European Regional Development Fund for England: 2014-2020 Operational Programme

Equality Assessment

July 2014

Department for Communities and Local Government

Mott MacDonald

European Regional Development Fund for England: 2014-2020 Operational Programme

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Department for Communities and Local Government

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Executive Summary

Introduction

In July 2013 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) commissioned an ex-ante evaluation of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Operational Programme for England for the period 2014-2020. The evaluation included an Equality Assessment, intended to:

- Assess whether, in implementing the Programme strategies and priorities, due regard has been paid to equality issues.
- Inform how equality issues should be considered in the design of the Programme and in shaping implementation.
- Identify opportunities to promote equality in the Programme.
- Propose solutions for elimination of any potential negative impacts which may be identified.
- Assess equality data requirements of the European Commission and identify how qualitative and quantitative data should be collected to evidence the impact of the Programme.

Equality Assessments can be used to support adherence to the Equality Act 2010 by a public body and are generally accepted to be good practice for major policy or Programme developments. They are a systematic assessment of the likely or actual effects of policies, Programmes and developments on the following 'protected characteristics' (as defined by the Act):

- **Age** – including younger, older and working age people.
- **Disability** – including people with sensory or mobility impairments, learning and mental health disabilities.
- **Gender reassignment** – including transgender and transsexual people.
- **Marriage and civil partnership** – including people who are married or in a civil partnership, but not single people.
- **Pregnancy and maternity** – including pregnant women, women on maternity leave, and nursing mothers.
- **Race and ethnicity** – including racial, ethnic or national origins, skin colour or nationality
- **Religion or belief** – including all religion, faith or belief groups, including lack of belief.
- **Sex / gender** – including effects on both women and men.
- **Sexual orientation** – including heterosexuals, and lesbians, gay men and bisexual (LGB) people.

Methodology

The following research tasks have been undertaken in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Equality Assessment process. These tasks proceed from established good practice, and are based on guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

- **Task 1: Review of existing evidence.** Focussed on a review of: equality policy and strategy in England; existing research and literature on equality issues relevant to the subject matter of the Programme; past ERDF Programmes and projects; and evidence of good practice in delivery elsewhere.

- **Task 2: Review of draft Operational Programme consultation document.** Focussed on an examination of: the appropriateness of the priority axes selected for investment; the proposed activities to be funded; and the effectiveness of management, monitoring and evaluation arrangements.

▪ **Task 3: Socio-demographic analysis.** Based on the nine protected characteristics, data was sourced, examined and analysed as follows: mapping Census and other data for those protected characteristics where available; using surveys and other qualitative data for those protected characteristics where data in unavailable; and providing comparative data for LEPs in England.

▪ **Task 4: Stakeholder engagement.** Consulting with key stakeholders and organisations on key issues including: additional impacts, opportunities, mitigations and recommendations for delivery; additional sources, evidence, data or stakeholders; and ways to remove barriers and increase access to the Programmes by people with protected characteristics.

▪ **Task 5: Equality analysis.** Assessing the likely disproportionate impacts of the draft ERDF Operational Programme on each of the protected characteristics.

▪ **Task 6: Drawing conclusions and making recommendations.** Drawing a series of conclusions about the ERDF Operation Programme accompanied by a series of recommendations for the further development, refinement and implementation of the Programme.

Findings

Priority Axis 1: Research and innovation. Overall, Priority Axis 1 presents opportunities for beneficial impacts as part of delivery. This Priority primarily provides opportunities to draw currently marginalised sections of the population into research and development activity, STEM careers, and innovation and enterprise. There are a number of groups – such as **women** and **young people** – who represent significant pools of untapped potential within these sectors. This Priority Axis also provides opportunities to support entry into the labour market for new graduates – who remain at risk of unemployment following completion of their studies – in these areas. However, the funds (and other, complimentary resources) will need to be appropriately targeted to ensure that the opportunities within ERDF are open to them.

Priority Axis 2: Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, ICT. There are opportunities for some benefits to arise from the measures contained with Priority Axis 2. Full access to ICT can be a challenge for a number of groups – most notably **older people** and **disabled people** – who may lack the skills, inclination, financial means, or opportunity to make full use of broadband or mobile communications where they own their own business. Again activities will need to be promoted and communicated effectively to reach these groups. The presumption of online access, and overuse of the 'digital by default' approach could present barriers to full participation of these groups in the ERDF Programme.

Priority Axis 3: Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs. Priority Axis 3, if properly implemented, offers opportunities to a broad range of people with protected characteristics looking to start or grow their own business. Drawing down appropriate finance, and securing support, advice and guidance on starting a business can be particularly challenging for many sections of the population including: **younger people**, **older people**, **disabled people**, **trans people**, people from some **ethnic minority** and **religious communities**, **women** and **LGB people**. If implemented with this in mind this Priority Axis could contribute to overcoming a range of barriers faced by these groups.

Priority Axis 4: Supporting the shift towards a low carbon economy in all sectors. Priority Axis 4, concerning 'the shift towards a low carbon economy' is less likely than other Priority Axes to result in benefits for equality. However, indirectly and in the long term this shift may result in environmental improvements in areas such as air quality. This may in turn help with a minor reduction in respiratory-related conditions in certain sections of the population – such as **children** and **older people**. Any benefits are dependent on a range of external factors and are likely to come long after the 2014-2020 ERDF Programme has finished delivery.

Priority Axis 5: Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management. Priority Axis 5 has some potential to manage long term risks associated with environmental change. Here, mitigating the effects of and adapting to climate change may support a reduction in the impacts of the effects of climate change on groups least able to deal with them – such as **children**, **older people** and **disabled people**. However this Priority is focussed on system wide changes that are more likely to provide benefits to the whole population.

Priority Axis 6: Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency. No impacts or opportunities were identified within Priority Axis 6 that are directly relevant to equality. This does not mean that people with protected characteristics will not benefit from activities within this Priority Axis, merely that there is no evidence to suggest that it will lead to disproportionate effects or specific opportunities for equality groups.

Priority Axes 7: Sustainable transport in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly; and 8: Sustainable Transport. Priority Axes 7 and 8 target an aspect of transport infrastructure that has the potential to provide benefits to a number of different social and demographic groups. Sustainable transport entails support for non-motorised and public transport modes, which are used disproportionately by **younger people**, **older people**, **people from ethnic minority communities**, **women** and families with **young children**.

Priority Axis 9: Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty and any discrimination. Priority Axis 9 targets social inclusion and aims to combat discrimination, issues highly relevant to equality, Investment in this area, therefore is likely to yield a number of positive outcomes for people with protected characteristics including **younger** and **older people**, **women** and people from **BAME groups**. However, as with certain other priorities within the Programme (namely Priorities 7 and 8), the level of investment is comparatively small and as such overall effects are likely to be limited.

Priority Axis 10: Sustainable Urban Development. With higher density urban populations comes greater numbers and proportions of people with protected characteristics who might be disproportionately or differently affected by the implementation of the ERDF Programme. Targeted support in these areas has the potential to deliver significant gains in terms of enhancing equality of opportunity by addressing structural barriers (such as transport, infrastructure and business support) to access, inclusion and participation.

Overall assessment of effects

The 2014-2020 ERDF Operational Programme is directed towards improving economic competitiveness (an area in which many social and demographic groups experience barriers) through research and innovation; improved business support; IT, transport and infrastructure; and sustainability measures.

While many of the priorities, objectives and activities within the Programme will not provide explicit benefits in terms of equality, effects are highly likely to be positive overall. Similarly, it is highly unlikely that there will be any disproportionately negative effects on any of the characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 – this is a Programme of positive investment in an area of market failure and is to be expected.

It is, however, equally likely that, without appropriate focus and targeting of resources at particular social and demographic groups (including the young, the old, disabled people, people from some BAME and religious groups, LGB people, and trans people), there is a serious risk of missed opportunities to maximise equality. This is particularly the case for those characteristics for which there is very little evidence from which to direct ERDF-funded activity, such as gender reassignment and sexual orientation.

Other aspects of the programme

Consideration of equality in the development of the ERDF Programme. Overall, equality has been reasonably well integrated into the wider ERDF Operational Programme document, primarily via the 'Equal Opportunities' cross-cutting principle. There is some evidence of gaps and a number of Priority Axes make no substantive mention of issues relating to equality beyond outline reference to the cross-cutting principle. This suggests a lack of integration in practice but is partially explained by a lack of overlap between the content of the Programme document and the equality agenda, but in some cases the need to consider equality appears to be more of an additional consideration than a fundamental principle of Programme design.

Implementation, monitoring and evaluation arrangements. The Programme presents a number of opportunities to secure benefits for equality groups. However, in the vast majority of cases, the realisation of these benefits is reliant on the way in which they are delivered. Careful consideration needs to be given to the requirements of people with different protected characteristics when delivering the actions under each Priority Axis. Monitoring and evaluation, and the collection of project data provides a good point of access to understanding where individual projects, as well as the Priority Axes and the ERDF Programme as a whole, are having an impact on equality of opportunity.

Contribution to strategic equality goals. The Programme is reasonably well-positioned to contribute to the achievement of European and UK equality ambitions. It presents a number of opportunities to support the general aim of the PSED to promote equality of opportunity between different sections of society. While some of the Priority Axes will contribute very little to the achievement of equality ambitions in England, this is not considered to be an issue and the programme is not specifically targeted in this way. It falls on the ERDF team to maximise the benefits to different sections of society through design and delivery, whilst preventing unnecessary barriers to accessing the fund.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the EIA, the following recommendations have been made for the implementation of the Programme:

- To deliver tailored provision of actions for protected characteristic groups, through raising awareness amongst project sponsors and delivery teams and directly addressing barriers as part of project implementation.

- To support Programme delivery organisations to draw on the untapped potential of particular groups, particularly around innovation, research and development and enterprise – areas in which groups face barriers to entry, limiting the wider potential social and economic benefits they could contribute.

- To develop a communication strategy that includes guidance on equality and is targeted at those groups least likely to access the programme with comparative ease. Measures addressing language, disability and communication method should all be considered.

- To include specific equality objectives and indicators in the monitoring and evaluation strategy, and ensure progress against these is monitored regularly. Monitoring and evaluation of the Programme are key to understanding its effectiveness in addressing equality issues.

- To provide Programme delivery organisations with the opportunity to undertake equality training provision, in order to maximise their buy-in to the equality priorities of CLG and the European Commission.

1   Introduction and background

1.1   Background to the study

In July 2013 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) commissioned an ex-ante evaluation of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Operational Programme for England for the period 2014-2020. A team of evaluators led by Regeneris Consulting and including Mott MacDonald Ltd. were appointed to undertake the evaluation.

The ex-ante evaluation is intended to:
- Independently appraise and advise on each element of the Operational Programme throughout its development as required by European commission (EC) ex-ante evaluation guidance.
- Appraise the rationale for the intervention so that the Programme is focussed on those activities most likely to have the greatest impact on growth and tackling spatial disparities.
- Appraise monitoring and evaluation arrangements for the Programme including data needs and establishing baselines.
- Support the assessment of the ex-ante conditionalities linked to thematic and general requirements including statistical systems and result indicators.

An Equality Assessment was commissioned as part of the package of works for the ex-ante evaluation. The Equality Assessment was intended to:
- Assess whether, in implementing the Programme strategies and priorities, due regard has been paid to equality issues.
- Inform how equality issues should be considered in the design of the Programme.
- Inform how equality issues should be considered in the shaping of implementation and administration arrangements.
- Identify opportunities to promote equality in the Programme.
- Propose solutions for elimination of any potential negative impacts which may be identified.
- Assess equality data requirements of the European Commission and identify how qualitative and quantitative data should be collected to evidence the impact of the Programme.

This report presents the findings of the EIA of the proposed ERDF Programme. It considers the possible impacts of the Programme's intended priorities, themes and key interventions for the whole country.

1.2   The European Regional Development Fund Operational Programme

1.2.1   The European Common Strategic Framework (CSF)

The ERDF, together with the European Social Fund (ESF), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Marine and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), are part of the Common Strategic Framework (CSF). The CSF was developed by the European Commission and presented to Member States in March 2012; it is intended to help Member States set the strategic direction for the 2014-2020 financial planning periods and seeks to improve coordination securing the more targeted use of the EU's Structural Funds. It aims to achieve this by focussing the national and regional authorities' activities on a limited set of common 'Thematic Objectives'.

The CSF proposed that:
- Funds should be implemented in a more complementary way to increase their combined impact and drive growth.
- They are delivered in a more effective way, with more rigorous national performance management tied to the release of funds alongside existing fund-specific audits to drive accountability and value for money.
- Funds will have an agreed set of aims and will be monitored carefully to ensure those aims are met.
- All funds will have specific objectives so that they can have the biggest impact.

1.2.2   The European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)

The Government has established a single European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) Growth Programme for the 2014-2020 funding period. The Growth Programme combines the ERDF with ESF and parts of the EAFRD. In March 2013 it was announced that England would receive a total allocation of €6.174 billion in ERDF and ESF for the 2014-2020 period.

Together, the Funds have supported, and continue to support, a range of projects across the UK. Securing continued European investment through the funds is a key way in which local areas can finance social, economic and investment projects.

The ESIF Growth Programme's top priorities will be: innovation; research and development; SME support; low carbon; skills; employment; and social inclusion. The vast majority of the Funds within the Growth Programme have been allocated to England's 39 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas. The LEPs are to work with local partners, to set out their priorities for the EU Growth Programme Funds in their area through an investment strategy, which are currently under development.

The priorities and activities to be supported by each of the three Funds are detailed within separate national Operational Programme documents.

1.2.3   The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in England

ERDF is a key funding instrument of EU Cohesion Policy which aims to promote economic, social and territorial cohesion across the European Union.

ERDF is focused upon investment to support economic growth and job creation in order to reduce intra and inter regional economic disparities within the EU. The next round of ERDF funding is under development for 2014-2020 and will continue the significant level of investment currently channelled into local projects across England.

In addition, the UK Government have stated their priority is to restore the national economy back to growth. This includes targeted interventions in support of local economic growth, designed to strengthen overall economic performance and support the rebalancing of the economy in favour of a strengthened private sector. The Government's objectives reflect the current and future priorities for the use of EU Structural and Cohesion Funds across England and the Devolved Administrations (in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) in the funding period 2014-2020.

It is recognised that in the current context of constrained public spending, the ERDF is an important potential source of public funding to support local economic growth. DCLG is the Managing Authority for ERDF in England.

1.2.4 The structure of the ERDF Programme

The ERDF Programme is structured around 10 Priority Axes. Each has Specific Objectives which fall under Investment Priorities. A brief summary of each of the Priority Axes is below:

- **Priority Axis 1 - Research and Innovation**: There are large variations in: R&D investment, the number of new businesses actively innovating to bring new products to market, and disparity between the levels of collaborative research across England. Therefore activities under this Investment Priority include increasing collaboration with enterprises, research and development centres and the Higher Education sector, and promoting investment in product and service development.

- **Priority Axis 2 - Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, ICT:** Broadband access varies between local areas. There is a need to improve connections and access to ultrafast broadband for SMEs in isolated areas and high growth firms. This Priority will involve the provision of improved ICT connections, improve take up and support to exploit existing infrastructure for SMEs through ERDF.

- **Priority Axis 3 - Enhancing SME Competitiveness**: There is disparity in productivity levels and start up rates across England and within regions. Therefore the main aim of this Priority is to improve the competitiveness of SMEs through the Programme by increasing the capacity and capability of SMEs and promoting entrepreneurship.

- **Priority Axis 4 - Supporting the shift towards a low carbon economy in all sectors**: 8.2% of electricity in England is generated from renewables but levels vary across territories. The key development needs and opportunities that will be prioritised within this Priority Axis are: market opportunities in the low carbon goods sector; the need to develop holistic whole-place carbon reduction plans; localised renewable energy/micro generation; and scope to develop products and services to improve energy efficiency in domestic and non-domestic buildings and within SMEs.

■ **Priority Axis 5 - Promoting climate change adaption, risk prevention and management**: Flooding presents significant challenges across the UK. For example, risk of flood can lead to economic sites remaining underdeveloped, due to businesses leaving the area as a result of the experience of flood damage and future risks. This Priority will work towards addressing these challenges through promotion, adaption, prevention and management.

■ **Priority Axis 6 - Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency**: This Priority how the development needs in relation to environmental degradation and resource efficiency vary by territory, sector and firm size. Despite this, development needs and opportunities are shared across territories; this includes investment in Green and Blue infrastructure and promotion of innovative technologies to improve environmental protection and resource efficiency.

■ **Priority Axis 7** - **Sustainable transport in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly**: Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is England's only Less Developed Territory. It is disadvantaged by a range of transport development needs. Business growth is hampered by high transport costs and slower movement of goods and services reducing the attractiveness of businesses to locate in the area. This Priority will lead to the development of the network, in order to reduce congestion, speed up travel times, and increase usage levels.

■ **Priority Axis 8** - **Sustainable transport**: Some areas of England are adversely affected by poor transport links to the trans-European transport (TEN-T) network, reducing their prospects of accessing economic development opportunities. Therefore this Priority will invest in improving transport bottlenecks and connectivity with the TEN-T network. In addition, support from this Priority will result in the provision of low carbon and environmentally friendly modes of transport.

■ **Priority Axis 9** - **Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty and any discrimination**: This Priority will address market failure barriers at local level that act to restrict the ability of places, SMEs and people to strengthen economic growth and achieve social inclusion and poverty reduction. Therefore, this Priority will direct investment to support growth and jobs that create the conditions under which poverty and the numbers at risk of social exclusion can be reduced.

■ **Priority Axis 10 - Sustainable Urban Development**: SMEs face a number of barriers in increasing capacity and propensity to innovate and invest in internal capacity, this includes: a lack of awareness of the benefits of investing in innovation and uncertainty about the value that will accrue to the company. This further exacerbated by a lack of access to appropriate finance. This Priority will address these barriers resulting in the increase of SMES innovating to bring new products and processes to the market. In addition, there is also opportunity to improve interactions between businesses and universities, research centres and other organisations.

A breakdown, including information on investment priorities, specific objectives and actions, of each Priority is provided in the assessment of the ERDF Programme (Chapter 5).

1.3   The structure of this report

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter two** outlines our approach to the equality assessment and describes the methodology used to reach the conclusions and recommendations detailed herein.

- **Chapter three** outlines the policy framework for the 2014-2020 ERDF Programme in the context of equality. It highlights the EU policies that drive the equality agenda within the Structural Fund Programmes, alongside UK equality policies.

- **Chapter four** provides the socio-demographic baseline for the study, covering available data on each of the protected characteristics and highlighting patterns and trends by LEP area where available.

- **Chapter five** presents our analysis of the ERDF Programme, set out by Priority Axis. For each we provide more detail on the activities to be funded, drawing out likely impacts and opportunities presented by the Programme.

- **Chapter six** considers the delivery and implementation of the Programme including:
  - **additional mechanisms** for levering investment such as the financial instruments and cross-cutting principles;
  - the role of equality in the **development** of the Operational Programme, including how ERDF has been co-ordinated with other funding mechanisms and with the partnership arrangements that have been established; and
  - plans for **implementation** of the Programme including mechanisms for projects selection, monitoring and evaluation, use of available technical assistance, and the simplification of processes associated with delivery.

- **Chapter seven** provides a summary of the results of the analysis undertaken by protected characteristic, as well as offering a set of overall conclusions and recommendations for further development and implementation of the Programme.

2 Approach and Methodology

2.1 Introduction

This section sets out our approach to this Equality Assessment, in response to the brief, and to UK equality legislation, detailed in the next chapter. It also details the tasks undertaken as part of the assessment.

2.2 The Equality Assessment

The Equality Assessment was commissioned as part of the package of works for the ex-ante evaluation. The Equality Assessment was intended to:

- Provide an assessment of what impacts the Programme strategies and priorities will have on particular groups of people and inform how equality issues should be incorporated in any redesign of the Programme.
- Ensure that the development, design and implementation of the Programme is accessible to all who are eligible to benefit from it, including ensuring the Programme eliminates discrimination, advances equality of opportunity, and fosters good relations.
- Ensure that every opportunity to promote equality is maximised.
- Ensure compliance with the requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010 as well as Article 87, Point 3 of the EC General Regulations.

In order to fulfil this brief, it was identified that the Equality Assessment would therefore need to:

- Assess whether, in implementing the Programme Strategies and Priorities, due regard has been paid to equality issues.
- Inform how equality issues should be considered in any redesign of the Programme.
- Inform how equality issues should be considered in the shaping of implementation and administration arrangements.
- Identify opportunities to promote equality in the Programme.
- Propose solutions for elimination of any potential negative impacts which may be identified.
- Assess equality data requirements of the European Commission and identify how qualitative and quantitative data should be collected to evidence the impact of the Programme.

