and aim to improve *the frame conditions* or reorganise the existing settings, e.g. by developing/adapting networking practices

ANNEX B: GENERAL TYPOLOGY OF TRANSNATIONAL CO-OPERATION (Source: European-wide evaluation of "EMPLOYMENT" final Report by NEI/FHVR; European-wide evaluation of "ADAPT" final Report by PLS Consultants)

The following main models of transnational co-operation can be distinguished according to the objectives and the contents of co-operation between the project partners:

1. Exchange of information and experiences ('getting to know each other')

This model usually represents the starting point of transnational co-operation and it is also the common denominator for all the following models. Partners exchange information about their projects and the background to their activities. Partners have not explicitly defined *joint* concrete objectives of their co-operation at this stage.

2. Parallel development of innovative approaches

In this model, partners share and pursue a common concrete objective, yet work relatively independently (in parallel) of each other on the practical realisation of their common goal. The exchange of experiences is less general and more systematically goal-related than in the first model above. It is a systematic attempt to secure support in the development of innovations from partners with comparable interests.

3. Import, export or adoption of new approaches and their adaptation to own situation

This model is usually a variant or continuation of the "parallel development"-model above, coming into play when it becomes apparent in the course of transnational co-operation that the project partner already has a largely "complete" solution for one's own problem. In that case transnationality makes it possible for certain partners to have access to insights which the other partner already possesses.

4. Joint development – division of tasks with a common objective

This model often results from partnerships that have been in existence for some time. It implies a common perception of the problem and an intention to find a joint solution to it, making conscious use of individual strengths. The steps required to solve the problem are defined and the resulting tasks divided up among the project partners.

5. Sub-model/additional activity: Exchange of trainees/trainers/staff

The exchange of trainees, trainers or staff between the transnational partners is an additional activity or a sub-model which usually occurs in parallel with one of the four main models. But these activities need to go beyond study visits (otherwise they would belong to the first model of co-operation above). There has to be a precise definition of the specific objectives of the exchange in relation to the further development and progress towards the common project objective.

Appendix 10: Data to be collected for the Equal common database (ECDB)

18/12/2000

A. General information (ongoing information)

FIELDS Type of data / Items...

A1.	Id Codes	European = Country + national ID <i>Each DP receives a unique code at European level. It is made up of a maximum of 4 letters identifying the Member State and x characters as decided by the Member State.</i>
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A2.	Status of the application	<i>Indicate the status of the application in MS</i>
		Multiple choice Action 1 and/or Action 2 <input type="checkbox"/> in selection process <input type="checkbox"/> approved for action 1 <input type="checkbox"/> approved for action 2 <input type="checkbox"/> project ended

B. Action 1 : Set up of the Development partnership (ongoing information)

B1.	Dates	<input type="checkbox"/> Application date : date field <input type="checkbox"/> Selection date for action 1 : date field
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B2.	Title of the DP' project National language	Text field – max 80 characters <i>Simple & short Can be modified during action 1</i>
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B3.	Title of the DP' project International characters	Text field – max 80 characters <i>Latin alphabet without accented letters...</i>
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B4.	Partners to be involved	<i>For each item, click in the list of the members</i>
		Concerns DP initiators <input type="checkbox"/> Partner 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Partner 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Partner ...n

B5.	DP's managing organisation	One choice in the table of the partners <i>Concerns the partner who has administrative and financial responsibility within the DP. If the DP has its own legal constitution, that structure will be identified in the list of partners. Click in the list of the members</i>
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B6.	Other responsibilities – contacts	<i>For each item, click in the list of the members</i>
		<input type="checkbox"/> Design of the project <input type="checkbox"/> Co-ordination of experimental activities <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring, data collection <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Transnational partnership

