



## **European and External Affairs Committee**

### **Announcement of Committee Inquiry: Welsh participation in EU research, innovation and lifelong learning programmes**

The European and External Affairs Committee is undertaking an inquiry into Welsh participation in EU research, innovation and lifelong learning programmes for the period 2007-2013. We invite individuals, groups and organisations with an interest or expertise in this area to submit written evidence.

#### **Background**

There is a plethora of EU programmes available for the period 2007-2013 across a wide range of policy areas that Welsh organisations may be eligible to apply for. The inquiry will review participation of Welsh organisations in the three largest EU funding programmes outside of EU Structural Funds and Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), namely, the Framework Research Programme for Research & Development Seven (FP7); the Lifelong Learning Programmes; and the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP). In total these three “clusters” of programmes (as there are sub-programmes within each of them) have a combined overall budget of approximately €60bn EU-wide for 2007-2013.

The choice of EU funding programmes to focus on is consistent with the Committee’s strategic focus on the Europe 2020 Strategy, where high priority is given to research, innovation, education and skills in the successor to the Lisbon Strategy.

#### **Rationale for the inquiry**

With the EU Budget Review due to be published in the early autumn, the European Commission will launch a debate about the future

priorities and focus of the EU Budget for the period after 2013, and Commission President José Manuel Barroso has made clear his intention to base these around the priorities of the Europe 2020 Strategy, and the flagship initiatives identified within this.

Within the current EU Financial Perspectives the two largest budget lines are the Common Agriculture Policy and EU Cohesion Policy, and Wales has traditionally benefitted substantially in terms of funding from both of these areas. Assembly Committees have undertaken scrutiny of these funding programmes but there has not been an analysis of participation by Welsh organisations in the other EU programmes and initiatives available for 2007-2013.

The proposed inquiry would enable the Committee to get a sense of the level of participation of organisations from Wales in those programmes, benchmarking this where information is available against other parts of the UK and EU. The inquiry would also provide an opportunity for Welsh organisations who have or are participating in the EU funded programmes covered, to share their experiences (positive and negative), and provide feedback on how the various activities they are involved in will bring benefits to Wales, provide a lasting legacy, and contribute to the strategic priorities of the Welsh Government.

### **Terms of Reference**

We have agreed the following terms of reference for our inquiry:

- To understand the extent and type of involvement of organisations from Wales in the following EU Programmes: Framework Research Programme Seven (FP7); Lifelong Learning Programmes; and the Competitiveness and Innovation Programmes;
- To benchmark the participation of Welsh organisations with other parts of the UK and EU;
- To identify exemplar success stories from Wales;
- To provide policy recommendations to the Welsh Government for ways in which to facilitate future participation in these programmes;
- To highlight any positive or negative aspects of participation in the programmes, and feed this back to the appropriate channels (Welsh Government, UK Government and European Commission), to enable

this to be taken into account in preparation of the future programmes for post 2013;

- To review the extent to which participation in these programmes is helping to deliver the strategic priorities set out by the Welsh Government.

## Questions for consideration

The Committee welcomes all views and opinions on the subject, however the following may be considered in formulating your response:

- What is the extent of Welsh participation in the three programmes for 2007-2013 and how does this compare with previous programming periods (e.g. FP6/FP5) ?
- What is the breadth and type of involvement: what is the nature of the organisations involved, what is the geographical spread, and are there any particular sectoral concentrations?
- How does the level and type of participation by organisations from Wales compare with other parts of the UK, and in terms of UK/EU averages?
- Are there any particular success stories within Wales resulting from participation in these programmes, and can we identify any special niche areas of Welsh expertise?
- What are the perceived benefits of involvement in the various programmes to participants, including any long-term or legacy effects in Wales from the initiatives?
- Are there any particular challenges or barriers to participation?
- To what extent has participation in Structural Funds facilitated participation in other EU programmes?
- Are there any particular pinch points in the process e.g. in funding or recovery of university overheads, or 'matchmaking' with other Member States' institutions or companies?
- What is the value of any support provided to successful applicants from within Wales/UK – or to their partners in developing the project proposals?

- What is the relevance of the Welsh policy context to the initiatives supported, including Welsh Government strategies such as the 'Economic Renewal Programme for Wales' and 'For Our Future'?
- What specific policy recommendations can be made in terms of future programmes post 2013?

### **How to Submit Written Evidence**

You should submit written evidence to the Clerk of the Committee, to arrive no later than **Friday 12 November 2010**. If possible, please supply an electronic version in MS Word or Rich Text format, either by e mail to [Europe.comm@wales.gov.uk](mailto:Europe.comm@wales.gov.uk) or on a disk.

If this is not possible, please send your written submission to:  
**Clerk, European and External Affairs Committee, National Assembly for Wales, CF99 1NA.**

Further guidance on the submission of evidence is at annex A.

**We would be grateful if you could share this call for evidence with other interested parties or, where appropriate, any of your member organisations.**

Membership of the Committee:

Rhodri Morgan AM (Chair); Nick Bourne AM; Eleanor Burnham AM; Jeff Cuthbert AM; Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM.

**4 October 2010**

## **Annex A - Advice on Submitting Evidence**

The Committee may call on those who have submitted written evidence to supplement it in oral evidence to the Committee. Please indicate in your response whether you would be prepared to give evidence in person.

Witnesses should be aware that once written evidence has been submitted to the Committee it is treated as the property of the Committee. Written evidence will be published on the Committee's website, and extracts may subsequently be included in the report.

The Assembly will not publish information which it considers to be personal data. If you are providing any information, other than personal data, which you feel is not suitable for public disclosure, please stipulate which parts should not be published. You should provide a reasoned argument to support this. The National Assembly will take this into account when publishing information or responding to requests for information.

In the event of a request for information submitted under UK legislation, it may be necessary to disclose the information that you provide. This may include information which has previously been removed by the National Assembly for publication purposes.