2.3 About Equality Assessment

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), at section 149 of the Equality Act, requires public bodies (including Government departments such as DCLG) to consider all individuals in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It requires public bodies to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

Equality Assessments can be used to support adherence to the PSED by a public body and are generally accepted to be good practice for major policy or Programme developments. They are a systematic assessment of the likely or actual effects of policies, Programmes and developments on the following 'protected characteristics' (as defined by Equality Act 2010):

- **Age –** covering all ages, often grouped together in age bands, for example, children (aged under-16), younger people (aged 16-24), working aged people (aged 16-64), and older people aged 65 and over. Appropriate age bands are selected according to the initiative policy or development which is subject of the assessment.
- **Disability** – this may include people with sensory impairments, mobility impairments, learning disabilities, mental wellbeing disabilities, and serious long-term illness such as cancer and AIDS.
- **Gender reassignment** – including transgender and transsexual people and all persons who are considering, proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment.
- **Marriage and civil partnership** – with a focus purely on eliminating discrimination on the basis of whether someone is married or in a civil partnership (this is not the same as 'marital status' – single people are not covered by this characteristic).
- **Pregnancy and maternity** – including pregnant women, women on maternity leave, and nursing mothers.
- **Race and ethnicity** – this may include racial, ethnic or national origins, skin colour or nationality, being particularly aware of effects on different Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities. In turn this could include Gypsy and Traveller Groups, economic migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.
- **Religion or belief** – this includes all religion, faith or belief groups, including lack of belief, and being particularly aware of effects on 'minority' faith groups.
- **Sex / gender** – including effects on both women and men.
- **Sexual orientation** – covering all sexual orientations (including heterosexuals), but also being aware of effects on lesbians, gay men and bisexual (LGB) people.

The primary objectives of an Equality Assessment are to:
- assess whether one or more of these groups could experience **disproportionate** effects (over and above the impacts likely to be experienced by the general population) as a result of a policy being implemented or the way in which a service is delivered;
- identify opportunities to promote equality more effectively or to a greater extent; and
- develop ways in which any disproportionate negative impacts could be removed or mitigated to prevent any unlawful discrimination and minimise inequality of outcomes.

Guidance published by the Government Equalities Office (GEO)[1] and Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), makes clear that undertaking an equality impact assessment is something that should occur as early as possible in the policy development process:

> "Equality analysis starts prior to policy development or at the early stages of a review. It is not a one-off exercise, it is on-going and cyclical and it enables equality considerations to be taken into account before a decision is made.

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[1] The GEO has now been formally incorporated into the Home Office.

Equality analysis of proposed policies will involve considering their likely or possible effects in advance of implementation. It will also involve monitoring what actually happens in practice. Waiting for information on the actual effects will risk leaving it too late for your equality analysis to be able to inform decision-making."[2]

In this early stage of the ERDF Programme there is an opportunity for equality considerations to be fully integrated.

2.4   Methodology

The following research tasks have been undertaken in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Equality Assessment process. These tasks proceed from established good practice, and are based on guidance from the EHRC (in its 'Meeting the equality duty in policy and decision-making'[3]) and GEO (in its guides to the 'Public Sector Equality Duty'[4]). They have been undertaken in many instances with support from DCLG.

2.4.1   Task 1: Review of existing evidence

This first task has been designed to provide a solid grounding in the equality context of the ERDF Programme, and the challenges facing different socio-demographic groups in accessing the services that the ERDF Programme is designed to address. It sets the context for the second task, namely the review the Operational Programme document, furnishing that task with the requisite background to make an informed assessment of likely effects.

The task focussed on a review of:
■   Equality policy context in England, the UK (where applicable) and in Europe.
■   Existing research and literature on the subject matter covered by EU Structural Funds including: employment and skills, SME support, transport and infrastructure, research, innovation and development, and energy efficiency.
■   Past Operational Programmes in England, including those from 2000-2006 and 2007-2013, evaluations undertaken on the Programmes and projects, and equality impact assessment findings where available.
■   Good practice in Operational Programme and project delivery from other parts of the UK.

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[2] Equality and Human Rights Commission (2011): 'Equality analysis and the Equality Duty'
[3] EHRC (2012): 'Meeting the equality duty in policy and decision-making'
[4] GEO (2011): 'Equality Act 2010: Public Sector Equality Duty. What do I need to know? A Quick Start Guide for Public Sector Organisations'. See: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85041/equality-duty.pdf GEO (2011): 'Equality Act 2010: Specific Duties to Support the Equality Duty. What do I need to know? A Quick Start Guide for Public Sector Organisations'. See: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85049/specific-duties.pdf

2.4.2   Task 2: Review of draft Operational Programme consultation document

The Operational Programme document is the subject of the Equality Assessment. This task involved application of the knowledge and research undertaken in Task 1 to the Operational Programme. Given that the Programme is draft at this stage, this task will need to be revisited once the Programme is finalised to ensure that the findings of the Equality Assessment reflect the Programme which will ultimately be implemented.

This task involved examining the objectives, priorities and management processes within the draft Programme, with particular focus on:
- The appropriateness of the Priority axes selected for investment, based on the challenges and issues faced by different equality groups as identified in task one.
- The proposed activities to be funded under each Priority to identify those areas where impacts are likely to occur.
- The effectiveness of management, monitoring and evaluation arrangements in terms of effects on equality groups and how the accessibility of the Programme to different groups of people will be assured.

2.4.3   Task 3: Socio-demographic analysis

In order to establish a socio-demographic baseline for the Equality Assessment, and to understand the geographical extent and magnitude of any effects, a socio-demographic assessment was undertaken. This process was based on the nine characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010. The data was sourced, examined and analysed as follows.
- Mapping Census 2011 and other data for those protected characteristics where it is available.
- Using surveys and other qualitative data for those protected characteristics where Census and other relevant data sets are not available.
- Providing comparative data for LEPs in England, illustrated through comparative charts and maps.

Analysis was undertaken to determine the likely extent of any impacts as a result of the prevalence of different groups.

2.4.4   Task 4: Stakeholder engagement

Consulting with key stakeholders and organisations involved with equality groups is considered good practice as part of effective analysis of equality. Input from targeted national stakeholders was therefore sought in order to gather relevant perspectives on the equality impacts of the Operational Programme. This process was conducted by email questionnaire in conjunction with CLG.

The key questions on which input from stakeholder was sought include the following:
- additional impacts, opportunities, mitigations and recommendations for delivery;
- additional sources, evidence, data or stakeholders; and
- ways to remove barriers and increase access to the Programmes by people with protected characteristics.

The level of stakeholder engagement is considered to be sufficient for a high level Equality Assessment such as this. A large number of organisations were invited to comment, including representatives of equality groups, Local Enterprise Partnerships and other relevant stakeholders. 12 detailed responses were received overall.

2.4.5   Task 5: Equality analysis

The culmination of the above tasks is the process of equality analysis. This has allowed an assessment of the draft Operational Programme documents to be made in a systematic way incorporating all the evidence gathered in previous stages of the Assessment.

Where possible each potential effect has been considered in order to make an assessment of the likely disproportionate impacts of the draft Operational Programme on each of the protected characteristics. The findings of this analysis is set out throughout this report and is divided by Priority Axis and segmented further by protected characteristics and LEP area (in order to provide demographic and spatial assessment of the likely effects of the Programme).

2.4.6   Task 6: Drawing conclusions and making recommendations

The findings of the equality analysis have been used to draw a series of conclusions about the ERDF Operation Programme. These have been organised by protected characteristic, by Priority Axis, and by geographical area and an overall assessment of the likely equality implications of the Programme has been made.

This is accompanied by a series of recommendations for the further development, refinement and implementation of the Programme to ensure that opportunities to benefit all sections of the population and to promote equality of opportunity are realised.

2.5   Assumptions and limitations

This Equality Assessment report is based on the most up to date version of the 2014-2020 ERDF Operational Programme for England available at the time of writing.

3   Policy context

3.1   Introduction

This chapter outlines the equality policy context – at European and UK administrative levels – for the 2014-20 Structural Fund Programmes and the ERDF Programme in particular. It details the policy and strategy documents, and the goals and objectives set by the different authorities with regard to equality. The delivery of these goals must be supported as part of the development and implementation of the ERDF Programme for England.

Equality, in Europe, the UK[5] and in England, has undergone a transformation from an emerging and poorly defined policy area in the 1970s and 1980s to its current role as a key aspect of the policy-making process. The growing emphasis on equal opportunities as a strategic area of concern is reflected in European funding Programmes, not as a single priority, but as a cross-cutting principle, which should be comprehensively embedded into policy, programming and project delivery.

3.2   European Policy

European policy on social and economic issues is focussed around the Europe 2020 strategy and its various associated documents, detailed below. In terms of equality, EU policy is concentrated around the various non-discrimination directives of EU Labour Law. These form part of the legal compliance process regarding employment and are also outlined below.

3.2.1   Europe 2020

Europe 2020 is the European Union's growth strategy for this decade. It is based around delivering growth that is:
- smart, through more effective investments in education, research and innovation;
- sustainable, with a move towards a low-carbon economy; and
- inclusive, with a strong emphasis on job creation and poverty reduction.

Inclusivity is key tenet of equality, particularly when it comes to tackling structural challenges, and public bodies including the UK Government and various local authorities refer to them interchangeably.

Within Europe 2020, 'inclusive growth' has a number of targets, the overall aim being to raise the European employment rate, with particular focus on increasing jobs for women, young people and older workers. Its core aims include helping people of all ages with access to skills and training, modernising labour markets and welfare systems and ensuring the benefits of growth reach all parts of the EU. By 2020, the aim is for 75% of 20-64 year-olds to be employed, the school drop-out rate to be below ten per cent, at least 40% of 30-34 year-olds completing third level (higher or degree level) education and for there

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[5] Throughout this report the terms United Kingdom (UK), and Great Britain, or Britain (GB) are used to describe the policy, strategy and intervention activity being undertaken at the 'Nation State' level. Equality policy in the UK, while it has been radically simplified in many ways, remains complex due to the process of devolution occurring in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. National policy is enacted covering a range of levels including 'England and Wales', Great Britain (including England Wales and Scotland) and the UK (including Northern Ireland). Frequently the terms are used interchangeably and this report has been developed to avoid any ambiguity wherever possible.

to be at least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion – conditions closely linked to inequality.

There are two key EU initiatives which are linked to these targets.

- The first is an agenda for new skills and jobs, for individuals to acquire new skills and adapt to the changing labour market and modernising labour markets to raise employment levels, reduce unemployment, raise labour productivity and ensuring the sustainability of Europe's social models.
- The second initiative is a European platform against poverty, ensuring economic, social and territorial cohesion, guaranteeing respect for the fundamental rights of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion. The initiative aims to enable people to live in dignity and take an active part in society, mobilise support to help people integrate into their local community, acquire training and support to find a job and have access to social benefits.

3.2.2   Youth Opportunities Initiative

The Youth Opportunities Initiative, run by the European Commission, aims to help young people who are not in employment, education or training (referred to in the UK as NEETs), by providing the means for them to acquire important skills and experience. These may be gained by returning to school, entering training, or gaining work or volunteering experience.[6]

The initiative aims to promote youth employment through:
- greater use of the European Social Fund;
- the implementation of innovative approaches;
- making it easier for young people to find jobs in another EU country;
- stronger partnerships between political authorities, business and trade unions at EU, national, regional and local levels; and
- policy guidance and assistance from the European Commission.

3.2.3   European Disability Strategy 2010-2020

The European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 was adopted in November 2010. The strategy asserts that people with disabilities have the right to participate fully and equally in society and the economy and recognises that denial of equal opportunities constitutes a breach of human rights. However, it also recognises that people with disabilities are generally poorer than other citizens of the EU, fewer have jobs and their opportunities to enjoy goods and services such as education, healthcare, transport, housing, and technology are more limited. On-going discrimination as well as physical and attitudinal barriers affects one in six citizens of the EU, approximately 80 million people.[7]

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[6] European Industrial Relations Observatory On-line (2012): 'Commission Launches Youth Opportunities Imitative'. See:
http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2012/01/articles/eu1201011i.htm
[7] European Commission (2012): Breaking down barriers for disabled people - 15/11/2010', See:
http://ec.europa.eu/news/justice/101115_en.htm

As such, the European Commission identified eight key areas for action:
- **Accessibility** to ensure access to goods, services including public services, and assistive devices for people with disabilities.
- **Participation** to enable disabled people to enjoy all the benefits of EU citizenship, remove administrative and attitudinal barriers to full and equal participation and provide quality community-based services, including access to personal assistance.
- **Equality** in order to eradicate discrimination on grounds of disability throughout the EU.
- **Employment** to enable many more people with disabilities to earn their living on the open labour market.
- **Education and training** to increase the number of disabled and severely disabled people in education and training thus promoting inclusive education and lifelong learning for pupils and students with disabilities.
- **Social protection** to promote decent living conditions for people with disabilities.
- **Health** to foster equal access to health services and related facilities for people with disabilities.
- **External action** to promote the rights of people with disabilities within the EU external action, including EU enlargement, neighbourhood and development Programmes.

3.2.4   Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015

On 21 September 2010 the EU published its new five year gender strategy. This sets out five key priorities for EU action in the field of gender equality for the next five years:
- equal economic independence – reconciliation between work and family life;
- equal pay;
- equality in decision-making;
- an end to gender based violence; and
- gender equality in foreign policy.

3.2.5   EU Labour Law

The EU has an established body of labour law which includes a series of directives aims at promoting equal treatment and removing discrimination.

3.2.5.1   Racial Equality Directive (Directive 2000/43/EC)

EU Directive 2000/43/EC is the EU's main directive regarding equal treatment between persons, irrespective of race. It forbids all direct or indirect discrimination based on race or ethnic origin, as well as harassment, and any discriminatory behaviour by one person against another.

The Directive applies to all persons and to all sectors of activity, regarding:
- access to employment and to unpaid activities, specifically during recruitment;
- working conditions, including concerning hierarchical promotion, pay and dismissals;
- access to vocational training;
- involvement in workers' or employers' organisations, and in any professional organisation;
- access to social protection and to health care;
- education; and
- social advantages, access to goods and services, particularly housing.

It is of note that the directive does not oppose positive action, such as national measures aimed at preventing or compensating for disadvantages connected with race or ethnic origin.[8]

3.2.5.2 Equal Treatment Directive (2006/54/EC)

EU Directive 2006/54/EC is the main directive on gender equality as part of EU employment law. The purpose of this directive is to ensure the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation. Specific provisions of the directive prohibit explicitly any discrimination on grounds of sex with regards to pay, treatment in occupational social security schemes and access to employment, vocational training and promotion and working conditions.[9]

3.2.5.3 Employment Equality Framework Directive (Directive 2000/78/EC)

Directive 2000/78/EC is the main EU Directive, aimed at tackling discrimination on grounds other than race and gender (as addressed in Directives 2000/43/EC and 2006/54/EC respectively). It addresses equality of treatment and discrimination on the grounds of disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age in the workplace.[10]

3.2.6 Common Strategic Framework

The draft Common Strategic Framework (CSF) sets out a framework for the Structural, Rural and Fisheries Funds that will be delivered by member states and regions. The CSF identifies linkages and priority areas for investment based on the Europe 2020 strategy. It sets out eleven 'thematic objectives': all activity across all Programmes in the 2014-2020 programming period will have to relate to at least one of these objectives. It also sets out the two horizontal principles that will apply to all funds, and that give rise to the cross-cutting principles within the 2014-2020 Programme in England.

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[8] European Union (2000): 'Council Directive 2000/43/EC'. See:
http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/justice_freedom_security/combating_discrimination/l33114_en.htm
[9] European Union (2006): 'Council Directive 2006/54/EC'. See: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:204:0023:0036:en:PDF
[10] European Union (2000): 'Council Directive 2000/78/EC'. See: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32000L0078:en:HTML

The first of the horizontal principles is entitled 'Promotion of equality between men and women and non-discrimination' and states:

> 'ERDF, ESF and Cohesion Fund Programmes should explicitly specify the expected contribution of these Funds to gender equality, by setting out in detail objectives and instruments. Gender analysis should be included in the analysis of the objectives of the intervention.'[11]

And furthermore that:

> 'Member States should take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation as well as to ensure accessibility during the preparation and implementation of Programmes and operations co-financed by the CSF Funds.'[12]

Finally, it also emphasises the involvement of statutory and non-statutory equality bodies, affirming:

> 'The involvement of equality bodies or other organisations active in combating discrimination is strongly recommended in order to provide the necessary expertise in the preparation, monitoring and evaluation of the Funds.'[13]

The CSF sets the wider context for the ERDF Programme, and as such its objectives must be reflected in Programme design, and in particular, within the cross cutting theme concerning equality.

3.3 United Kingdom Policy

3.3.1 The Equality Act 2010

The introduction of the Equality Act 2010 replaced this plethora of legislative instruments with one piece of legislation covering a wide range of different characteristics. The act was given Royal Assent in April 2010 and the vast majority of its legal instruments were brought into force in October 2010. The act streamlined and simplified the law to make it easier to understand and use, in order to tackle persistent inequalities.[14]

The Equality Act 2010 codified the need to systematically assess the likely or actual effects of policies and development on different sections of society. The process which can, but does not necessarily have to incorporate an EIA, must be applied to the protected characteristics detailed in the previous chapter (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race and ethnicity; religion and belief; sex; sexual orientation).

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[11] European Commission (2012): 'Elements for a Common Strategic Framework 2012-2020', p.10. See:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/working/strategic_framework/csf_part1_en.pdf
[12] European Commission (2012): 'Elements for a Common Strategic Framework 2012-2020', p.10. See:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/working/strategic_framework/csf_part1_en.pdf
[13] European Commission (2012): 'Elements for a Common Strategic Framework 2012-2020', p.11. See:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/working/strategic_framework/csf_part1_en.pdf
[14] Government Equalities Office (2010): 'Equality Act 2010'

The objective of assessing equality impacts is to identify opportunities to promote equality more effectively or to a greater extent, as well as identifying negative impacts, which need to be removed or mitigated to prevent any unlawful discrimination or disproportionate negative effects.

3.3.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty

Investigating the effects of policies, programmes and projects on different social groups is a statutory responsibility in Britain originating from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2005. These placed requirements on public authorities to assess and consult on the likely impact of proposals on race and disability equality respectively. Existing alongside them for many years was a large body of legislation designed to secure the equality of a variety of social groups – from women, through the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, to religious belief, sexual orientation and age through the Employment Equality Regulations of 2003 and 2006.

The simplification of this raft of policy, regulation and guidance became a government priority in the mid-2000s. The Equality Act 2006 established much of the current strategic context for undertaking Equality Assessment (EA) and made provision for a single strategic body – the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to oversee equality in Britain. However, the most substantial step was taken with the introduction of a new Equality Act in 2010.

A key element of the Equality Act involved a restructuring of the duties placed upon public bodies with regard to equality. In April 2011 the PSED came into force as part of the Equality Act, replacing existing duties concerning race, disability and gender.

The PSED, at section 149 of the Equality Act, requires public bodies to consider all individuals when carrying out their day to day work – in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

The PSED is intended to support good decision making – it encourages public bodies to understand how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people's needs. By understanding the effect of their activities on different people, and how inclusive public services can support and open up people's opportunities, public bodies can be more efficient and effective. The PSED therefore helps public bodies to deliver the Government's overall objectives for public services.

The PSED is comprised of a 'general duty' which is in turn underpinned by a number of 'specific duties'.

The general duty requires that government departments and public authorities (and those responsible for delivering public functions) have due regard to the following three aims:

■ eliminating **unlawful discrimination**, harassment and victimisation;
■ advancing **equality of opportunity** between different groups; and
■ fostering **good relations** between different groups.

The general duty is underpinned by a series of specific duties. The specific duties are legal requirements designed to help those public bodies understand their responsibilities. The specific duties require public bodies to:

■ publish equality objectives, at least every four years, with the first published no later than April 2012; and
■ publish information to demonstrate their compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually, and initially by January 2011.

The duty also emphasises that public bodies should consider producing information in alternative formats for disabled people. The Equality Act requires reasonable adjustments to be made for disabled people, including ensuring information is provided in an accessible format.[15]

3.3.3   The effect of the general duty in England

In England the general duty ensures that equality considerations are built into the policies and services offered by public authorities and those carrying out public functions. This general duty covers most public bodies, and applies to both private and third sector organisations where they are carrying out a public function either on behalf of the public or in their own right. It specifies they should minimise disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics, take steps to meet the different needs of people from protected groups and to encourage participation from these groups where participation in disproportionately low.