B7.	EQUAL Theme – Measure	Max 1 choice
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		<input type="checkbox"/> Employability - Access to the labour market <input type="checkbox"/> Employability - Combating racism <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneurship - Business creation <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneurship - Social economy <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptability - Life long learning <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptability - Information technology <input type="checkbox"/> Equal opportunities – Reconciling family and professional life <input type="checkbox"/> Equal opportunities - Reducing gender gaps <input type="checkbox"/> Asylum seekers
B8.	Sub-themes	<p>This field is foreseen in the ECDB. The content and the codification will be developed in a second step according to sub-themes coming up from practice. The codification could be set up manually, with help of each NSS.</p> <p>This field is not a compulsory part of the national database</p>
B9.	Geographical/sectoral	<p>Max 1choice</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Size of the geographical area linked with a Nuts table</i></p>
	If geographical	<input type="checkbox"/> Rural area <input type="checkbox"/> Urban area <input type="checkbox"/> Town, city <input type="checkbox"/> Travel to work area <input type="checkbox"/>
	If sectoral	<p>Max 1choice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic sector : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Services • <input type="checkbox"/> Specific discrimination and inequality problems
B10.	DP's status	<p>Max 1 choice</p>
	Legal form	<input type="checkbox"/> Association without legal form <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit making organisation <input type="checkbox"/> Consortium <input type="checkbox"/>
	Pre-existing partnership (before Equal)	<p>Max 1choice</p> <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> ≤ 2 years <input type="checkbox"/> > 2 years
		Text field : explanation of the pre-existing partnership
B11.	DP linguistic skills	<p>4 Scroll down menus</p> <p>1° Choice : en/fr/de/it/es/pt/sv/fi/da/nl/el/hu/pl/cz/sk/... 2° Choice : en/fr/de/it/es/pt/sv/fi/da/nl/el/hu/pl/cz/sk/... 3° Choice : en/fr/de/it/es/pt/sv/fi/da/nl/el/hu/pl/cz/sk/... 4° Choice : en/fr/de/it/es/pt/sv/fi/da/nl/el/hu/pl/cz/sk/...</p>
B12.	DP's background in CI	<p>Max 1choice</p> <input type="checkbox"/> One partner involved in ADAPT/EMPLOYMENT <input type="checkbox"/> Two and more partners involved in ADAPT/EMPLOYMENT <input type="checkbox"/> Nobody involved in ADAPT/EMPLOYMENT
B13.	Rationale for the DP	<p>§33 Rationale for the partnership, diagnosis of the problem to be addressed and explanation of how the needs of all the potential beneficiary groups will be taken into account</p> <p>Text field: Max 3 000 character.</p>
		Text field: Translation in English and optionally in other(s) language(s) (provided by DP or Member state).
B14.	Objectives of the DP	<p>Response to the rationale; objectives of the partnership</p> <p>Text field : Max 2 000 character.</p>
		Text field: Translation in English and optionally in other(s) language(s) (provided by DP or Member state).

B15.	Nature of the experimental activities to be implemented	Multiple choice.					
			+	++	++	++	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Assistance to persons <input type="checkbox"/> Training <input type="checkbox"/> Reception, orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Guidance and counselling <input type="checkbox"/> Work placement <input type="checkbox"/> employment aids (+ for self-employment)			+		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Assistance to structure and systems and accompanying measures <input type="checkbox"/> Employment creation and support <input type="checkbox"/> Training of teachers, trainers and staff <input type="checkbox"/> Improvement of employment services <input type="checkbox"/> Conception for training programmes <input type="checkbox"/> Anticipation <input type="checkbox"/> Awareness raising, information, publicity <input type="checkbox"/> Studies and analysis of discrimination features <input type="checkbox"/> ...					

B16.	Innovation	Multiple choice					
			+	++	++	++	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Process-oriented <input type="checkbox"/> Goal-oriented <input type="checkbox"/> Context oriented			+		
		Text field					

B17.	Beneficiaries	Multiple choice in each section	<i>In percentage</i>			
		<input type="checkbox"/> Assistance to persons	M	F		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed <input type="checkbox"/> Employed <input type="checkbox"/> Others (without status, social beneficiaries...)			100	100
		<input type="checkbox"/> Migrants <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic minorities <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsies, travellers <input type="checkbox"/> Asylum seekers <input type="checkbox"/> Others			100	100
		<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Impairment <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Impairment <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Illness <input type="checkbox"/> Others			100	100
		<input type="checkbox"/> Substance abusers <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless <input type="checkbox"/> (Ex-)prisoners <input type="checkbox"/> Other discriminated (religion, sexual orientation) <input type="checkbox"/> Others			100	100
		<input type="checkbox"/> < 25 year <input type="checkbox"/> 25 – 50 year <input type="checkbox"/> > 50 year			100	100
		<input type="checkbox"/> Assistance to structure and systems and accompanying measures	+	+	+	+
				+	+	+
					+	+
					+	+

		<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination and inequality in employment <input type="checkbox"/> Racial discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Asylum <input type="checkbox"/> Disabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Low qualification <input type="checkbox"/> Gender discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Other discriminations					
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B18.	Empowerment dimension	
	1° National partners	Text field: max 800 character Text field: optionally, translation in English
	2° Beneficiaries	Multiple choice
		<input type="checkbox"/> Promoting individual empowerment <input type="checkbox"/> Developing collective responsibility and capacity for action <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in the project design <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in running and evaluating activities <input type="checkbox"/> Changing attitudes and behaviour of key actors
		Text field: max 800 character
		Text field: optionally, translation in English