In terms of implementation, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) have published an 'essential guide'[16] to aid any public authority covered by the general duty. The guide states that these authorities need to guarantee that:

■ all staff and leadership are aware of the duty's requirements;
■ the duty arises at the time of or prior to a decision about a particular policy;
■ the duty itself is an integral part of the decision making process;
■ all necessary information has been acquired for an informed decision to be made;
■ the duty is regularly reviewed; and
■ even those exercising public functions on behalf of a public body meet the duty.

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[15] The Office for Disability Issues provides information about how to make information accessible to disabled people. See: www.odi.gov.uk/formats
[16] Equality and Human Rights Commission (2011): 'The essential guide to the public sector equality duty'. See: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/EqualityAct/PSED/essential_guide_update.pdf

The PSED through the general duty encapsulates the requirements at the Member State level with regard to equality and all EU Programmes delivered by public bodies must demonstrate compliance with it. EIAs are one way to achieve this.

3.3.4   Guidance and support

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has released several publications providing non-statutory guidelines on how to follow the specific duties[17]. In addition the Government Equalities Office (GEO – a part of the UK Home Office) has also released a general 'quick start guide for public sector organisations'[18] which again breaks down the implications of the Equality Act 2010 to make it easy for authorities to comply with their duties.

3.4   Summary

Equality continues to be a priority in Europe as well as in the UK. The emphasis on equality of opportunity within EU legislation is replicated and strengthened through the Equality Act 2010 which provides an effective framework against which to measure the performance of Programmes, projects and policies in terms of equality.

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[17] Equality and human Rights Commission (2011): 'New Equality Act Guidance'. See: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/
[18] Government Equalities Office (October 2011): 'Equality Act 2010: Specific Duties to Support the Equality Duty – What do I need to Know?' See: http://www.pfc.org.uk/pdf/specific-duties%20Nov%202011%20(2).pdf

4 Socio-demographic baseline

4.1 Introduction

This section presents the baseline socio-demographic analysis the area covered by the 2014-2020 ERDF Programme for England. This analysis is broken down by the nine protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010. Where data is available it is provided comparatively, broken down by LEP area, as well as being plotted spatially by local authority area.

Not all social groups or people with all protected characteristics are likely to be directly and intentionally affected by the content of the ERDF Programme (for example children aged under-16 below are not direct beneficiaries of any of the interventions set out). However a range of unintended, indirect and wider issues and impacts arising from a Programme of this scale are likely to be felt by groups not targeted as beneficiaries. The baseline below, therefore, explores each protected characteristic from a number of perspectives to provide a complete picture regarding equality.

Socio-economic evidence for all groups is presented within the analysis of the Programme

4.2 Age

Because of the nature of the ERDF Programme, different age brackets may experience disproportionate impacts compared with other sections of the population. Here we provide demographic data for the following groups who may be likely to be affected by the Programme differently to other sections of the general public:
- Children (people aged under 16)
- Younger people (people aged 16-24)
- Older people (people aged 65 and over)

4.2.1 Children (aged under 16)

18.9% of the population of England (equalling 10,022,836 people) are children aged under 16. The proportion of the population who are under 16 is shown in the chart and map below.

The chart shows:
- The LEP areas with the highest proportions of children (with over 20% of the population) include: Greater Birmingham and Solihull, Thames Valley Berkshire, South East Midlands, Buckingham and Buckinghamshire Thames Valley.
- The LEP areas with the lowest proportions of children (with just over 15% of the population) include Dorset and Cumbria.

The map highlights the broad spatial trends for this age group and shows:
- Areas with high proportions of young people include London, Kent, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and areas around Manchester.
- Areas with low proportions include the Cumbria, North Yorkshire and East Riding of Yorkshire, North Norfolk and Cornwall and the south west Coast.

Figure 4.1: Percentage of the population aged under 16 by LEP area
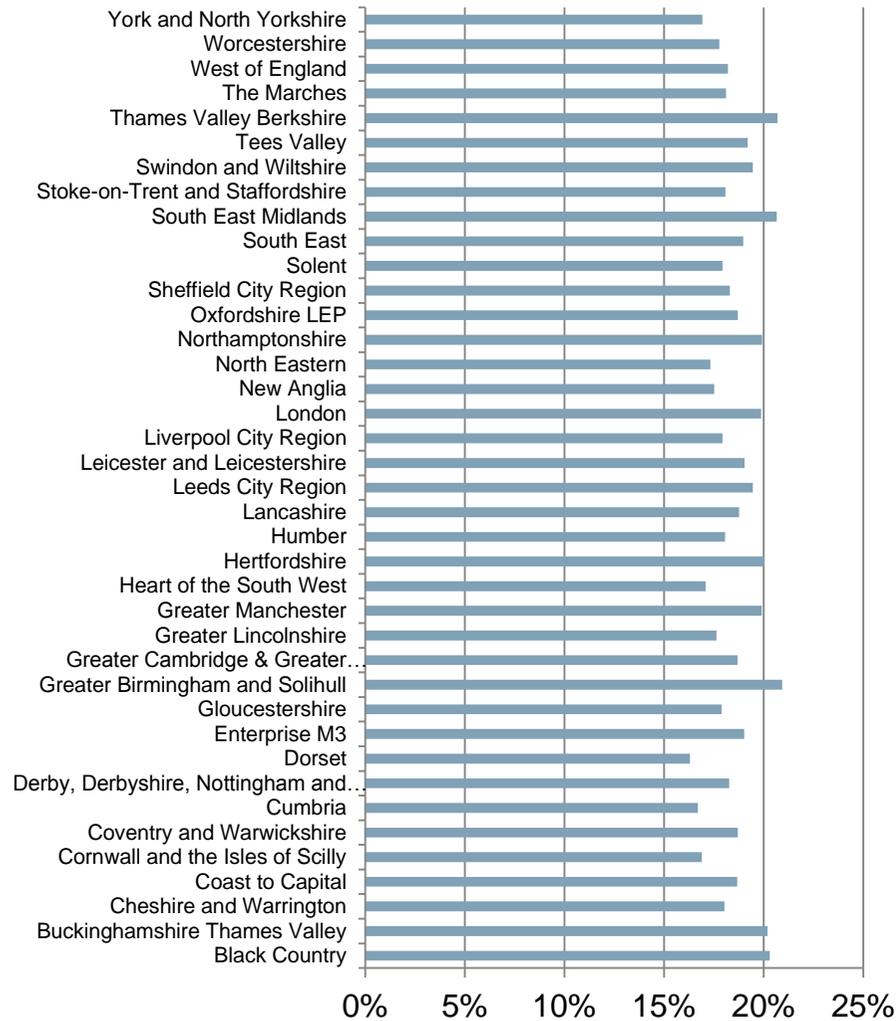
Figure 4.2: Percentage of the population aged under 16 in England

Source: Census 2011, nomis
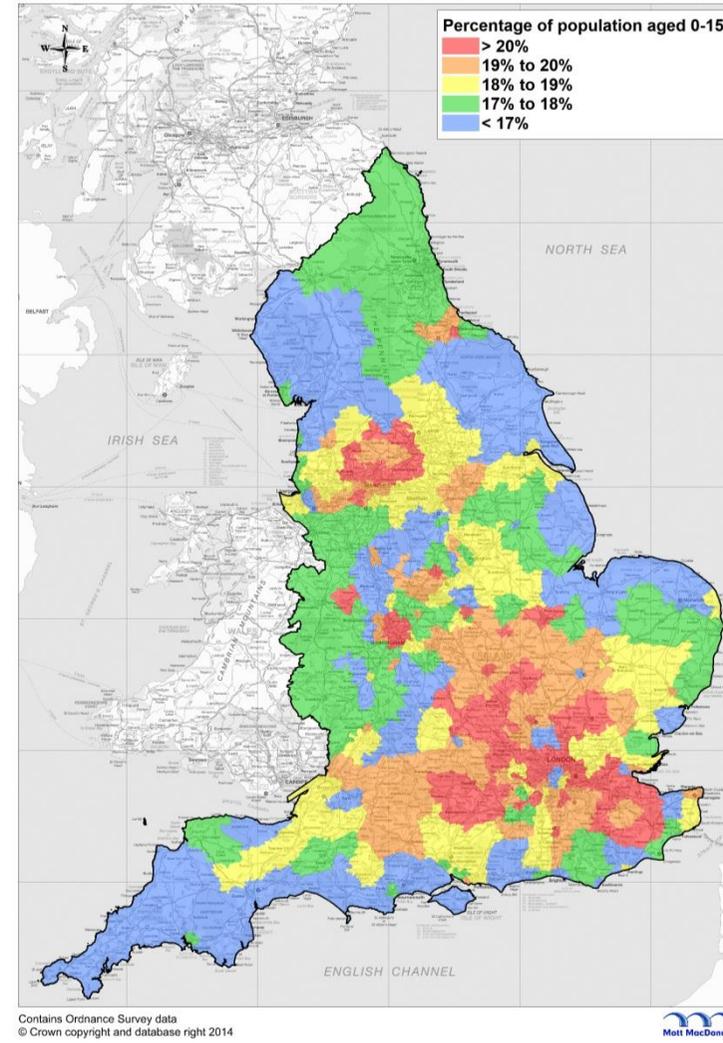
Source: Census 2011, nomis

4.2.2 Young people (aged 16-24)

11.9%% of the population of England (equalling 6,284,760 people) are younger people aged 16-24. The proportion of the population aged 16-24 is shown in the chart and map below.

The chart shows:
- The LEP areas with the highest proportion of young people (almost 15% of the population) include: West of England, Leicester and Leicestershire, Greater Manchester and Greater Birmingham and Solihull.
- The LEP areas with the lowest proportion of young people (less than 10% of population) include: Cumbria, Buckinghamshire Thames Valley and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

The map highlights the broad spatial trends relating to 16-24 year olds and shows:
- Areas with high proportions of young people include Tyne and Wear, County Durham, Lancaster, parts of South Yorkshire, the Midlands and small pockets around London and Kent.
- Areas with low proportions of young people include South Lakeland and Craven, the Norfolk and Suffolk Coast, and parts of the south west and south coast.

Figure 4.3:   Percentage of the population aged 16-24 by LEP area
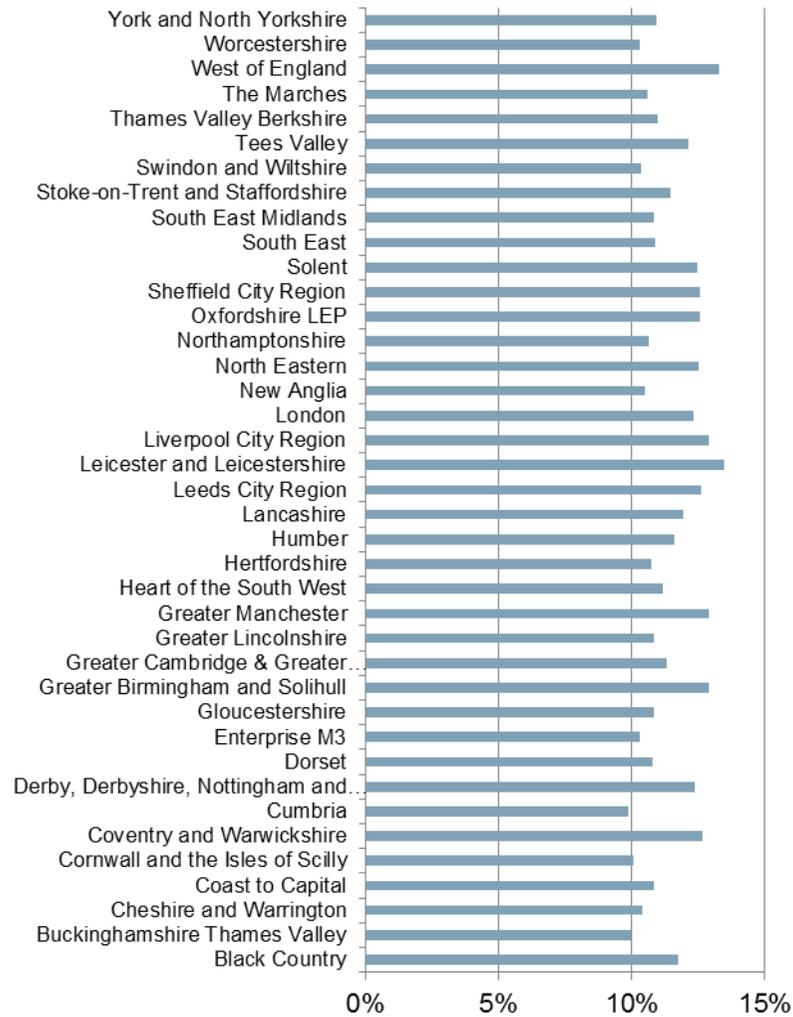
Figure 4.4:   Percentage of the population aged 16-24 in England

Source: Census 2011, nomis
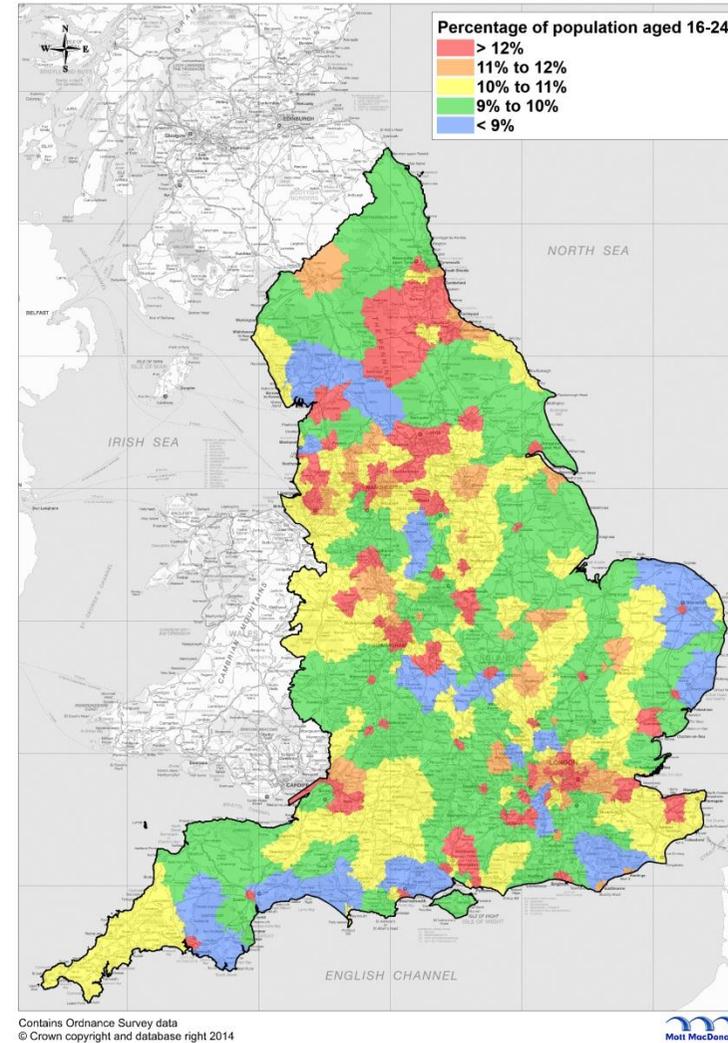
Source: Census 2011, nomis

It is further recognised that younger people have been disproportionately negatively affected by the recession.[19] The chart below illustrates the proportion of JSA claimants aged 16-24 in each LEP area:

Figure 4.5:   Percentage of the JSA claimants aged 16-24 by LEP area
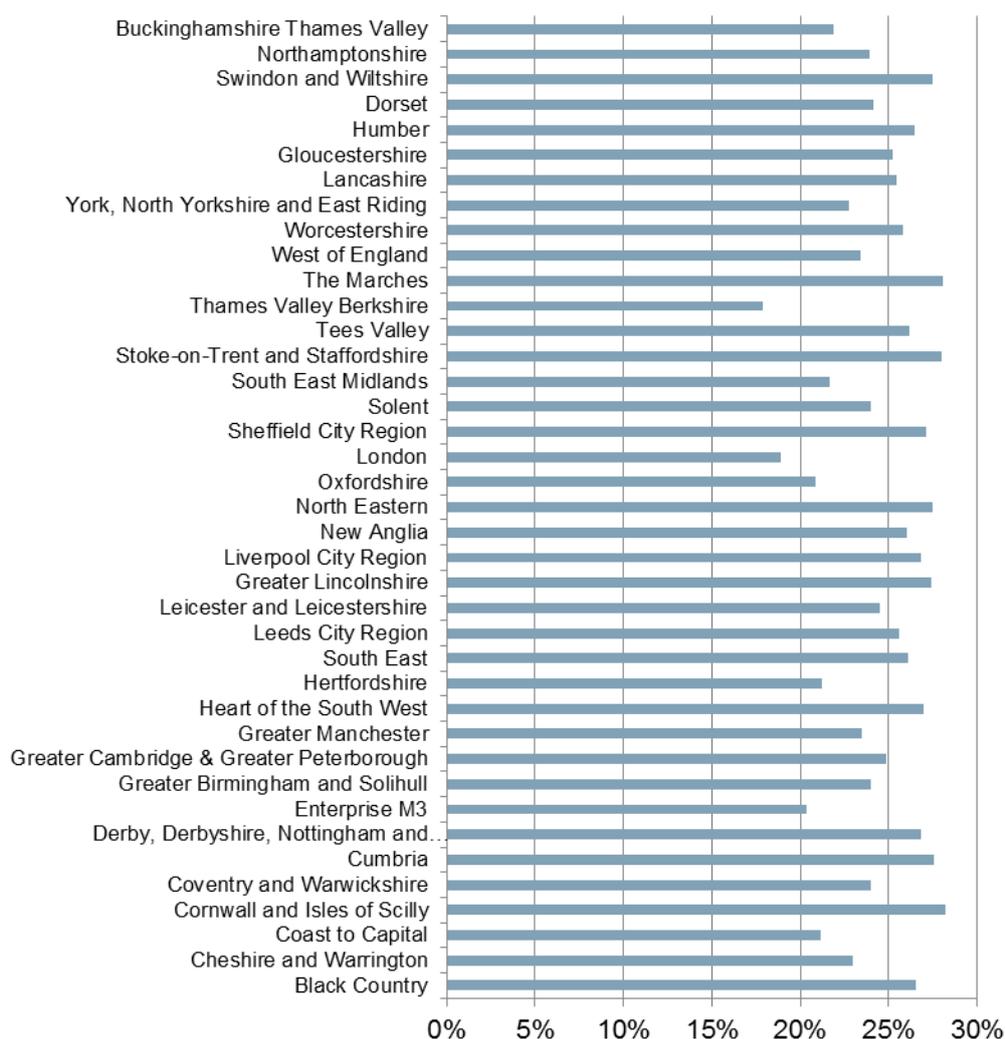
Source: nomis, April 2014

The chart illustrates the proportion of JSA claimants who are aged 16-24 and shows:

- The LEP areas with the highest proportion of JSA claimants aged 16-24 (at almost 25%) include: Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, The Marches, Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire and Cumbria.
- The LEP areas with the lowest proportion of JSA claimants aged 16-24 (at under 20%) include: Thames Valley Berkshire, London and Enterprise M3.

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[19] UK Commission for Employment and Skills (2013): 'The Youth Employment Challenge'

4.2.3 Older people (aged over 64)

16.3% of the population of England (equalling 8,660,529 people) are older people aged over 64. The proportion of the population aged over 64 is shown in the chart and map below.

The chart shows:
- The LEP areas with the highest proportions of older people (at over 20% of the population) include: Dorset, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Heart of the South West and Coventry and Warwickshire.
- The LEP areas with the lowest proportions of older people include (at between 10 and 15% of the population): London, Greater Manchester, Thames Valley Berkshire and South East Midlands.

The map highlights the broad spatial trends for older people and shows:
- Areas with high proportions of older people include Northumberland, much of Cumbria and Yorkshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, the south coast and large parts of the East Anglian coast.
- Areas with low proportions include central London and small pockets around Greater Manchester.

Figure 4.6: Percentage of the population aged over 64 by LEP area
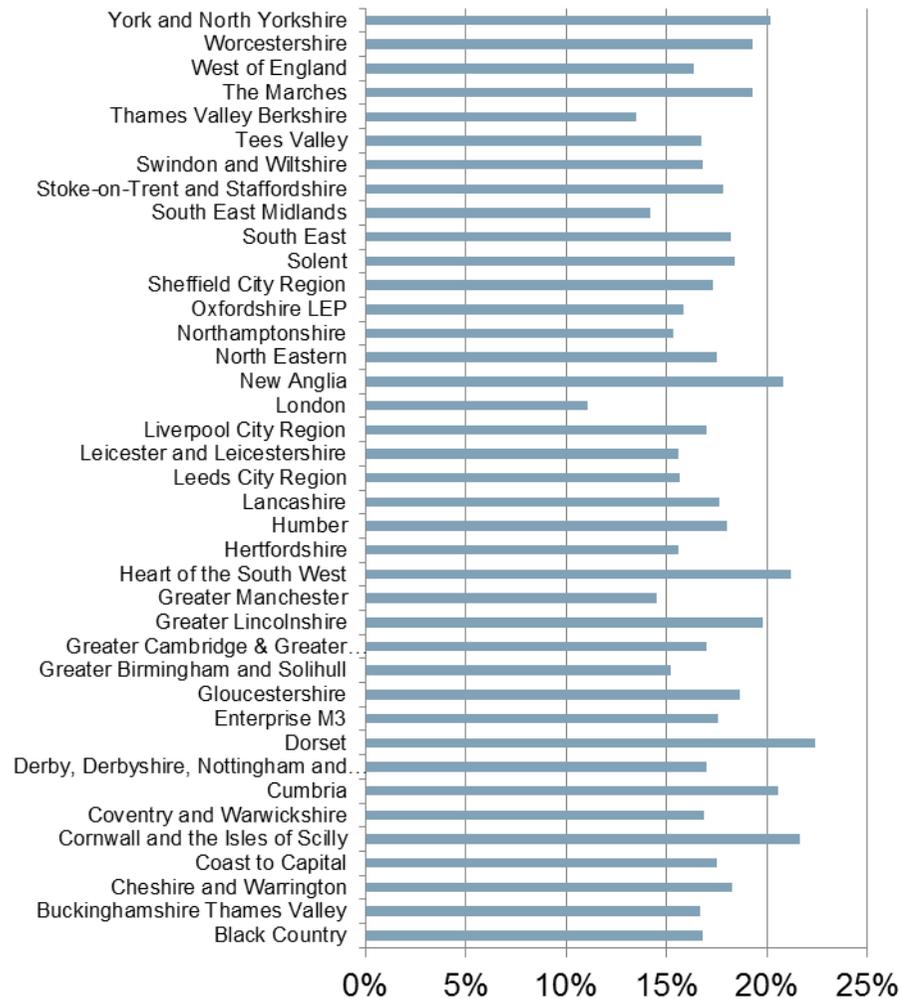
Source: Census 2011, nomis

Figure 4.7: Percentage of the population aged over 64 in England
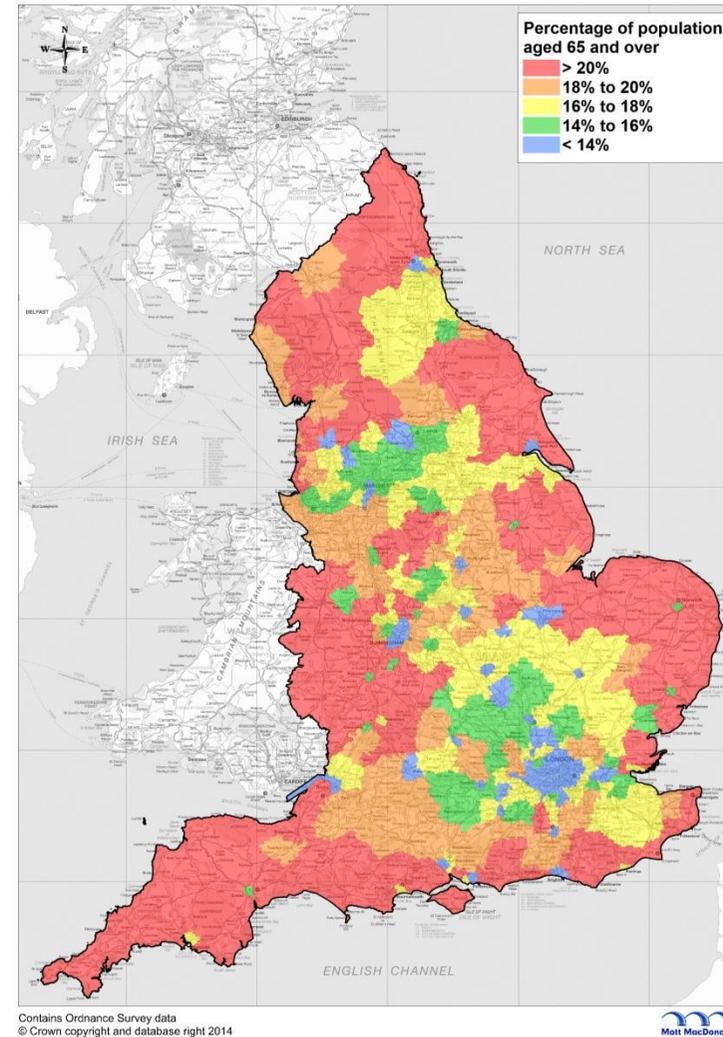
Source: Census 2011, nomis

4.3   Disability

Disability is considered under the following definition:

> "Disability is the loss or limitation of the ability to participate in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others, due to physical, social and attitudinal barriers, rather than just the result of an individual's impairment."[20]

The definition includes people with mobility impairments, sensory impairments, learning disabilities, mental wellbeing disabilities and severe life threatening conditions including cancer and AIDS. However, disability is now increasingly understood according to the 'Social Model of Disability', recognising that people are often disabled more by poor design, inaccessible services and other people's attitudes than by their impairment.

For the purposes of developing a baseline picture of disability in the UK, the proportion of the population with a limiting long term illness (LLTI) has been used.

17.6% % of the population of England (equalling 9,352,586 people) live with an LLTI (which limits their ability to access good and service 'a little' or 'a lot'). The proportion of the population with an LLTI is shown in the chart and map below.

The chart shows:
- The LEP areas with the highest proportion of people living with an LLTI include: areas in the north such as Liverpool City Region, Tees Valley, Lancashire, North Eastern and Sheffield City Region, as well as Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and the Black Country. All have more than 20% of their populations living with LLTIs.
- The LEP areas with the lowest proportion of people living with an LLTI include: London, Enterprise M3, Oxfordshire and Thames Valley Berkshire. All have less than 15% of their populations living with LLTI.

The map highlights the broad spatial trends for people with an LLTI and shows:
- Areas with high proportions of people with an LLTI include Cornwall, County Durham, coastal parts of Cumbria and Lancashire, parts of west, south Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, the northern coast of East Anglia and small areas on the Southern Coast.
- Areas with low proportions include London, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Surrey and Hampshire.

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[20] See Equality and Human Rights Commission (2011): 'Guidance on the new Equality Act'. See:
http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/

Figure 4.8:   Percentage of the population with an LLTI by LEP area
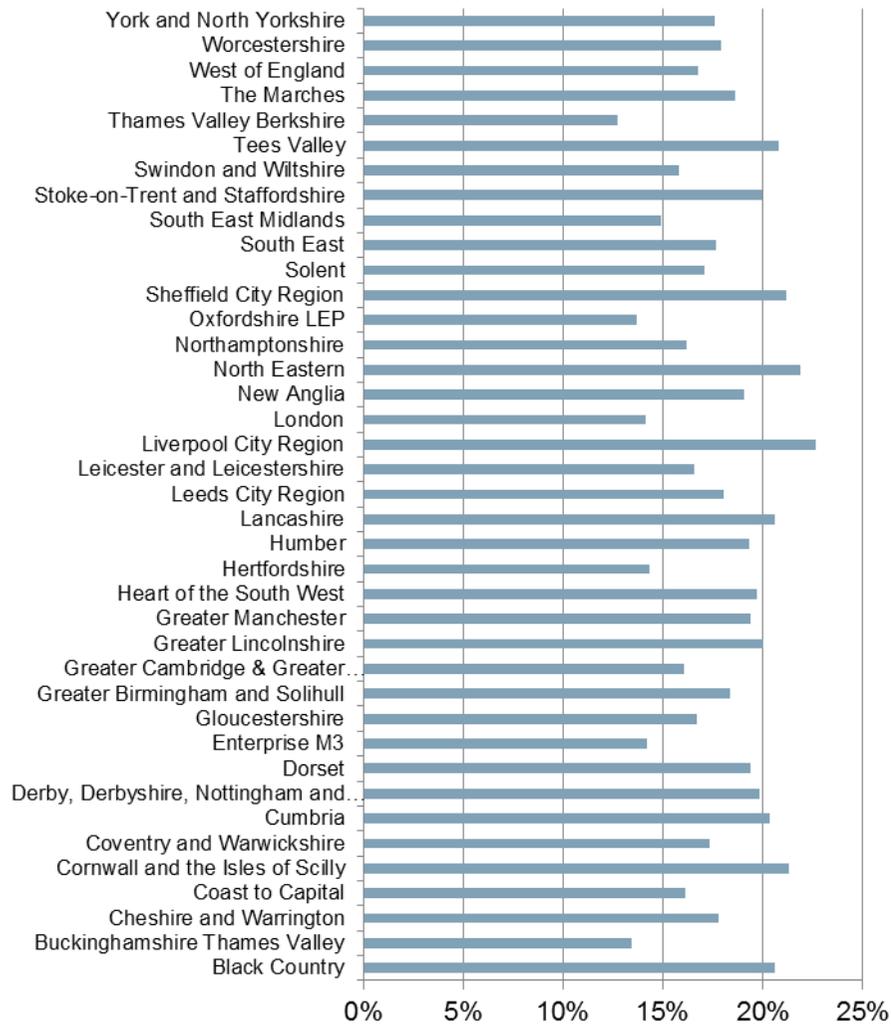
Source: Census 2011, nomis

Figure 4.9:   Percentage of the population with an LLTI in England
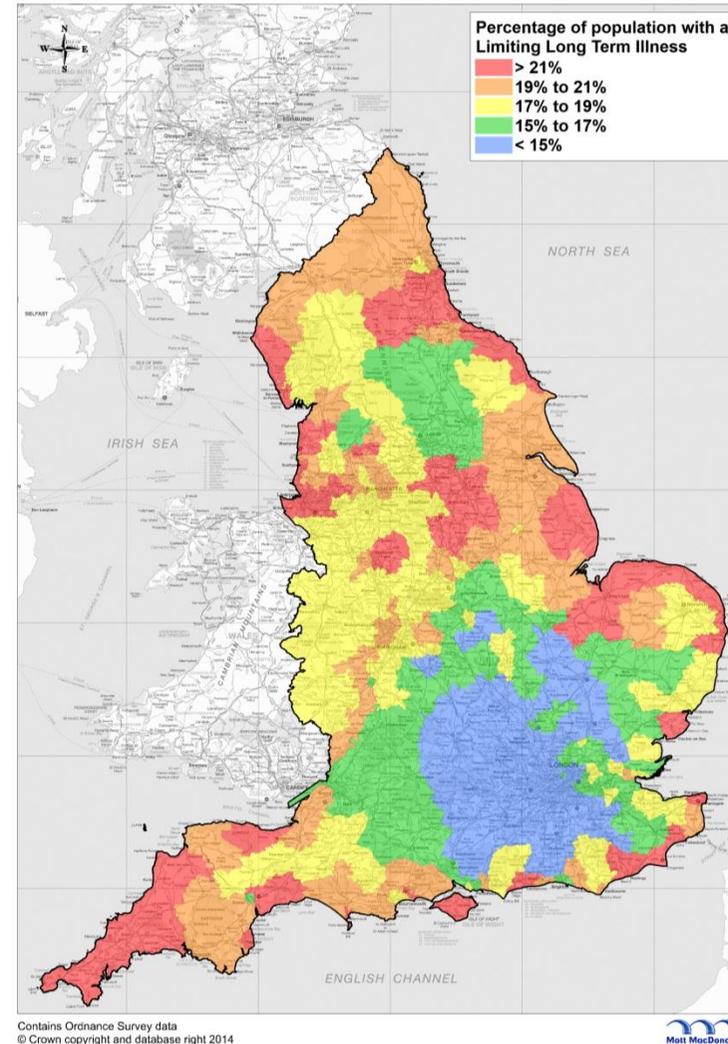
Source: Census 2011, nomis

4.4   Gender reassignment

There are multiple definitions of 'gender reassignment'. For the purposes of equality law, gender reassignment is defined as 'a process which is undertaken under medical supervision for the purpose of reassigning a person's sex by changing physiological or other characteristics of sex, and includes any part of such a process'. This means that an individual does not need to have undergone any specific treatment or surgery to be protected by the law.[21]

There are no official or Census 2011 figures for the number of transgender people in England. The Home Office 'Report of the interdepartmental working group on transsexual people' based on research from the Netherlands and Scotland, estimates that there are between 1,300 and 2,000 male to female and between 250 and 400 female to male transsexual people in the UK.[22] However, Press for Change estimate the figures at around 5,000 post-operative transsexual people.

Further, a 2011 update on 2008 research by the Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIRES) identified approximately 7,500 people who have transitioned to a new gender role via medical intervention[23] and approximately 2,605 full Gender Recognition Certificates had been issued to August 2010. The figures are more diverse when looking at the wider trans community in the UK, where estimates range from 65,000 to 300,000.[24]

4.5   Marriage and Civil Partnership

Marriage and civil partnership is covered by the Equality Act 2010 only on the grounds of unlawful discrimination. People who are married or in a civil partnership must be treated the same as people who are not and, similarly, people who civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters.

The table below shows the number and percentage of people of differing marital status in the UK:

Table 4.1:   Marital status

	Single		Married		Civil Partnership		Other	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
England	14,889,928	34.6%	20,029,369	46.6%	100,288	0.2%	7,970,035	18.5%

Source: Census 2011

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[21] Equality and Human Rights Commission (2012): 'Transgender: what the law says'. See: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/your-rights/transgender/transgender-what-the-law-says/
[22] Home Office (2000): 'Report of the Interdepartmental Working Group on Transsexual People' cited in Office for National Statistics (2009): 'Trans Data Position Paper'
[23] Gender Identity Research an Education Society (2011): 'The number of gender variant people in the UK – Update 2011'. See: http://www.gires.org.uk/assets/Research-Assets/Prevalence2011.pdf
[24] Office for National Statistics (2009): 'Trans Data Position Paper'; Gender Identity Research an Education Society (2008): 'The number of gender variant people in the UK'

The table shows that, of all usual England residents over the age of 16 (and able to marry legally), the majority are married (46.59%). 34.64% are registered as single, whilst 18.54% are registered as other (either separated, divorced or widowed). Only 0.23% of usual England residents are registered as in a civil partnership.

4.6   Pregnancy and maternity

The EHRC defines pregnancy as 'the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby' while 'maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding'.[25]

The table below shows birth rates, fertility rates and maternity rates for England and its constituent geographical regions.

The table shows that maternity rates are highest in London, the West Midlands and the East of England; all three areas have a higher maternity rate than the England average of 63.5. The region with the lowest maternity rate is the North East with 59.9.

Table 4.2:   Birth rate, fertility rate and maternity rate

Area	Total Population (1000s)	Female population (aged 15 to 44) (1000s)	Total births	Crude Live Birth Rate	General Fertility Rate (GFR)	Total Fertility Rate (TFR)	Total maternities	Maternity Rate
North East	2,596.4	504.1	30,527	11.8	60.6	1.85	30,220	59.9
North West	7,056.0	1,400.7	88,752	12.6	63.4	1.93	87,883	62.7
Yorkshire and the Humber	5,288.2	1,053.6	66,451	12.6	63.1	1.92	65,882	62.5
East Midlands	4,537.4	885.2	55,378	12.2	62.6	1.94	54,833	61.9
West Midlands	5,608.7	1,103.9	73,023	13.0	66.1	2.02	72,289	65.5
East	5,862.4	1,126.3	73,220	12.5	65.0	1.99	72,302	64.2
London	8,204.4	1,998.4	132,843	16.2	66.5	1.84	131,248	65.7
South East	8,652.8	1,679.9	107,132	12.4	63.8	1.96	105,849	63.0
South West	5,300.8	973.2	60,794	11.5	62.5	1.95	60,059	61.7
England	**53,107.2**	**10,725.4**	**688,120**	**13.0**	**64.2**	**1.93**	**680,565**	**63.5**

Source: ONS, Census 2011[26]

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[25] Equality and Human Rights Commission (2012): 'Protected Characteristics Definitions'. See:
http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/protected-characteristics-definitions/
[26] Definitions: Population = total population of the area. Female population (aged 15-44) = ONS standard measure for women of childbearing age. Total births = total number of live births. Crude live birth rate = Live births per 1,000 population. General fertility rate (GFR) = Live births per 1,000 women aged 15-44. Total fertility rate (TFR) = total number of live births a woman amongst the group in question would bear if they experienced the age-specific fertility rates of the calendar year. Maternities = a pregnancy resulting in the birth of one or more children, including stillbirths. Maternity rate = maternities per 1,000 women aged 15-44.

'Maternity' also covers the period of statutory maternity leave leading up to and following a birth. A 2011 report by the Department for Work and Pensions showed that:

- The mean length of maternity leave taken by mothers increased from 32 weeks in 2006 to 39 weeks in 2008.
- The majority of mothers who had worked before childbirth received some type of maternity pay Including:
  - 42% of mothers receive Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) only; and
  - 32% of mothers receive SMP and Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP); while
  - 11% of mothers receive no maternity pay.
- Around three quarters (77%) of mothers return to work 12-18 months after childbirth.
- The return to work was found to be influenced by: employer size and sector, duration of pre-birth job, the type of maternity pay received, family structure and the mothers' educational level.
- Two thirds of fathers (66%) took some time off from work before their baby was born. Nine out of ten fathers (91%) took some time off after the birth of their baby. Of the fathers who took time off, three quarters took paternity leave either on its own or in combination with other types of leave. Half of the fathers who took paternity leave took their full entitlement of two weeks.[27]

4.7   Race and ethnicity

The protected characteristics of race and ethnicity refers to groups of people defined by their race, colour, nationality (including citizenship), and ethnic or national origin.

EIAs, while focussing on the potential impacts of Programmes on all races and ethnicities, tend to draw a distinction between people of White British origin and people from Black Asian and other minority ethnic (BAME) groups. This distinction is drawn because in many cases the outcomes (including educational attainment, employment, skills and qualifications, health and other outcomes) of people from BAME groups tend to differ from their White British counterparts. Despite the separation into these two groups for the purposes of this EIA, it is worth mentioning that BAME communities are not a homogenous group and wherever possible data needs to be disaggregated to ensure that an accurate picture is reflected.

20.2%% of the population of England (equalling 10,733,220 people) are in this regard members of BAME groups. The proportion of the population who are from BAME group is shown in the chart and map below. The chart shows:

- The LEP areas with the highest proportion of people from BAME groups included: London (at around 40%), and Greater Birmingham and Solihull, the Black Country and Leicester and Leicestershire (at more than 20%).
- The LEP areas with the lowest proportion of people from BAME groups (at less than 5%) included: Heart of the South West, Cumbria and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

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[27] Department for Work and Pensions (2011): 'Maternity and Paternity Rights and Women Returners Survey 2009/10'

The map highlights the broad spatial trends for people who are BAME and shows:
- Areas with high proportions of people who are from BAME groups include areas of Central London
- Areas with low proportions include large parts of Essex and Kent, areas around Cambridgeshire and Buckinghamshire, and small parts of the Midlands and South Yorkshire.