B19.	ESF budget requested	Max. one choice
		Total requested Budget for action 1 and 2 for the duration of the DP (ESF + national) <input type="checkbox"/> < 250 000 € <input type="checkbox"/> 250 000 – 500 000 € <input type="checkbox"/> 500 000 – 1 000 000 € <input type="checkbox"/> 1 000 000 – 1 500 000 € <input type="checkbox"/> 1 500 000 – 2 000 000 € <input type="checkbox"/> 2 000 000 – 5 000 000 € <input type="checkbox"/> > 5 000 000 €
		% of total budget for transnational activities

B20.	Searching transnational partners	Max one choice
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

B21.	Transnational co-operation intended or searched	Multiple choice				
			+	+	+	+
				+	+	+
					+	+
						+
		- Exchange of information and experiences - Parallel development of innovative approaches - Import, export or adoption of new approaches - Joint development - Exchange of trainees/trainers/staff				
		Text field				
		Text field: Translation in English and optionally in other(s) language(s) (provided by DP or Member state).				

B22.	Transnational co-operation – Preferences	Multiple choice
		<input type="checkbox"/> Bfr <input type="checkbox"/> Bnl <input type="checkbox"/> Dk <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> EL <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> Irl <input type="checkbox"/> I <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> NI <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> P <input type="checkbox"/> Fin <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> Ukgb <input type="checkbox"/> Ukni <input type="checkbox"/> candidate countries <input type="checkbox"/> other countries <input type="checkbox"/> no preferences

B23.	Last update on action 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Date field
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C. Members of the DP (ongoing information)

C1.	Name	Text field
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C2.	Acronym	(not compulsory) Text field
C3.	Address	Text field <i>link with postcode (nuts) and country</i>
C4.	Tel	Text field
C5.	Fax	Text field
C6.	Email	Text field
C7.	Web site	Text field

C8.	Type of organisation	Max one choice
		<input type="checkbox"/> Public authority (national, regional, local) <input type="checkbox"/> Enterprise <input type="checkbox"/> Employers' organisation <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Union <input type="checkbox"/> Financial institution <input type="checkbox"/> Chamber of commerce/industry/crafts <input type="checkbox"/> Organisation providing support and guidance for disadvantaged groups <input type="checkbox"/> Employment services <input type="checkbox"/> Social economy enterprise <input type="checkbox"/> Social services <input type="checkbox"/> Education / training organisation <input type="checkbox"/> University / Research organisation <input type="checkbox"/> Consortium created for managing the DP <input type="checkbox"/> Other

C8b	Type of organisation	Description who the national partners are, what they do, their clients, the aim of the partner organisations, methodologies used etc... (not compulsory)
		Text field
		Text field: Translation in English and optionally in other(s) language(s) (provided by DP or Member state).

C9.	Legal status	Max one choice
		<input type="checkbox"/> Public organisation <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit private organisation (including NGO...) <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-public organisation <input type="checkbox"/> Union, Confederation... <input type="checkbox"/> Co-operative <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Without legal status

C10.	Contact person	For each responsibility taken by the member			
			Name	Email	Tel
		<input type="checkbox"/> Administration and finance <input type="checkbox"/> Design of the project <input type="checkbox"/> Co-ordination of experimental activities <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring, data collection <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Transnational partnership <input type="checkbox"/> ... (open field) <input type="checkbox"/> ... (open field) <input type="checkbox"/> ... (open field)			

C11.	Size of the organisation	Max one choice
		<input type="checkbox"/> staff < 10 <input type="checkbox"/> staff 10 – 50 <input type="checkbox"/> staff 50 – 250 <input type="checkbox"/> > 250 <i>Permanent staff</i>

C12.	Date of joining DP	Date field
C13.	Date of leaving DP	Date field

C14.	Last update on the DP's member	Date field
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D. Action 2 : Implementation of the work programme (ongoing information)

D1.	Dates	<input type="checkbox"/> approval date for Action 2
D2.	Title of the DP' project	See Action 1
D3.	Title of the DP' project (en)	
D4.	Partners involved	<i>For each Item, click in the list of the members</i>
		DP members <input type="checkbox"/> Partner 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Partner 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Partner ...n
D6.	DP's managing organisation	
D7.	Other responsibilities – contacts	See Action 1
D8.	EQUAL Theme – Measure	See Action 1
D9.	Sub-themes	See Action 1
D10.	Geographical/sectoral	See Action 1
D11.	DP's status	See Action 1
D12.	DP linguistic skills	See Action 1
D13.	DP's background in CI	See Action 1
D14.	Rationale for the DP	See Action 1
D15.	Objectives of the DP	See Action 1
D16.	Nature of the experimental activities to be implemented	See Action 1
D17.	Innovation	See Action 1
D18.	Targeted ultimate beneficiaries	See Action 1
D19.	Empowerment dimension	See Action 1
D20.	ESF budget	See Action 1

D21.	DP Agreement	Text field : Summary of the DP agreement in max 1000 characters and, optionally, DP agreement in annexe.
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D22.	Transnational partners	Multiple choice <i>Click in the list of the Development partnerships (cf. Id Code)</i>
		<input type="checkbox"/> Transnational partner 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Transnational partner 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Transnational partner ...n

D23.	Transnational co-operation partnerships	<i>Click in the European list of the transnational co-operation partnerships (section E)</i>
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D24.	Last update on action 2	<input type="checkbox"/> date field
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E. Transnational co-operation partnerships (European level information)

E2.	Name of the Transnational co-operation partnership	To be developed
E1.	Transnational Co-operation agreement	To be developed

E3.	DP assuring the secretariat	<i>Click in the list of the Development partnerships (cf. Id Code)</i>
E4.	State of validation	To be developed
E5.	...	