Figure 4.10: Percentage of the population who are BAME by LEP area
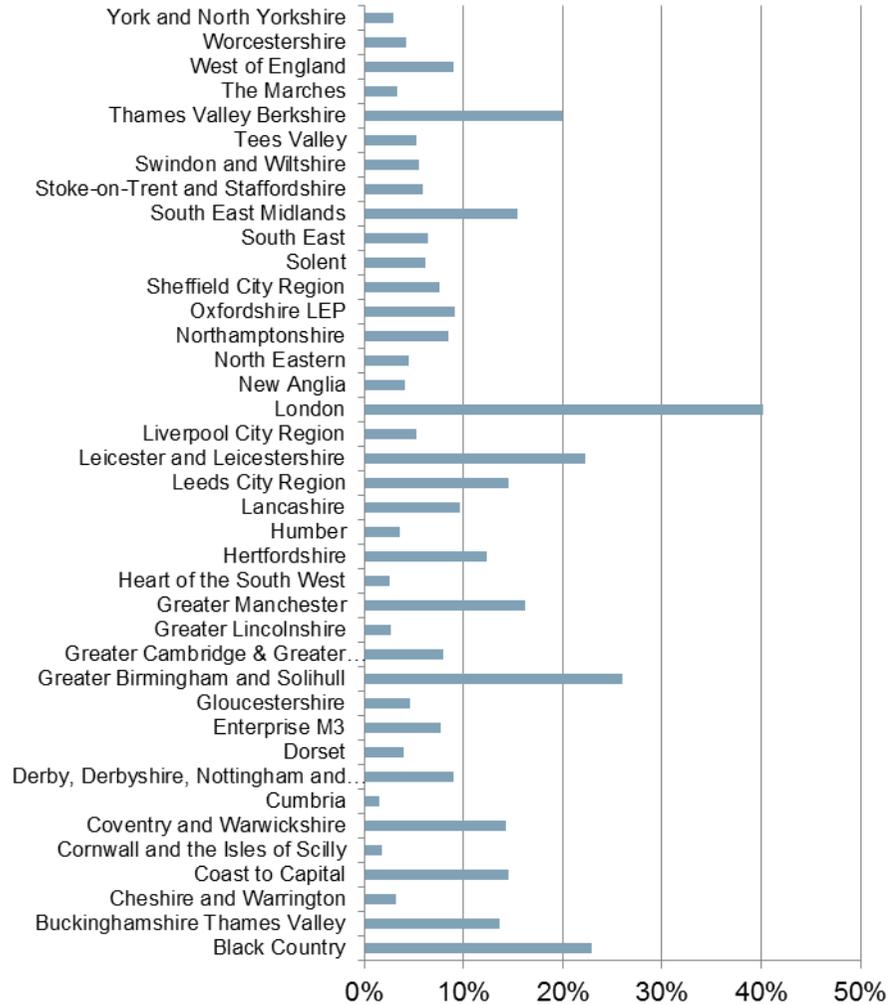
Figure 4.11: Percentage of the population who are BAME in England

Percentage BAME
- > 60%
- 45% to 60%
- 30% to 45%
- 20% to 30%
- 10% to 20%
- < 10%

Contains Ordnance Survey data
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Source: Census 2011, nomis
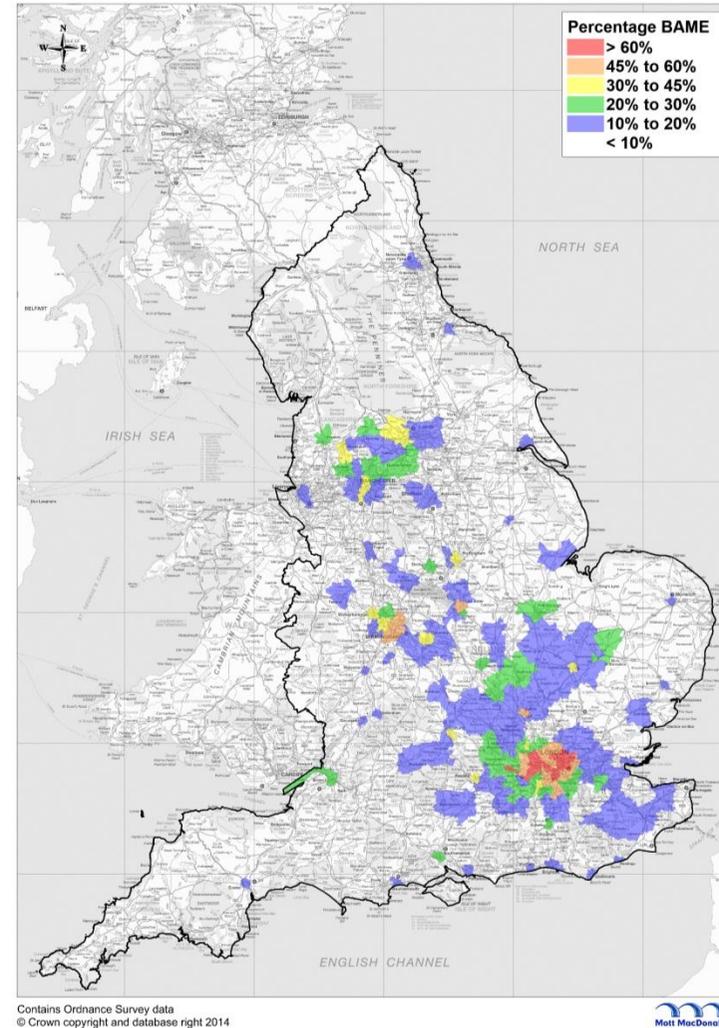
Source: Census 2011, nomis

It is further recognised that people from some BAME groups have been disproportionately negatively affected by the recession in terms of employment.[28] The chart below illustrates the proportion of JSA claimants from non-White British backgrounds in each LEP area:

Figure 4.12: Percentage of the JSA claimants from BAME groups by LEP area
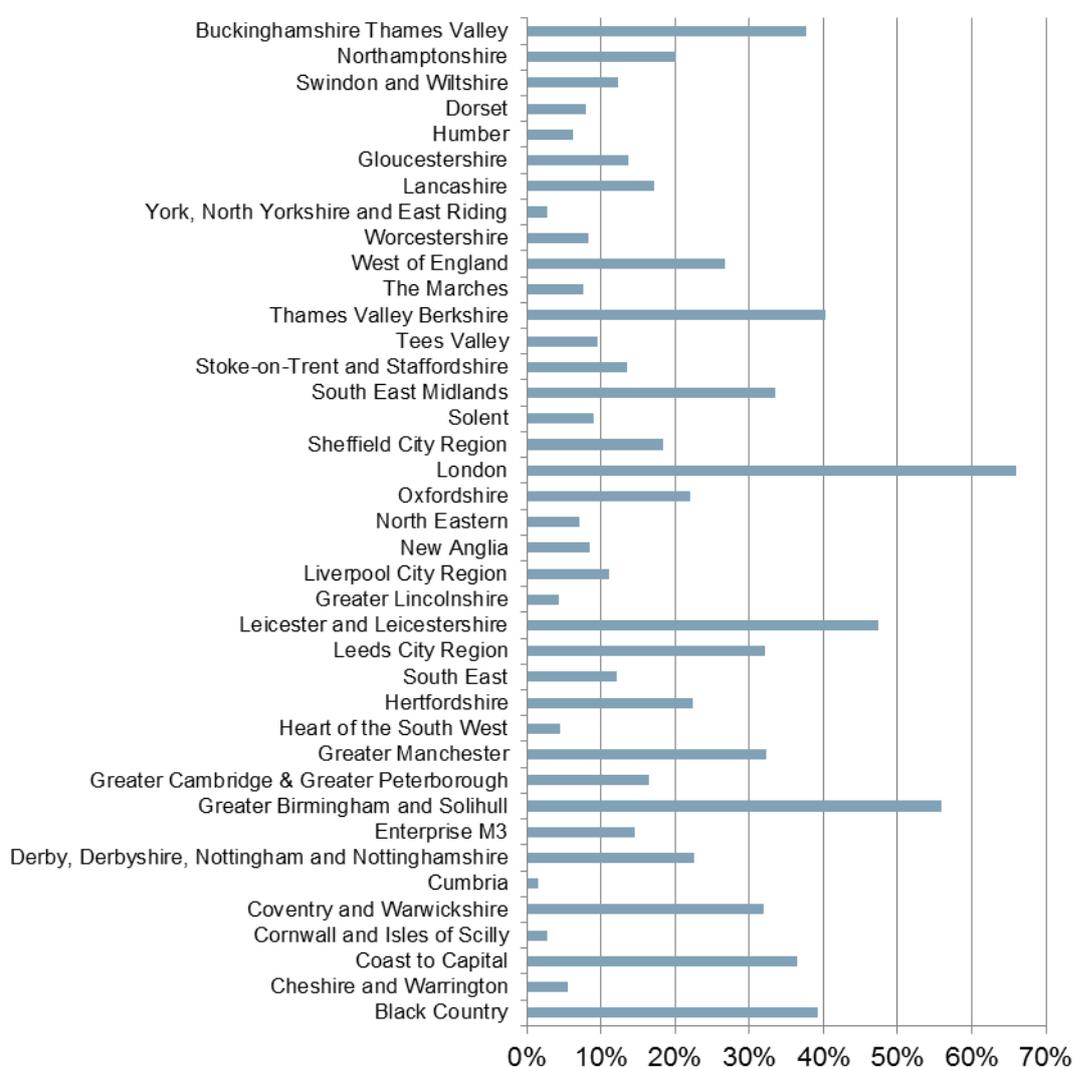
Source: nomis, April 2014

The chart illustrates the proportion of JSA claimants from BAME groups and shows:

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[28] This is confirmed in a recent report by the TUC, which has demonstrated that young people from Black, Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities have been consistently disadvantaged in employment before, during and after the recent recession. See TUC (2012): ''Youth, ethnicity and employment'

- The LEP areas with the highest proportion of JSA claimants from BAME groups include: London (at more than 65%), as well as Greater Birmingham and Solihull (at more than 50%), and Leicester and Leicestershire (at more than 40%).
- The LEP areas with the lowest proportion of JSA claimants from BAME groups include: York, North Yorkshire and East Riding, Cumbria, and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

4.8   Religion and belief

In terms of religion or belief, distinctions are frequently drawn in order to identify those professing a so-called 'minority faith' which in the UK generally includes Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism (as well as other faiths, such as Baha'i and smaller groups such as pagans). This distinction is made because in most areas the majority of the population tend to express their religion or faith as some form or denomination of Christianity, as a professed lack of religion or faith (including atheists and humanists) or with a preference not to answer.

The chart below highlights those LEP areas with high proportions of 'minority' faiths as described above.

The chart illustrates the proportion of minority faith groups by LEP area and shows:
- The LEP areas with the highest proportions of people following these faiths include: London (at more than 20%), Greater Birmingham and Solihull and Leicester and Leicestershire (at more than 15%).
- The LEP areas with the lowest proportions of people following these faiths include: Cumbria and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (at less than 2%).

Figure 4.13: Percentage of the population who belong to 'minority' faith groups by LEP area
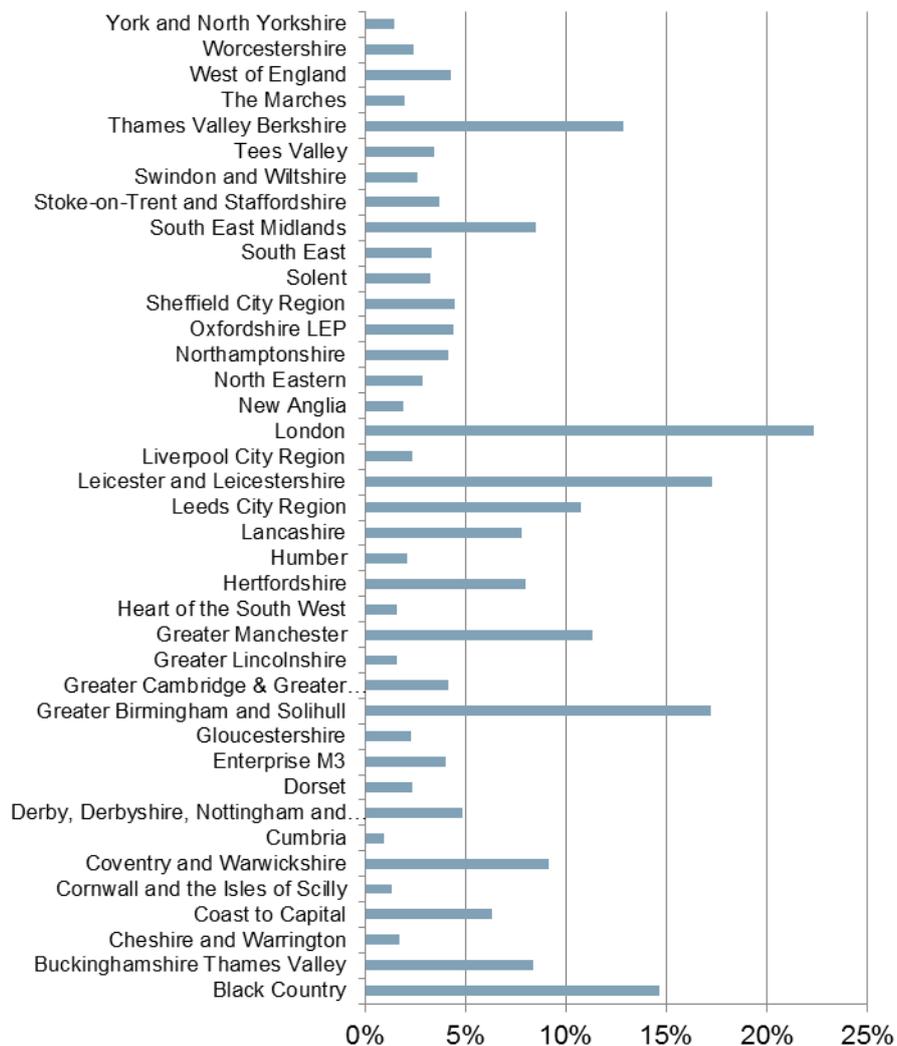
4.9   Sex and gender

Sex is defined as the biological distinction between male and female, while gender is the socially-determined role of men and women, which is often accompanied by social norms such as specific dress conventions and established familial roles.

Though the number of females is slightly higher than males in England (approximately 26.9 million females against 26.1 million males), the difference is minimal (with females making up 51% of the population and males making up 49%). This picture is reflected throughout England.

4.10   Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation concerns whether a person's sexual attraction is to their own sex, the opposite sex or both sexes.

Sexual orientation was added to the list of protected characteristics under the provision of the Equality Act 2010. In general, consideration of this characteristic focuses on lesbians, gay men and bisexuals who frequently refer to themselves as the LGB community. The acronym is often expanded to LGBT to incorporate the trans population, although current equality legislation considers them separately.

There are no comprehensive official or census figures for the number of LGB people in England and different surveys have produced different results.

For example, it is estimated by LGB charity Stonewall that lesbian, gay and bisexual people make up around six per cent of the UK population.[29] Conversely, experimental statistics published by the ONS from the results of the Integrated Household Survey (undertaken from April 2011 to March 2012) indicated that:

- 1.5 per cent of adults in the UK identified themselves as LGB, while 93.9 per cent identified themselves as heterosexual. This suggests that many who did not identify as heterosexual chose not to disclose their sexuality or did not identify with the options presented.
- 2.7 per cent of 16 to 24 year olds in the UK identified themselves as LGB compared with 0.4 per cent of 65 year olds and over.[30]

4.11   Summary

The data presented within this chapter is designed to present a baseline picture of equality in England. The protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010 will have a greater or lesser degree of interaction with the ERDF Programme.

Some sections of the population are more likely to experience the kind of challenges that the ERDF is designed to address, while others may feel indirect or unintended effects of the Programme. The evidence for particular impacts and interactions is presented within the main body of the report and identifies where particular groups are likely to experience impacts.

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[29] Stonewall Cymru (2012): 'Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) People in Sport: Understanding LGB sports participation in Wales' See: http://www.stonewallcymru.org.uk/documents/lgb_people_in_sport.pdf
[30] Office for National Statistics (2012): 'Integrated Household Survey April 2011 to March 2012: Experimental Statistics'. See: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_280451.pdf

5 Assessment of the ERDF Priority Axes

5.1 Priority Axis 1: Research and innovation

5.1.1 Summary of Priority Axis 1

Priority Axis 1 has one Investment Priority and two Specific Objectives. The structure of Priority Axis 1 is detailed in the table below:

Table 5.1:   Priority Axis 1: Investment Priorities, Specific Objectives and actions

Priority Axis 1
Research and innovation
Investment Priority 1 of Priority Axis 1
Strengthening research, technological development and innovation by: promoting business investment in R&I; developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the Higher Education sector; promoting investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation; and supporting technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advance manufacturing capabilities and first production, in particular in key enabling technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies
Specific Objective 1.1
Increase the number of SMEs innovating to bring new products and processes to the market.
Specific Objective 1.2
Increase collaborative research and innovation between large enterprises, research institutions and public institutions to improve SME commercialisation.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include;
Strengthening research, technological development and innovation by: ■ Promoting business investment in research and innovation, including through the attraction of new companies and inward investment, especially where the purpose is to help SMEs bring new products and processes to the commercial markets. ■ Developing links, synergies and joint activity between enterprises, research and development centres and the Higher Education sector, including the development of innovation centres that combine physical space for innovative firms with specialist support services and/or equipment needed for the commercialisation of new products. ■ Facilitating the development of spin out companies from Higher Education institutions and other research centres. ■ Promoting investment in product and service development, including social innovation, eco innovation and public service applications, including the development of new solutions through public service procurement. ■ Supporting, including through capital investment where necessary, the development of existing (and a limited number of new) enterprise, innovation and technology hubs and centres of excellence, manufacturing clusters and the development of appropriate test facilities, pilot lines and advance manufacturing capabilities. ■ Driving demand for innovation, including through business engagement and the provision of advice, support for networking and clusters of innovative firms and those firms seeking to become innovative, business-to-business collaborations, especially where actions seek to build systems and

> cultures of open innovation.

5.1.2   Assessment of Priority Axis 1

This section highlights the potential effects and opportunities that could be achieved through delivery of Priority Axis 1 of the Programme. The opportunities identified for this Priority specify the protected characteristics likely to experience the effects.

Opportunities to support young people to enter the labour market

The Programme provides – through Priority Axis 1 – opportunities to further support **young people** looking to enter the labour market.

The Labour Force Survey for 2013 clearly shows that unemployment rates are related to age. Higher unemployment rates were experienced by both recent graduates and non-graduates aged 21 to 30, than older graduates and older non-graduates.[31] Almost half of all employed recent graduates in 2013 were working in a non-graduate role.[32] There has been an upward trend in the number graduates working in non-graduate roles since the 2008/09 recession.

In addition, evidence suggests that graduates are increasingly exploring self-employment as a route into employment. The HE Business and Community Interaction survey (HE-BCI) is an annual survey completed by all publically funded UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). In 2012/13, over 3,500 graduate start-up companies were formed, representing a 27% increase on the previous year.[33] This is compared to an annual decrease in the number of newly created spinouts (-14%) with only 150 forming.[34] Graduate start-up companies are often located either on or close to the university from which they have emerged.[35] This in turn can help to boost the local economy by using local supply chains and offering local jobs. This suggest that there is both a need and demand for further support for graduate start-ups as a means of boost employment amongst younger people and those who have recently completed university in particular.

Activity within the Programme that could help to address these challenges is detailed in the box below:

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[31] ONS (2013) Full Report – Graduates in the UK Labour Market 2013, available at:
http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_337841.pdf
[32] ONS (2013) Full Report – Graduates in the UK Labour Market 2013, available at:
http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_337841.pdf
[33] Spin-outs (2014) Quarterly Journal – April 2014, available at:
http://www.spinoutsuk.co.uk/Downloads/Spinouts_UK_Quarterly_Journal_April_2014.pdf
[34] Spin-outs (2014) Quarterly Journal – April 2014, available at:
http://www.spinoutsuk.co.uk/Downloads/Spinouts_UK_Quarterly_Journal_April_2014.pdf
[35] Witty A. (2013) Encouraging a British Invention Revolution

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective: 1.1: Increase the numbers of SMEs innovating to bring new products and processes to the market

Specific Objective 1.2: Increase collaborative research and innovation between large enterprises, research institutions and public institutions to improve SME commercialisation.

Actions

- Facilitating the development of spin out companies from Higher Education institutions and other research centres.
- Developing links, synergies and joint activity between enterprises, research and development centres and the Higher Education sector, including the development of innovation centres.
- Supporting, including through capital investment where necessary, the development of existing enterprise, innovation and technology hubs and centres of excellence.

Relevance

As this objective aims to increase collaborative research and innovation between large enterprises, research institutions and public institutions, this Priority presents the opportunity to help young into a labour market, either through capital investment, centres of excellence, and spin out companies. This will be beneficial to the local economy and support further R&D.

Spatial and demographic impact

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: younger people.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: no specific geographical impacts beyond those areas with university campuses, though the concentration of younger people in urban areas may result in opportunities in these areas. LEP areas such as Greater Birmingham and London may see particular impacts from this Priority as a result.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for younger people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

Opportunities to promote the inclusion of young people in the technological, applied research and manufacturing sectors

This Priority Axis has the potential to broaden the appeal of careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) related subjects to a range of groups including **younger people**.

Currently, a shortage of skills in the STEM sectors is threatening the UK's capacity for growth.[36] The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) survey on education and skills in 2012, found that 42% of employers were facing difficulties in recruiting STEM-proficient staff.[37] Although, the majority of young people (aged 10-14) enjoyed science, only 17% of these children aspired to a STEM career.[38]

A recent literature review of approximately 300 articles identified a number of themes regarding the barriers young people face to studying STEM subjects.[39] These were:

- The need for quality teaching for students to become and remain engaged in STEM.
- The perceived difficulties of STEM subjects.
- Less time spent devoted to practical work at secondary school.
- Negative stereotypes of people studying STEM subjects.
- Perceptions of careers and opportunities in STEM.

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective: 1.1: Increase the numbers of SMEs innovating to bring new products and processes to the market

Specific Objective 1.2: Increase collaborative research and innovation between large enterprises, research institutions and public institutions to improve SME commercialisation.

Supported actions

- Facilitating the development of spin out companies from Higher Education institutions and other research centres.
- Developing links, synergies and joint activity between enterprises, research and development centres and the Higher Education sector, including the development of innovation centres.
- Promoting investment in product and service development.

Relevance

As this objective aims to increase collaborative research and innovation between large enterprises, research institutions and public institutions, this Priority has the opportunity to promote STEM subjects among young people. This would, however, be heavily dependent on the level of engagement with HEIs. STEM subjects could also be promoted through the centres of excellence set up under the Priority.

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[36] NFER (2013) Improving young people's engagement with science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), available at:
[37] CBI (2012) Education and Skills Survey, available at:
http://www.cbi.org.uk/media/1051530/cbi__edi_education___skills_survey_2011.pdf
[38] DfE (2013) Reform of National Curriculum, in House of Parliament (2013) STEM education for 14-19 year olds
[39] The Institution of Engineering and Technology (2013) Studying Stem: what are the barriers?

Spatial and demographic impact

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: younger people.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: no specific geographical impacts, though the concentration of younger people around university towns may result in opportunities in these areas.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for younger people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

Opportunities to promote the inclusion of women in the technological, applied research, and manufacturing sectors

Priority Axis 1 also presents important new opportunities to support **women** in innovative research and development roles in sectors traditionally dominated by men.

A report by the CBI identified a number of barriers to female participation in STEM related careers, these included: poor careers advice and guidance, a lack of information on STEM career options and the absence of positive female role models.[40]

A recent survey of more than 600 women in manufacturing in the US found that female employees felt there was a gender bias in their industry.[41] 51% of respondents cited the main reason for women's underrepresentation in manufacturing is the perception of a male-favoured culture. In addition, there is a sense that a historical gender bias has resulted in women being excluding from core managerial roles.

In 2013 a higher percentage of female gradates (27%) worked in lower middle skill jobs compared to their male counterparts (13%). In this skill level, the top three jobs for women were teaching assistants, care workers and home carers, and administrative roles. There are a higher number of women in these roles despite female graduates achieving higher degree results than men. Three in every five females (62%) working in the lower middle skill jobs had attained a first or upper second class degree compared with only 56% of men.[42]

Women are under-represented at most levels in the manufacturing sector, including apprentice and graduate-entry level.[43] The majority of manufacturing businesses are SMEs (99.5%) and they employ almost 60% of the manufacturing workforce.[44] However, only 18% of SMEs are female led.[45]

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[40] UKRC – WISE (2012): 'Engaging girls in science technology, engineering and maths: What works?'
[41] Deloitte & Manufacturing Institute (2013) Untapped resource, How manufacturers can attract, retain, and advance talented women, available at: http://www.themanufacturinginstitute.org/~/media/D0D064208A994D6A91B0E51CF008BF23.ashx
[42] ONS (2013) Women in the labour market, http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/lmac/women-in-the-labour-market/2013/rpt---women-in-the-labour-market.html?format=print
[43] Make it Britain & Lloyds Bank (2014) Women in manufacturing, available at: http://www.eef.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/153CAC93-168C-4C88-8B20-A1B41BFF97CA/23897/WIMReport_May2014_new.pdf
[44] Department for Business Innovation & Skills (2013): 'Business population estimates for the UK and regions'
[45] Department for Business Innovation & Skills (2013): 'Small Business Survey 2012: businesses led by women and ethnic minorities'

In the UK, only 16 per cent of women-led businesses export in comparison to 30 per cent of SMEs as a whole.[46]

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect
Objective
Specific Objective: 1.1: Increase the numbers of SMEs innovating to bring new products and processes to the market
Specific Objective 1.2: Increase collaborative research and innovation between large enterprises, research institutions and public institutions to improve SME commercialisation.

Supported actions:

- Developing links between enterprises, research and development centres.
- Facilitating the development of spin out companies from HE institutions and other research centres.
- Supporting, including through capital investment where necessary, the development of existing (and a limited number of new) enterprise innovation and technology hubs and centres of excellence.

Relevance

There is an opportunity to promote the inclusion of young women in the technological, applied research and manufacturing sectors, and support their development and growth. The Programme has the opportunity to engage women in these sectors through graduate schemes, and SME and start-up support. It can also promote these sectors through centres of excellence identified within the Programme. This Priority has the opportunity to support young women through the facilitation of HE spin outs and capital investment. The Programme will need to address the barriers women currently face in these sectors in order to fulfil this opportunity.

Spatial and demographic impact

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: younger people and women.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: no specific geographical impacts, though the concentration of younger people in urban areas may see city regions benefit.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for women and younger people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

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[46] Prowess, Women in Business (2013) Making It Global: Supporting Women-Led Businesses Go Global, available at: http://www.prowess.org.uk/make-it-global

5.2   Priority Axis 2: Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, ICT

5.2.1   Summary of Priority Axis 2

Priority Axis 2 has two Investment Priorities and includes two Specific Objectives. The structure of Priority Axis 2 is detailed in the table below:

Table 5.2:   Priority Axis 2: Investment Priorities, Specific Objectives and actions

Priority Axis 2:
Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, ICT
Investment Priority 1 of Priority Axis 2
Extending broadband deployment and the roll-out of high-speed networks and supporting the adoption of emerging technologies and networks for the digital economy.
Specific Objective 2.1
Increase the coverage and take up of superfast and ultrafast Broadband in areas where the market is failing, particularly where this is creating a barrier to SME growth.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
- Improve access to superfast and ultrafast broadband.   - Increase business to take up of ICT connections. This could include: use of IP Telephony Solutions, cloud computing solutions, the implementation of flexible working and remote access solutions.   **Examples of actions which may be supported:**   - Extension of superfast broadband networks.   - Provision of vouchers to SMEs to help with superfast or ultrafast connection costs.   Activities will target businesses and SMEs, including social enterprises.
Investment Priority 2 of Priority Axis 2
Developing ICT products and services, e-commerce, and enhancing demand for ICT.
Specific Objective 2.2
Increase the number of SMEs using and having access to digital technologies including trading online.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
- Supporting Small and Medium Sized Enterprises to update/introduce new ICT business models which will drive business performance.   **Examples of actions which may be supported:**   - Provision of coaching, advice, consultancy, mentoring and peer-to-peer support.   - Targeted grant schemes   Activities will target SMEs, including Social Enterprises.

5.2.2   Assessment of Priority Axis 2

This section highlights the effects and opportunities that could be achieved through inclusive delivery of Programme actions. The opportunities for Priority Axis 2 are separated out by relevant protected characteristics.

Opportunities to improve digital connectivity for older entrepreneurs

Priority Axis 2 is well-positioned to improve digital connectivity for those lacking the skills or facing other barriers to making the most of online opportunities.

Older people often face barriers to accessing the internet. Although a personal choice for some, many older people do not use the internet because of issues related to cost, complexity of technology and lack of relevance to individual lifestyles. A recent survey found that 13% of people aged 55 to 64 and 53% of people aged 65+ do not have basic online skills.[47] Further to this, only four out of ten people aged 65 and over do not have internet access at home, 5 million of which have never used the internet. This can act as a barrier to successful entrepreneurship for older people.

The latest statistics on internet usage, found that there were differences in internet usage between genders in older ages.[48] Around five in ten (47%) men aged 75 years and over had never used the internet, compared with three in ten (30%) of women.

Engagement with the internet by older people is often reactive (e.g. using applications that have been developed by younger people), rather than older people pro-actively engaging with the development of new applications.[49] As a result, many older people would benefit from activities to improve their knowledge of the internet and related tools, in order to fully experience the benefits they can deliver.

45% of UK SMEs do not have a website and only 10% of SMEs are mobile optimised. Recent research by Hibu found that online sales are worth £480 billion to UK SMEs and mobile online transitions are worth £2.5 billion to UK SMEs.[50] The importance of having mobile optimised transactions is set to increase, with UK and U.S. SMEs believing that mobile online transactions will have the biggest increase across all sales channels next year. Those SMEs without a mobile optimised website felt they were missing out on £77 billion in annual revenue. This could act as barrier for those that do not have access to these technologies or have the skills to use them.

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[47] Ipsos MediaCT(2013) Media Literacy: Understanding Digital Capabilities follow-up, available at:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/overview/assets/bbcmedialiteracy_20130930.pdf
[48] ONS (2014): 'Internet Access Quarterly Update, Q1 2014', available at: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_362910.pdf
[49] Nomiet Trust (2011) Ageing and the use of the internet, available at:
http://www.nominettrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/NT%20SoA%20-%20Ageing%20and%20the%20use%20of%20the%20internet_0.pdf
[50] Hibu (2014): 'Missed revenue for SMEs without mobile websites', available at:
http://business.hibu.co.uk/knowledge/articles/2014/feb/smes-missing-mobile-revenue/

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect
Objective
Specific Objective 2.1: Increase the coverage and take up of superfast and ultrafast Broadband in areas where the market is failing, particularly where this is creating a barrier to SME growth.
Specific Objective 2.2: Developing ICT products and services, e-commerce, and enhancing demand for ICT
Supported actions ■ Improve access to superfast and ultrafast broadband. ■ Supporting SMES update/introduce new ICT business model (this could include provision of coaching, mentoring and peer to peer support).
Relevance As this Priority aims to enhance access to, and use of quality ICT, it has the opportunity to support older entrepreneurs maximise the benefits of internet use to support the growth of their business. The opportunity to provide coaching, mentoring and peer-to-peer barriers could help to address some of the skills barriers that older people can face when using related technologies.
Spatial and demographic impact ■ Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: older people. ■ Geographical areas where effect could be felt: There tend to be greater proportions of older people in coastal and rural areas and LEPs such as Dorset, Coast to Capital and Greater Kent and Essex may see benefits here. ■ This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for older people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

Opportunities to improve digital connectivity for disabled entrepreneurs

People with **disabilities** also experience barriers to the digital world. Priority Axis 2 can support greater accessibility for these people.

In 2014, 3.5 million disabled adults had never used the internet.[51] This represented 30% of the total adult population who were disabled.[52] The Shaw Trust describes how many disabled people may be

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[51] ONS (2014) Internet Access Quarterly Update, Q1 2014, available at: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_362910.pdf
[52] ONS (2014) Internet Access Quarterly Update, Q1 2014, available at: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_362910.pdf

discouraged from using online services as they feel they will not be able to use them.[53] Disabled people may not know how to use internet enabled devices or know what assistive technologies are available and how they could support their use. The Shaw Trust recommends that educating disabled people on how to use these technologies and raising awareness could increase usage.

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 2.1: Increase the coverage and take up of superfast and ultrafast broadband in areas where the market is failing, particularly where this is creating a barrier to SME growth.

Specific Objective 2.2: Increase the numbers of SMEs using and having access to digital technologies including trading online

Supported actions

- Improve access to superfast and ultrafast Broadband
- Supporting SMES update/introduce new ICT business models which will drive business performance (actions could include: provision of coaching, mentoring and peer-to-peer support)>

Relevance

This Priority could help increase internet access for disabled entrepreneurs. The actions of specific objective 2.1 and 2.2 will need to be implemented in tandem to not only increase the availability of Broadband for disabled entrepreneurs, but also reduce barriers to its use. Coaching, mentoring and peer-to-peer support could help address some of the barriers disabled people face when trying to access online services – for example making them aware of what assistive technologies are available and how they could use them.

Spatial and demographic impact

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: disabled people.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: areas with large proportions of people with disabilities include Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, north Norfolk, and Liverpool City Region and the opportunities within this Priority could be felt in these areas.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for disabled people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

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[53] The Shaw Trust (2013) Can 'digital by default' be accessible?, available at: http://webacc.shaw-trust.org.uk/blog/can-'digital-by-default'-be-accessible/

5.3 Priority Axis 3: Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs

5.3.1 Summary of Priority Axis 3

Priority Axis 3 has three Investment Priorities and includes three Specific Objectives. The structure of Priority Axis 3 is detailed in the table below:

Table 5.3: Priority Axis 3: Investment Priorities, Specific Objectives and actions

Priority Axis 3
Enhancing the Competitiveness of SMEs
Investment Priority 1 of Priority Axis 3
Supporting the creation and the extension of advanced capacities for products, services and development.
Specific Objective 3.1
Increase growth capability of SMEs
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include;
- Provision of advice to support business to develop new business models or higher quality products, processes or services.   - Advice and support for businesses to implement productivity improvements including through the provision of resource efficiency advice and workforce development.   - Supporting supply chain interventions to strengthen and grow the domestic supplier base.   - Developing local offers and capacity to attract overseas investment to high growth and Priority sectors.   - Ensuring Small and Medium Sized Enterprises have access to sufficient level of finance to implement their growth plans, including appropriate capital investment for premises and equipment to help build capacity.   **Examples of actions which may be supported:**   - Provision of advice, consultancy support, mentoring, peer to peer support, and support for collaborative projects.   - Grant finance for business to invest against product, process and service improvements (not through Financial Instruments).   - Provision of non-grant finance where there is a clearly evidenced market failure. E.g.   - Co-investment funds, e.g. for angel investment, venture capital or debt finance; and   - Early stage growth, Equity, quasi-Equity, Loan, guarantees or Mezzanine funds, seed capital.   - Independent access to finance advice.   - Provision of business incubation, managed workspace, or grow-on space where evidence shows there is demand that is not met by supply. Support for accommodation will be provided only where it is combined with an effective programme of business support tailored to the growth ambition of the incubatees.   Activities will target Small and Medium Sized Enterprises, including social enterprises.
Investment Priority 2 of Priority Axis 3
Supporting the capacity of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises to grow in regional, national and international markets, and to engage in innovation processes.

Specific Objective 3.2
Increase growth capability of SMEs.

Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include;:

- Provide efficient local referral routes to ensure that Small and Medium Sized Enterprises are able to identify and access the most appropriate and tailored support for their specific growth needs.
- Support Small and Medium Sized Enterprises to develop focused growth strategies which will drive business performance.
- Support Small and Medium Sized Enterprises to enter, establish and expand in new domestic and international markets.
- Help businesses to become investment ready.

Examples of actions which may be supported are:

- Provision of advice, consultancy, mentoring and peer-to-peer support to indigenous businesses and inward investors (SMEs from outside the EU who will move to England)Leadership and management coaching where connected to the development and implementation of a business growth plan.
- Support events, trade fairs and missions to enable SMEs to enter, establish and expand in new domestic and international markets.
- Targeted grant schemes.
- Provision of advice and consultancy on access to finance.

Activities will target SMEs, including Social Enterprises.

Investment Priority 3 of Priority Axis 3
Promoting entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, including through business incubators.

Specific Objective 3.3
Increase entrepreneurship, particularly in areas with low levels of enterprise activity and amongst under-represented groups.

Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include;

- Strengthen entrepreneurial and enterprise culture using targeted engagement, outreach and mentoring
- Provide support for entrepreneurship and self-employment in particular amongst under-represented groups by developing entrepreneurial skills and attitudes with a focus on increasing the number of business start-ups (including social enterprises).
- Provide support for new business start-ups to survive and grow (including social enterprises)
- Address market failures in the provision of start-up finance, e.g. see finance, start-up loans

Examples of actions which may be supported:

- Outreach, coaching, mentoring, networking and consultancy support to promote business start-up, survival and growth
- Grants, coaching, mentoring, n and consultancy support
- Provision of non-grant finance to support start-ups/entrepreneurs where there is a clearly evidenced market failure, for example:
  – Early stage growth, Equity, quasi-Equity, Loan or Mezzanine funds;
  – Microloan funds delivered by Community Development Finance Institutions; and
  – Proof of Concept funds.
- Provisions of incubator space, managed workspace, or grow-on space where evidence shows there is

demand that is not met by supply. Support for accommodation will be provided only where it is combined with an effective programme of business support tailored to the growth ambition of the incubatees.

Beneficiaries will be individuals with ambition to start up a business, and SMES in early stage of operation. They will also include social enterprises and those wanting to set up social enterprises.

Projects may be particularly targeted at groups with lower than average enterprise rates, such as women, and certain minority ethnic groups.

5.3.2   Assessment of Priority Axis 3

This section highlights the effects and opportunities that could be achieved through inclusive delivery of Programme actions. The opportunities for Priority Axis 3 are separated out by relevant protected characteristics.

Opportunities to support young people through access to business support and finance

Between 2008 and 2012 there was an increase of almost 370,000 self-employed workers.[54] The number of young people currently self-employed, however, remains relatively low, accounting for only 5% of all young people currently in employment in the UK.[55] Priority Axis 3 has the opportunity to increase the number of young entrepreneurs through the provision of business support and finance.

Promotion of entrepreneurship among young people has an important role in helping to reduce youth unemployment. Helping young people start-up their own businesses gives them a pathway into the labour market and promotes job creation.

A survey by the Prince's Trust found that more than a quarter of young people claimed that they were 'increasingly' thinking of setting up a business and more than one in four unemployed young people stated that they would rather try to set up their own business than continue to job-seek.[56] Additionally, 30% of young people also believed they will be self-employed in the future, while one in four expected to be their own boss within the next five years.

However, young people tend to face a number of barriers when trying to set up their own business; this tends to due to a lack of financial, social or physical capital.[57] Barriers related to this include: limited access to financing and capital, underdeveloped or insufficient skills and lack of mentoring support. [58]

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[54] ONS (2013) Self-employed up 367,000 in Four Years, Mostly Since 2011, available at:
http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_298533.pdf
[55] Office of National Statistics (2013): 'Labour Force Survey 2012 '
[56] Princes Trust and RBS (2013): 'The start-up generation – why the UK could be set for a youth business boom'
[57] International Labour Office (2012) The youth employment crisis: Time for action, available at:
http://www.oitcinterfor.org/sites/default/files/file_publicacion/reportv.pdf
[58] GEM (2013): 'Generation Entrepreneur?' The stage of global youth entrepreneurship, available at:
http://www.gemconsortium.org/docs/download/2835

Young people can also be more vulnerable when setting up a business, as they are more likely to lack the experience and knowledge needed to set-up a business or have a poor understanding of their ability to succeed in business.[59]

Almost 60% of young people in the UK stated that not having enough money is a key barrier preventing them from starting their own business.[60] Many young people have no credit history or track record, and few or no assets to offer as security. Those under 18, in particular, often find banks and other financial institutions unwilling to provide financial assistance in the form of loans or overdrafts.[61] The majority of young entrepreneurs have to use their own personal savings, as well as borrowing money from family and friends for the initial set-up; however, this is not an option for all young people who want to start a business. More structured capital support could help facilitate the offer of a broader range of services.[62]

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor also found that a lack of mentoring support is limited the success of start-ups run by young people.[63] Many young people found it difficult to run their business without outside support or advice from a mentor. Further to this, business skills are also an important enabler to success. Although many young people have the necessary technical skills, they tend to lack the business and managerial skills.

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 3.3: Increase entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, including through business incubators.

Supported actions

- Targeted engagement, outreach and mentoring to strengthen entrepreneurial and enterprise culture.
- Provision of support for entrepreneurship and self-employment in particular amongst under-represented groups by developing entrepreneurial skills and attitudes with a focus on increasing the number of business start-ups.
- Grants.

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[59] International Labour Office (2012) The youth employment crisis: Time for action, available at: http://www.oitcinterfor.org/sites/default/files/file_publicacion/reportv.pdf
[60] The start-up generation, 2013, The Prince's Trust and Royal Bank of Scotland Group
[61] NI Business Info (2011): 'Starting a business when under 30, Challenges specific to young entrepreneurs'. See: http://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/challenges-specific-young-entrepreneurs
[62] GEM (2013): 'Generation Entrepreneur?' The stage of global youth entrepreneurship, available at: http://www.gemconsortium.org/docs/download/2835
[63] GEM (2013) Generation Entrepreneur? The stage of global youth entrepreneurship, available at: http://www.gemconsortium.org/docs/download/2835

> ■ Provision of support for new businesses to start-up and grow.
>
> **Relevance**
>
> Youth entrepreneurship can help young people enter the labour market and lead to job creation. This Programme has the opportunity to support young people onto self-employment and support the sustainable growth of their businesses. Ensuring that business and financial support is promoted to young people and meets their needs (i.e. through mentoring and development of business skills, and the provision of structured capital support) will help the fulfilment of this opportunity. Further to this, one stakeholder described how the Programme has the potential to address some equality issues including the provision of specialist business support for social groups with low self-employment rates. The Programme document does specifically state that support will be particularly available for under-represented groups. As young people are under-represented in terms of business start-ups this Priority could lead to positive outcomes for this group.
>
> **Spatial and demographic impact**
>
> ■ Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: younger people.
> ■ Geographical areas where effect could be felt: areas with the largest proportions of younger people, including London, Greater Birmingham, Greater Manchester and other large city regions.
> ■ This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for younger people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

Opportunities to support older entrepreneurs through access to business support and finance

In terms of entrepreneurship, older people can be a source of untapped potential. They tend to leave the labour market due to redundancy or retirement from long-held positions. As a result they often have high levels of technical skills and access to finance, but can lack entrepreneurship specific skills.[64] Therefore, through the actions of this Priority's Axis there is the opportunity to support older entrepreneurs through access to business support and finance.