F. Action 3 : Thematic networking (ongoing information)

F1.	Participation in networking	
	Participating in National networking	Multiple choice <input type="checkbox"/> Thematic field/network 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Thematic field/network 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Thematic field/network n
	Participating in European networking	Multiple choice <input type="checkbox"/> Thematic field/network 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Thematic field/network 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Thematic field/network n

F2.	Interest in networking	Text field max 1000 character
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F3.	Events	Multiple choice + text field This field is foreseen in the ECDB. The content and the codification will be developed in a second step.
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F4.	Products	Multiple choice + text field This field is foreseen in the ECDB. The content and the codification will be developed in a second step.
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F5.	Last update on action 3	<input type="checkbox"/> date field
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G. Other information for monitoring at DP level (annually consolidated information)

G.1	Beneficiaries	Total number of beneficiaries during the year : <i>alphanumeric field</i> This field needs a standardised way of counting beneficiaries : number of persons, number of persons/duration of action ... To be decided.	
		<i>In percentage</i>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Assistance to persons	M	F
	<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed <input type="checkbox"/> Employed <input type="checkbox"/> Others (without status, social beneficiaries...)	100	100
	<input type="checkbox"/> Migrants <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic minorities <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsies, travellers <input type="checkbox"/> Asylum seekers <input type="checkbox"/> Others	100	100
	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Impairment <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Impairment <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Illness <input type="checkbox"/> Others	100	100
	<input type="checkbox"/> Substance abusers <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless <input type="checkbox"/> (Ex-)prisoners <input type="checkbox"/> Other discriminated (religion, sexual orientation) <input type="checkbox"/> Others	100	100
	<input type="checkbox"/> < 25 year <input type="checkbox"/> 25 – 50 year <input type="checkbox"/> > 50 year	100	100

		<input type="checkbox"/> Assistance to structure and systems and accompanying measures	+	+	+	+
		<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination and inequality in Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Racial discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Asylum <input type="checkbox"/> Disabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Low qualification <input type="checkbox"/> Gender discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Other discriminations				

G2.	Expenditures	Evaluation by the DP of the total amount (ESF and national) spent during the year (rounded 1 000 €):
		Alphanumeric field

G3.	Breakdown of expenditures by experimental activities		<i>Percentage</i>
		I. National activities	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Assistance to persons - Training - Reception, orientation - Guidance and counselling - Work placement - Employment aids (+ for self-employment) <input type="checkbox"/> Assistance to structure and systems and accompanying measures - Employment creation and support - Training of teachers, trainers and staff - Improvement of employment services - Conception for training programmes - Anticipation - Awareness raising, information, publicity - Studies and analysis of discrimination features - ...	
		II. Transnational activities	
		- Exchange of information and experiences - Parallel development of innovative approaches - Import, export or adoption of new approaches - Joint development - Exchange of trainees/trainers/staff	
		Total	100 %

G4.	Breakdown of expenditures by action		
		Action 1	
		Action 2	
		Action 3	
		Total	100 %

G5.	Transnational work	Text field max 1000 character
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G6.	National networking	Text field max 1000 character
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G7.	European level networking	Text field max 1000 character
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H. Other information for monitoring at Programme level (annually consolidated information)

H1.	Total expenditure actually paid out during the year (actions 1, 2, 3)	Amounts have to be consistent with the declaration in the SFC			
			Action 1	Action 2	Action 3
		<input type="checkbox"/> Employability - Access to the labour market <input type="checkbox"/> Employability - Combating racism <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneurship – Business creation <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneurship – Social economy <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptability - Life long learning <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptability – Information technology <input type="checkbox"/> Equal opportunities - Reconciling family and professional life <input type="checkbox"/> Equal opportunities - Reducing gender gaps <input type="checkbox"/> Asylum seekers			

H2	Total expenditure actually paid out during the year (technical assistance)	Priority technical assistance (TA) - Action 4 Amounts have to be consistent with the declaration in the SFC		
				Amounts
		<input type="checkbox"/> Equal specific support actions <input type="checkbox"/> Basic administrative and financial TA activities <input type="checkbox"/> Complementary TA activities		