A recent survey by Nationwide found that 41% of workers did not believe they would be financially secure in retirement, and 74% were concerned that their pension alone would not be sufficient for them to continue at their current level of spending.[65] This may lead older people to consider setting up their own business. In the 2012, the 55 to 64 age group had the lowest percentage of Total early-stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) compared to other groups.[66]

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[64] OECD/The European Commission (2013) The Missing Entrepreneurs: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Europe, OECD Publishing
[65] The Big Idea (2014) Why more and more people are NOT too old to work, available at: http://www.thebigidea.co.uk/people-old-work-dont-want-stop/
[66] Levie J. & Hart M. (2013) Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, United Kingdom 2012 Monitoring report, available at: http://www.gemconsortium.org/docs/download/3313

Access to finance and a lack of skills have been identified as significant barriers to enterprise activity for older people.[67] The Princes Initiative for Mature Entrepreneurs (PRIME) felt that business support tends to be targeted to younger people who are in the labour market.

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 3.3: Increase entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, including through business incubators.

Supported actions

- Targeted engagement, outreach and mentoring to strengthen entrepreneurial and enterprise culture.
- Provision of support for entrepreneurship and self-employment in particular amongst under-represented groups by developing entrepreneurial skills and attitudes with a focus on increasing the number of business start-ups.

Relevance

We have an increasingly growing elderly population. Greater numbers of older people are looking to start their own business but face barriers in terms of accessing finance and business support. Projects delivering these actions should ensure that they target all age groups and meet their needs; this could be achieved through coaching, mentoring, and networking which are examples of actions that could be supported through the scheme.

Spatial and demographic effects

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: older people.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: older people are less likely to live in urban areas and higher proportions of older people are found in rural and coastal parts of England.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for older people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

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[67] All Party Parliamentary Small Business Group (2012) Breaking Down the Barriers to Entrepreneurship, available at: http://www.icaew.com/~/media/archive/files/about-icaew/what-we-do/policy/budget-and-pbr/breakingbarriers2012.pdf

Opportunities to support entrepreneurial activity by women

There are clear differences in reported levels of entrepreneurial activity between men and women and this Priority provides an opportunity to support female entrepreneurs. Despite having similar levels of human capital, women are half as likely as men to start a business.[68] Only 19% of SMEs are majority-led by women (either run by a women or have a management team that is over 50% women), whilst 49% of SMEs are entirely led by men.[69]

The 2012 Labour Force Survey found that there were over 2.4 million women who are not in work but wanted to work.[70] Setting up their own business, is one way for women to access the labour market, however they are likely to require support in order to make this transition. However, the Women's Business Council found that business support for start-ups that focuses on 'high growth' businesses can put off many women-led SMEs that require support.[71]

Women-led SMEs are less likely to access external finance than men, and this can act as a barrier to starting a business.[72] There are also potential barriers relating to confidence and acknowledgement of ability. In 2012, 57% of men felt they had the skills, knowledge and experience to start a business, this compared to only 37% of women.[73]

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 3.3: Increase entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, including through business incubators.

Actions

- Targeted engagement, outreach and mentoring to strengthen entrepreneurial and enterprise culture.

[68] OECD/The European Commission (2013) The Missing Entrepreneurs: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Europe, OECD Publishing
[69] BIS (2013) 'BIS Small Business Survey 2012' Department for Business Innovation and Skills
[70] ONS (2012) Labour Force Survey, Q4
[71] Women's Business Council (2013) Maximising women's contribution to future economic growth, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/204751/DCMS_WBC_Full_Report_v1.0.pdf
[72] Women's Business Council (2013) Maximising women's contribution to future economic growth, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/204751/DCMS_WBC_Full_Report_v1.0.pdf
[73] Levie J. & Hart M. (2013) Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, United Kingdom 2012 Monitoring report, available at: http://www.gemconsortium.org/docs/download/3313

> ■ Provision of support for entrepreneurship and self-employment in particular amongst under-represented groups by developing entrepreneurial skills and attitudes with a focus on increasing the number of business start-ups.

Relevance

It is important that business finance is promoted to both men and women and a 'one-size fits all approach' is not taken. The Programme should consider the different aspirations of men and women, and the sectors they are interested in, as this is not always reflected in support provided. As women can face barriers when trying to access business finance and can lack confidence, activities such as coaching and mentoring should help to address these factors that can offer hinder their chances of setting up a business and being successful. It is positive the Operational Programme has highlighted that projects may particularly target groups with lower than average enterprise rates such as women.

Spatial and demographic relevance

- ■ Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: women.
- ■ Geographical areas where effect could be felt: there are no specific areas where the effects of this Priority might be felt disproportionately.
- ■ This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for women, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

Opportunities to support disabled entrepreneurs through finance and business support

Priority Axis 3 also provides an opportunity to support disabled entrepreneurs through the provision of finance and business support.

Currently, there are a higher proportion of disabled people self-employed (15%) compared to non-disabled people (13%).[74] Self-employment can provide disabled people with important flexibility in work environments and schedules[75] and therefore this may be a reason why there is a higher proportion.[76]

Although disabled people are less likely to go to university 40,000 disabled people graduate each year. Within six months, 60% of graduates who are disabled found work, similar to that of non-disabled graduates. However disabled young people are twice as likely to be NEET and 30 per cent of the economically inactive disabled people would like to work.[77]

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[74] Department for Work and Pensions (2013) New start up support for disabled entrepreneurs, available at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-year-new-start-up-support-for-disabled-entrepreneurs
[75] OECD/The European Commission (2013) The Missing Entrepreneurs: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Europe, OECD Publishing
[76] DWP (2013) Fulfilling Potential, Building a deeper understanding of disability in the UK today, available at:
http://www.thebigidea.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/fufilling_potential.pdf
[77] DWP (2013) Fulfilling Potential, Building a deeper understanding of disability in the UK today, available at:
http://www.thebigidea.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/fufilling_potential.pdf

While there are a higher proportion of disabled people self-employed, disabled people tend to face more difficulties in gaining entrepreneurial experience and skills, can lack capital to start-up businesses and may be constrained by state welfare policies.[78]

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 3.3: Increase entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, including through business incubators.

Supported actions

- This Priority could involve strengthening entrepreneurial and enterprise culture using targeted engagement, outreach and mentoring,
- Provide support for entrepreneurship and self-employment in particular amongst under-represented groups by developing entrepreneurial skills and attitudes.
- Address market failures in the provision of start-up finance.

Relevance

Although the majority of disabled people would like to work, a significant number are not in employment. This represents an opportunity for the Programme to support disabled people to return to the labour market. Furthermore, there is a higher percentage of self-employed disabled than non-disabled people, therefore it is important that the same level of business support provision is available to meet their needs.

Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: disabled people.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: the south west, East Anglia and the north east have high proportions of disabled people.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for disabled people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

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[78] OECD/The European Commission (2013) The Missing Entrepreneurs: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Europe, OECD Publishing

Opportunities to support BAME entrepreneurs and BAME-owned SMEs to access finance and business support

Implementing the actions of Priority Axis 3 presents the opportunity to support BAME entrepreneurs and SMEs to access finance and business support. The actions could work towards reducing levels of unemployment in BAME groups and reduce the barriers to accessing these services.

A review of labour market data over the last decade (looking at data from 2002, 2008, 2010 and 2012) over three different measures of unemployment (unemployment rate, proportion of young people unemployed and worklessness rate) found that young Black and Asian ethnic minority groups consistently have higher levels of unemployment activity.[79]

Although BAME groups tend to have higher levels of unemployment, a number of BAME groups have a higher proportion of self-employed individuals than the white population where the percentage is 8%.[80] This includes Gypsy or Irish Travellers (10 per cent) and Indian (10 per cent), Pakistani (15 per cent), Bangladeshi (12 per cent) and Chinese (12 per cent) communities.

Further to this, 6.2% of the SMEs in the UK are estimated to be led by minority ethnic groups. This represents around 295,000 SMEs.[81] It is estimated that in the UK SME businesses owned by ethnic minority groups contribute about £30bn to Gross Value Added (GVA) (or around six per cent of the UK SME approximate GVA total).[82] Therefore, it is of crucial importance to support BAME entrepreneurs and assist BAME SMEs to help maximise their growth. In order for this to be achieved, a number of barriers need to be addressed.

Firstly, research has found that people from Black African, Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups are more likely to have their loan applications rejected than Indian and White businesses.[83] This echoed the findings of BIS's small business survey which found black entrepreneurs were more likely to be refused credit.[84]

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[79] TUC (2012) Youth Unemployment and Ethnicity, available at: http://www.thebigidea.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/BME-youth-unemployment-ethnicity1.pdf
[80] Office of National Statistics (2013): 'Census 2011'
[81] Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (2013): 'Small Business Survey 2012: Estimates for Businesses Led by Women and Ethnic Minorities and Social Enterprises in the UK'
[82] Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (2013): 'Small Business Survey 2012: Estimates for Businesses Led by Women and Ethnic Minorities and Social Enterprises in the UK'
[83] DCLG (2013) Ethnic Minority Businesses and Access to Finance, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/225762/EMBs_and_Access_to_Finance.pdf
[84] Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (2013): 'Evaluating Changes in Bank Lending to UK SMEs Over 2001-12 – On-going Tight Credit?'. See: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/193945/bis-13-857-evaluating-changes-in-bank-lending-to-uk-smes-2001-12.pdf

Specific barriers to ethnic minority businesses being able to access finance have been identified as:

- a perception of discrimination and prejudice against ethnic minority businesses and entrepreneurs trying to access finance;
- low confidence due to a perception that mainstream support services lack cultural sensitivity and knowledge of traditional ethnic sectors and markets; and
- poor take up of professional support services which are perceived as intimidating and not meeting the needs of ethnic minority businesses and entrepreneurs.[85]

When addressing the barriers to start-up businesses accessing finance, consideration also needs to be given to the religious requirements of how finance can be accessed. Sharia law states that money cannot be made from money and therefore charging or receiving interest is not permitted.[86] A survey of 300 British Muslim and non-Muslim consumers across the UK by the Islamic Bank of Britain (IBB), found that 95 of Muslim respondents exclusively use Sharia-compliant finance and 27% use both Islamic and conventional finance, whilst 64% currently do not use Sharia finance products.[87] However, the 70% of those that do not use Sharia finance would consider using it in the future.

The second major barrier faced by BAME entrepreneurs is access to business support. The Ethnic Minority Employment Stakeholder Group highlighted that work needed to be undertaken to increase the confidence of ethnic minority businesses, and potential entrepreneurs, to implement their ideas and proposals for growth and start-up.[88]

It is not just about increasing provision; ethnic minorities and immigrants are more to likely to lack awareness of the business support available.[89] As a result, ethnic minorities and immigrants are among the groups that use mainstream business support the least.[90] Instead they often rely on informal and assistance and community self-help.

It is important that business support Programmes implement mechanisms to ensure they reach out to ethnic minority and immigrant entrepreneurs, both through the offer of targeted business support and to make business support more accessible.[91] Some ethnic minorities may require business support and information in another language. The offer of mentoring, support and advice for start-up business is also seen as crucially important in helping to facilitate the success of ethnic minority businesses.[92]

[85] Ethnic Minority Employment Stakeholder group, in DCLG (2013) Ethnic Minority Businesses and Access to Finance, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/225762/EMBs_and_Access_to_Finance.pdf
[86] See: UK Islamic Banking and Finance Centre (IFBC-UK) at: http://ibfc.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=43&Itemid=50
[87] IBB (2014) 81% of practising Muslims either ruse of will consider using Islamic Finance,
[88] Ethnic Minority Employment Stakeholder group, in DCLG (2013) Ethnic Minority Businesses and Access to Finance, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/225762/EMBs_and_Access_to_Finance.pdf
[89] OECD/The European Commission (2013) The Missing Entrepreneurs: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Europe, OECD Publishing
[90] OECD/The European Commission (2013) The Missing Entrepreneurs: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Europe, OECD Publishing
[91] OECD/The European Commission (2013) The Missing Entrepreneurs: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Europe, OECD Publishing
[92] Ethnic Minority Businesses and Access to Finance, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/225762/EMBs_and_Access_to_Finance.pdf

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 3.3: Increase entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, including through business incubators.

Supported actions

- This Priority could involve strengthening entrepreneurial and enterprise culture using targeted engagement, outreach and mentoring.
- Provide support for entrepreneurship and self-employment in particular amongst under-represented groups by developing entrepreneurial skills and attitudes.
- Address market failures in the provision of start-up finance.

Relevance

Becoming self-employed is a key access route into the labour market for individuals from BAME communities. However, access to finance is seen to be barrier to BAME entrepreneurship. The Operational Programme specifically states that certain minority groups have lower than average start-up rates therefore activity may be particularly targeted to this group.

Through the provision of grants, the Programme has the opportunity to increase access to business finance for ethnic minority entrepreneurs and SMEs. Deliverers can draw on the recommendations from the Ethnic Minority Employment Stakeholder group, by making finance more accessible to these groups in a way which helps to increase their confidence to implement their ideas. The Programme could also support business finance organisations targeting particular ethnic groups increase their accessibility, e.g. those compliant with Sharia Law. In addition, the Programme can also improve the accessibility to improve the accessibility of business support and offer targeted business support activities.

Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: BAME groups, people from Muslim communities.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: people from BAME communities tend to be concentrated within urban areas, but represent the highest proportion of the population within London.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for BAME groups, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

Opportunities to provide further support for LGB and trans entrepreneurs through finance and business support

This Priority has the opportunity to promote the inclusion of the needs of LGB and trans entrepreneurs in the provision of finance and business support. These needs are often overlooked by mainstream support and discrimination and victimisation are often cited as a barrier to wider economic participation for LGB and T people. A survey of 2,580 lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people was carried out by the Lesbian and Gay Foundation in 2012.[93] It found that 1 in 3 LGB people had experienced homophobic verbal bullying and discrimination in the workplace. Further to this 18% felt discriminated by their boss.

There is some evidence released by Stonewall which suggests that gay men and lesbians expect to be discriminated against in the provision of financial services and there is a reluctance and anxiety amongst this community to declare their sexual orientation when applying for a mortgage or insurance. Stonewall concludes by noting that gay people are more likely to seek financial services from gay service providers even if this is more expensive.[94]

Further to this, a recent survey conducted by Nationwide Building Society found that 60% of LGB and T would switch providers if they believed a financial services provider took LGB and T issues seriously. More than two thirds (68%) of respondents felt that their financial service provider was not taking serious steps to understand them, with 13% having experienced an uncomfortable situation with a financial services provider because of their sexuality.[95]

A toolkit produced to facilitate better engagement between LGB and T people and groups, and public bodies, highlighted that more is required to ensure full inclusion of transgender people in our communities.[96] It states that trans people continue to be disadvantaged in terms of equal access to services, civic participation and equality when compared to LGB groups.

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

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[93] The Lesbian & Gay Foundation (2012) Findings from the "I Exist" survey of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in the UK
[94] Stonewall, (2007): 'A guide to your options if you have been discriminated against under the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007'
[95] Nationwide Building Society (2014) Calls on financial services industry to improve relationships with LGBT customers, available at: http://www.nationwide.co.uk/about/media-centre-and-specialist-areas/media-centre/press-releases/archive/2014/3/12-mar-nationwide-calls-on-financial-services
[96] Equality Network, LGBT Youth Scotland and Stonewall Scotland (2012) Community Connections Tool Kit, available at: http://www.equality-network.org/resources/publications/community-engagement/community-connections/

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 3.3: Increase entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, including through business incubators.

Supported actions

- This Priority could involve strengthening entrepreneurial and enterprise culture using targeted engagement, outreach and mentoring.
- Provide support for entrepreneurship and self-employment in particular amongst under-represented groups by developing entrepreneurial skills and attitudes.
- Address market failures in the provision of start-up finance.

Relevance

Research has shown that LGB and T people can experience discrimination in the workplace and when accessing services. The ERDF Programme has the potential to work towards improving access to business support and finance for LGBT entrepreneurs, by ensuring that the provision of services is provided in an appropriate way.

Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: sexual orientation and gender reassignment (LGB and T people)
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: spatial analysis of the LGB and T population in the UK is not currently available. In urban areas LGB and T people often congregate in areas where they feel secure in accessing services – as such 'gay villages' have become staple features of most large towns and cities. In rural areas populations are more dispersed, placing them at greater risk of direct or indirect discrimination.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for sexual orientation and gender reassignment (LGB and T people), and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

5.4 Priority Axis 4: Supporting the shift towards a low carbon economy in all sectors

5.4.1 Summary of Priority Axis 4

Priority Axis 4 has five Investment Priorities and includes three Specific Objectives. The structure of Priority Axis 4 is detailed in the table below:

Table 5.4:   Priority Axis 4: Investment Priorities, Specific Objectives and actions

Priority Axis 4
Supporting the shift towards a low carbon economy in all sectors.
Investment Priority 1 of Priority Axis 4
Promoting research and innovation in, and adoption of, low-carbon technologies.
Specific Objective 4.1
Increase innovation in, and adoption of, low carbon technologies.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
▪ R&D, innovation, supply chain work for low carbon technologies and materials, including carbon capture and carbon storage, wave and wind energy, smart grids, distributed generation, solar and photovoltaics, heat networks, heat pumps and low carbon heat for energy intensive industries. ▪ Technology centres of excellence and test facilities, including relevant Catapult centres. ▪ Renewable technologies in the UK renewable energy roadmap. ▪ Mitigation and adapted technologies. ▪ Development of Low carbon vehicles and fuels. ▪ Knowledge transfer with HE/FE and Businesses. ▪ Low carbon technologies to build the market in Low Carbon Environmental Technologies, Goods and Services sector and its supply chain, focusing on goods and services with embedded low carbon technologies.
Investment Priority 2 of Priority Axis 4
Promoting the production and distribution of energy derived from renewable sources.
Specific Objective 4.2
Increase implementation of whole place low carbon solutions and decentralised energy measures.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
▪ Supporting increased production of renewable and low carbon fuels/energy. ▪ Whole place low carbon initiatives/solutions. ▪ Urban design and smart grids. ▪ Waste to Energy projects. ▪ Decentralised renewable energy, district heating, geothermal, micro-generation. ▪ Resilient low carbon energy infrastructure.
Investment Priority 3 of Priority Axis 4
Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multimodal urban mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures.
Specific Objective 4.2
Increase implementation of whole place low carbon solutions and decentralised energy measures.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
▪ Provision of advice and support to increase the use or take up of renewable and low carbon fuels/energy ▪ ICT to reduce carbon emissions/improve energy efficiency ▪ Whole place low carbon initiatives/solutions ▪ Low carbon transport, including electric/low carbon vehicle infrastructure, cycle paths, walking and

waterways
- Smart Cities, urban mobility , urban design,
- Smart grids and demand management
- Low carbon modal shift and smart systems,
- Green and blue infrastructure to reduce whole place energy requirements.

Investment Priority 4 of Priority Axis 4

Promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy use in enterprises

Specific Objective 3

Increase energy efficiency and implementation of low carbon technologies in all types of enterprise.

Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:

- Low carbon innovation in relation to waste and re-use.
- Energy efficiency in enterprises including industrial processes, designing out waste, recovery of 'waste' heat energy and CHP.
- Non Domestic Low Carbon Technologies and Energy Efficiency.
- Moving to renewable and low carbon fuels to generate heat, electricity and transport.
- Building retrofit and energy efficiency especially whole building solutions exemplifying next phase technologies which are near to market.
- Low carbon construction techniques.

Investment Priority 5 of Priority Axis 4

Supporting energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructure, including in public buildings, and in the housing sector.

Specific Objective 3

Increase energy efficiency and implementation of low carbon technologies

Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:

- Provision of advice and support to increase the use and take up of low carbon technologies and energy efficiency.
- Non Domestic Low Carbon Technologies and Energy Efficiency.
- Low carbon innovation in relation to waste and re-use.
- Moving to renewable and low carbon fuels to generate heat and power.
- Building retrofit and energy efficiency especially whole building solutions exemplifying next phase technologies which are near to market.
- Domestic energy efficiency and low carbon construction techniques.

5.4.2   Assessment of Priority Axis 4

This section highlights the effects and opportunities that could be achieved through inclusive delivery of Programme actions. The opportunities for Priority Axis 4 are separated out by relevant protected characteristics.

Opportunities to reduce the number of older people living in fuel poverty

Fuel poverty remains an issue for many older people, this has the potential to be alleviated through activities proposed within Priority Axis 4 which present opportunities to alleviate fuel poverty, particularly for older people.

As older people have a higher tendency to suffer from fuel poverty, this Priority has the opportunity to reduce the impact of this by helping improve the energy efficiency of homes. This is illustrated by the 2013 annual report on fuel poverty statistics. One in five households, where the oldest person was aged between 60 and 84, were living in fuel poverty in 2011.[97] Whilst almost one third (28%) of the households were the oldest member is 85 and over were living in fuel poverty.

Older people living in fuel poverty are more at risk of health problems.[98] In addition, there is a greater risk of death in colder housing than there is in warmer housing. The Marmot Review of cold homes and fuel poverty estimated that 21.5% of all Excess Winter Deaths (EWD) occur in the coldest quarter of housing.[99]

Activity within the Programme that presents opportunities to address these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 4.3: Increase energy efficiency and implementation of low carbon technologies

Supported actions (under investment Priority 5 of Priority Axis 4)

- Building retrofit and energy efficiency especially whole building solutions.
- Domestic energy efficiency and low carbon construction techniques.
- Moving to renewable and low carbon fuels to generate heat and power.

Relevance

Older people are more likely to suffer from fuel poverty and therefore poor health outcomes as a result of living in cold housing. Retrofit projects and increasing energy efficiency could help to reduce the number of older people suffering from fuel poverty. In order for this opportunity to be fulfilled these actions should be targeted at older people in poor housing.

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[97] DECC(2013) Annual Report on Fuel Poverty Statistics 2013, available at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/199833/Fuel_Poverty_Report_2013_FINALv2.pdf
[98] Age UK (2012) The cost of cold, available at: http://www.ageuk.org.uk/Documents/EN-GB/Campaigns/STW/The_cost_of_cold_2012.pdf?dtrk=true
[99] Marmot Review Team (2011) The Health Impacts of Cold Homes and Fuel Poverty

Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: older people.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: Older people tend to live less in urban areas, with many preferring suburban or rural locations. Many older people also live on or near the coast. These impacts are most likely to be felt in these areas.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for older people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

Opportunities to reduce the number of disabled people living in fuel poverty

Like older people, disabled people are also more likely to suffer from fuel poverty than the general population. This is particularly apparent when disability allowance is subtracted from overall income when working out fuel poverty (described below). If the actions of this Priority are promoted in an appropriate manner, it could help to reduce the number of disabled people suffering from fuel poverty.

A recent report which analysed data from the English Housing Survey (EHS) between 2010 and 2011, found that when the current UK fuel poverty definition is used [100] over three-quarters (79.6%) of households containing someone with an illness or disability are not classified as fuel poor. [101] However, a greater proportion of households containing a disabled person were classed as fuel poor, than households that did not contain a disabled person.

George *et al.* discussed how calculating fuel poverty based on income which includes disability benefits, means that the number of people in fuel poverty is likely to be under-estimated, as disability benefits are there to help meet the additional costs of having a disability. [102] When disability welfare payments (e.g. Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Attendance Allowance (AA) are subtracted from overall income, fuel poverty rates increase. [103]

Levels of fuel poverty for disabled people or people with a long term illness vary geographically, with the highest levels in the East and West Midlands, North West, North East and Yorkshire and the Humber. [104]

Disabled people are more likely to be in fuel poverty as they are less likely to be in paid employment, and if they are employed wages tend to be lower. In addition, the ability of disabled people being able to work

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[100] This definition uses full household income and does not subtract disability allowance),
[101] Thomson et al. (2013) Fuel Poverty and Disability: a statistical analysis of the English Housing Survey, available at: http://www.york.ac.uk/media/spsw/documents/research-and-publications/Thomson-Snell-Bevan_Fuel-Poverty-And-Disability_Report.pdf
[102] University of Leicester and the Eaga charitable trust (2013) The Energy Penalty: disabled people and fuel poverty, available at: https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/law/research/cces/documents/the-energy-penalty-disability-and-fuel-poverty-pdf
[103] Thomson et al. (2013) Fuel Poverty and Disability: a statistical analysis of the English Housing Survey, available at: http://www.york.ac.uk/media/spsw/documents/research-and-publications/Thomson-Snell-Bevan_Fuel-Poverty-And-Disability_Report.pdf
[104] Thomson et al. (2013) Fuel Poverty and Disability: a statistical analysis of the English Housing Survey, available at: http://www.york.ac.uk/media/spsw/documents/research-and-publications/Thomson-Snell-Bevan_Fuel-Poverty-And-Disability_Report.pdf

may be variable depending on their condition. Disabled people tend to have higher costs to maintain their health and quality life compared to non-disabled people, this includes: travel, home adaptions, mobility equipment and community aids. Living in a cold house, can have serious implications on the health of disabled people, including: increased risks of arthritis and respiratory problems, negative impact on immune system, and could cause delays in treatment recovery.[105]

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 4.3: Increase energy efficiency and implementation of low carbon technologies

Supported actions (under investment Priority 5 of Priority Axis 4)

- Provision of advice and support to increase the use and take up of low carbon technologies and energy efficiency.
- Domestic energy efficiency and low carbon construction techniques.
- Building retrofit and energy efficiency especially whole building solutions.

Relevance

Disabled people are more likely to suffer from fuel poverty and therefore poor health outcomes as a result of living in cold housing. Retrofit projects and increasing energy efficiency could help to reduce the number of disabled people suffering from fuel poverty. In order for this opportunity to be fulfilled, the Programme should ensure that they activities are available to disabled people and are advertised in an accessible format.

Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: disabled people.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: the south west, East Anglia and the north east have high proportions of disabled people. In addition, levels of fuel poverty for disabled people or people with a long term illness vary geographically, with the highest levels in the East and West Midlands, North West, North East and Yorkshire and the Humber.[106]
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for disabled people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

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[105] University of Leicester and the Eaga charitable trust (2013) The Energy Penalty: disabled people and fuel poverty, available at: https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/law/research/cces/documents/the-energy-penalty-disability-and-fuel-poverty-pdf
[106] Thomson et al. (2013) Fuel Poverty and Disability: a statistical analysis of the English Housing Survey, available at: http://www.york.ac.uk/media/spsw/documents/research-and-publications/Thomson-Snell-Bevan_Fuel-Poverty-And-Disability_Report.pdf

Opportunities to support sector-based employment for young people

There is an identified need for an increasing number of young graduates to support the growth of the energy sector. This Priority provides an opportunity to support the growth of this sector by helping to facilitate employment opportunities for young people.

The energy sector supports 1 in every 45 jobs in the UK. Between the 2008 and 2012, direct employment in the sector grew from 90,000 to 125,000.[107] In the 1970s and 1980s, there was a high level of recruitment into this sector in order to support the building of new nuclear and coal-fired power stations, and the shift to North Sea gas. As a result, a large number of employees are expected to retire over the next 10 years and will need replacing. For example electricity distribution network operators (DNOs) will need to employee 74% of their current workforce numbers, over the next decade to support the sector. There is a need for the sector to attract young engineers and skilled workers.

The renewable energy sector receives a third of the total energy sector investment.[108] Private sector investment in large scale renewable energy between January 2010 and April 2013 was over £29 billion, and has the potential to support around 30,000 jobs.[109] This will help to further increase the number of employment opportunities for young people.

Innovation in low carbon technologies has a critical role to play in delivering affordable low carbon energy and is a key factor relating the achievement of greenhouse emission reduction targets.[110] In order to support its growth, the low carbon sector requires employment in many different industries and at a variety of skill levels. Therefore, it offers opportunities for new graduates who have studied related disciplines as well as young people that may have a low skill level e.g. retrofitting projects do not tend to require a high qualification skill level. [111]

Research by British Gas found that half of young people (aged 19-25 years) were interested in working in the green economy.[112] However, almost two-fifths (38%) did not feel they had the right skills to get a job in the sector.

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

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[107] EY and Energy UK (2013) Powering the UK 2013, Empowering UK growth, jobs and energy users through continued investment, available at: http://www.energy-uk.org.uk/component/jdownloads/finish/5-research-and-reports/972-powering-the-uk-ernst-and-young-report-on-growth-jobs-and-energy-users-through-continued-investment-november-2013.html

[108] EY and Energy UK (2013) Powering the UK 2013, Empowering UK growth, jobs and energy users through continued investment, available at: http://www.energy-uk.org.uk/component/jdownloads/finish/5-research-and-reports/972-powering-the-uk-ernst-and-young-report-on-growth-jobs-and-energy-users-through-continued-investment-november-2013.html

[109] DECC (2013) Annual Energy Statement 2013, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254250/FINAL_PDF_of_AES_2013_-_accessible_version.pdf

[110] Low Carbon Innovation Co-ordination Group (LCICG) (2014) Coordinating Low Carbon Technology Innovation Support, The LCICG's Strategic Framework

[111] Cominetti N. (2012) The Work Foundation, Low carbon jobs for cities, available at: http://www.theworkfoundation.com/DownloadPublication/Report/317_Low%20Carbon%20Jobs%20for%20Cities.pdf

[112] British Gas (2013) 'Give us the skills to get a green job', say young people, available at: http://www.britishgas.co.uk/blog/articles/give-us-the-skills-to-get-a-green-job-say-young-people

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 4.1: Increase innovation in, and adoption of, low carbon technologies.

Specific Objective 4.3: Increase energy efficiency and implementation of low carbon technologies.

Actions

- Knowledge transfer with HE/FE and Businesses.
- Technology centres of excellence and test facilities.
- Retrofit and energy efficiency whole building solutions.

Relevance

There has been significant growth in the energy sector, particularly related to renewable energy. As the sector is growing and there is a need for more employees, the activities of the Programme have the opportunity to support the employment of young people, particularly new graduates. In addition to this, there is also an opportunity for young people that have not attended university to support the growth in this sector. In addition, it also could help promote take –up of STEM subjects for young people, through knowledge transfer activities between HE/FE and Businesses.

Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: younger people.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: Younger people tend to make up a large proportion of the population in urban areas, such as London, and the core cities including Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool and Nottingham.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for younger people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

Improving air quality for older people and young people

As this Priority is focused on supporting the shift towards a low carbon economy in all sectors, and has activities specifically related to low carbon transport, it will contribute to improving air quality which deliver positive impacts for all, particularly old and young people.

The UK Government has committed to an 80% reduction in total greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. In order for this to be achieved, it would require the road transport sector to be largely decarbonised. Ultra low emission vehicles (ULEV) will support mobility and will reduce the carbon and air quality impact of road transport.[113]

The Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP) estimates that particulate matter (PM) in the air has an effect equivalent to accelerating 29,000 deaths in the UK per year (at 2008 levels of fine particulates levels).[114] In addition, poor air quality is associated with respiratory diseases, impaired lung development in children, premature births and low birth weight, lung cancer and heart disease. Groups that are more likely to be affected include children, older people and people with asthma.[115]

A study of 10 European cities, found that 50% of the total population lived within a 150 metres of a road.[116] The study found that 15-30% of new cases of asthma in children; and of acute worsening of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; and acute coronary heart disease in adults aged 65 and over, are attributable to air pollution.

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 4.2: Increase implementation of whole place low carbon solutions and decentralised energy measures (under Investment Priority 2 of Priority Axis 4).

Specific Objective 4.2: Increase implementation of whole place low carbon solutions and decentralised energy measures. (under Investment Priority 3 of Priority Axis 4).

Actions

- Supporting increased production of renewable and low carbon fuels/energy.
- Whole place low carbon initiatives/solutions.
- Low carbon transport, including electric/low carbon vehicle infrastructure, cycle paths, walking and waterways.

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[113] Office for Low Emission Vehicles (2013) Driving the Future Today, A strategy for ultra-low emission vehicles in the UK, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239317/ultra-low-emission-vehicle-strategy.pdf

[114] Committee on the medical effects of air pollutants (2010) The Mortality Effects of Long-Term Exposure to Particulate Air Pollution in the United Kingdom, available at: http://www.comeap.org.uk/images/stories/Documents/Reports/comeap%20the%20mortality%20effects%20of%20long-term%20exposure%20to%20particulate%20air%20pollution%20in%20the%20uk%202010.pdf

[115] Healthy air (2014) The Healthy air campaign is tackling the public health crisis caused by air pollution, available at: http://healthyair.org.uk/the-problem/?full-site=true

[116] Aphekom (2011) Summary report of the Aphekom project 2008-2011, available at: http://www.aphekom.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=5532fafa-921f-4ab1-9ed9-c0148f7da36a&groupId=10347

Relevance

The Programme activities will contribute to the reduction in air pollution levels, particularly as the actions relate to the provision of low carbon transport.. As older people and young people are more likely to be vulnerable to the effects of poor air quality, the Programme could help reduce these impacts for these groups.

Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: younger people and older people.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: younger people tend to live in urban areas, while higher proportions of older people live in rural and coastal areas. These areas could, therefore, experience the most significant effects.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for younger people and older people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

5.5 Priority Axis 5: Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management

5.5.1 Summary of Priority Axis 5

Priority Axis 5 has one Investment Priority and includes a single Specific Objective. The structure of Priority Axis 5 is detailed in the table below:

Table 5.5: Priority Axis 5: Investment Priorities, Specific Objectives and actions

Priority Axis 5
Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management
Investment Priority 1 of Priority Axis 5
Enabling and protecting economic development potential through investment in flood and coastal flooding management where there is demonstrable market failure.
Specific Objective 5.1
Enabling and protecting economic development potential through investment in flood and coastal flooding management where there is demonstrable market failure.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
- Flood mitigation measures that support the protection of new and existing major employment areas including incorporation of flood risk management and river restoration into employment sites and surrounding areas, design and lay-out so that flood risk and surface water management is actively addressed in a sustainable way.   - Flood mitigation and environmental measures focused on strategically important sites/areas identified as central to realising growth aspirations to include activities that remediate and unlock dormant and/or contaminated land and bring it back into use for future economic development.

- Addressing upstream water management to protect key employment areas and carbon sequestration activities where these also reduce flood risk.
- Physical environmental enhancement of employment premises, sites and surrounding areas.
- Initiatives that actively involve businesses and communities in the planning and management of flood risk.
- Knowledge transfer and exchange of information relating to adaptations to climate change, risk management and resilience.

5.5.2   Assessment of Priority Axis 5

This section highlights the effects and opportunities that could be achieved through inclusive delivery of Programme actions. The opportunities for Priority Axis 5 are separated out by relevant protected characteristics.

Opportunities to reduce the impacts of climate change for older people

Older people are likely to suffer disproportionately from the negative effects of climate change. As this Priority focuses on promoting climate change adaption, risk prevention and management, it could help to mitigate these effects for older people.

Coastal areas tend to have a higher proportion of elderly populations, and are more likely to be vulnerable to the effects of climate change than inland areas. Climate change and sea level rise is likely to have a severe impact on UK coasts by 2080.[117] The increase in frequency of storm events combined with a rise in sea level is likely to result in an increase in flooding. Storms and flooding are likely to have a negative impact on key public infrastructure, including health and emergency services, and public transport along the coast. For coastal areas that are already experiencing isolation, these impacts could be particularly serious for elderly populations.[118]

The future is likely to lead to more risks to the aging society from flooding – both coastal and inland. Oven *et al.* stated that areas with high elderly populations are areas where the elderly population is continuing to grow, and the areas which are experiencing the most rapidly changing hazards.[119]

Flooding is not the only negative impact relating to climate change. Older people are more at risk of extremes of heat and cold.[120] This is due to older people having reduced heat-regulating mechanisms

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[117] Zsamboky M. et al (2011) Impacts of climate change on disadvantaged UK coastal communities, available at:
http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/disadvantage-communities-climate-change-full.pdf
[118] Zsamboky M. et al (2011) Impacts of climate change on disadvantaged UK coastal communities, available at:
http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/disadvantage-communities-climate-change-full.pdf
[119] Oven et al. (2011) Climate change and health and social care: Defining future hazard, vulnerability and risk for infrastructure systems supporting older people's health care in England, Applied Geography,
[120] JRF (2014) Climate change and social justice: an evidence review, available at: http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/climate-change-social-justice-full.pdf

related to physiological facts (impaired thermoregulation, reduced cardiovascular fitness or kidney functions), restricted mobility and cognitive capacity.[121]

The negative impacts of climate change were captured in a recent study, which found a significant increase of heat-related and cold-related mortality in all regions on the UK when modelling the local climate population projections in the UK for the 2020s, 2050s and 2080s[122]. The study found that the elderly were most at risk; heat and cold risks increased with successive age groups, with the greatest risk occurring in those 85+. Without adaption, the study found that by the 2050s, the number of heat-related deaths would be expected to rise around 257%, whilst the number of cold-related deaths would decline by 2%.

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 5.1: Enabling and protecting economic development potential through investment in flood and coastal flooding management where there is demonstrable market failure.

Actions

- Design and lay-out so that flood risk and surface water management is actively addressed in a sustainable way.
- Initiatives that actively involve businesses and communities in the planning and management of flood risk.
- Knowledge transfer and exchange of information relating to adaptions to climate change, risk management and resilience.
- Flood mitigation measures.
- Initiatives that actively involve businesses and communities in the planning and management of flood risk.

Relevance

The Programme can help reduce the impact of flooding. Older people are more vulnerable to the effects of flooding, and therefore the Programme has the opportunity to reduce the impacts and likelihood of impacts on this group. As the actions under this Priority focus on protecting employment sites, it is likely that potential impact on this group will be minimal.

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[121] JRF (2014) Climate change and social justice: an evidence review, available at:
http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/climate-change-social-justice-full.pdf
[122] Hajat et al. (2014) Climate change effects on human health: projections of temperature-related mortality for the UK during the 2020s, 2050s and 2080s, Journal of epidemiology and community health, available at:
http://researchonline.lshtm.ac.uk/1520143/1/J%20Epidemiol%20Community%20Health-2014-Hajat-jech-2013-202449.pdf

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Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: older people.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: higher proportions of older people live in rural and coastal areas. These areas could, therefore, experience the most significant effects.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts (although minimal) for older people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

Opportunities to reduce the impact of climate change for children

The impacts of climate change are expected to cause an economic burden for the children of today and future generations.[123] The actions of this Priority could reduce the impact of climate change for younger people and children.

Although children are least responsible for climate change, they are subject to greater consequences. In a recent poll by UNICEF UK, 74% children felt worried about how climate change will affect the future of the planet and believe the world will have changed as a result of climate change by the time they are adults. Reducing carbon emission can have positive benefits for the health and well-being of children.

In addition, young children can suffer negative health impacts as a result of climate change. Young children are most at risk from changes and extremes in temperature that are likely to result from climate change (as their bodies are less able to regulate temperature, increasing their risk of overheating, dehydration and heatstroke).[124] However, this Priority is only partially focussed on adaptions to the broader effects of climate change (being focussed more on flood risk) and as such, this impact will be relatively minor.

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these climate change risks is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 5.1: Enabling and protecting economic development potential through investment in flood and coastal flooding management where there is demonstrable market failure.

Actions

- Design and lay-out so that flood risk and surface water management is actively addressed in a

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[123] Unicef (2013): 'Climate change: children's challenge', available at: http://www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publication-pdfs/unicef-climate-change-report-2013.pdf
[124] Bates et al. (2012) The impact of climate change upon health and health inequalities in the north west of England, available at: http://www.nwph.net/nwpho/Publications/Climate%20Change%20Interactive.pdf

- sustainable way.
- Initiatives that actively involve businesses and communities in the planning and management of flood risk.
- Knowledge transfer and exchange of information relating to adaptions to climate change, risk management and resilience.

Relevance

The Programme aims to reduce the impact of flooding though mitigation measures and promotes knowledge transfer relating to climate change adaptions, risk management and resilience. Children are more vulnerable to the effects of flooding and therefore will be positively impacted by these actions.

Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: children, particularly young children.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: The highest proportions of children living in the UK urban areas and live in their highest proportions in large towns and cities.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for children, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

Opportunities to reduce the impact of climate change on disabled people

As this Priority includes actions to mitigate flooding and more general actions relating to knowledge transfer of climate change adaption, risk management and resilience, this Priority presents an opportunity to support the reduction in the impact of climate change on disabled people.

Disabled people may be at a higher risk during emergencies caused by events such as storms and floods.[125] For example, disabled people: may not be able to get out of buildings quickly in an emergency or require help to leave; may not be aware of emergency warnings; may not know how to react in an emergency; and they may have a reliance on care that may be disrupted by loss of power or food supplies.

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

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[125] Bates et al. (2012) The impact of climate change upon health and health inequalities in the north west of England, available at: http://www.nwph.net/nwpho/Publications/Climate%20Change%20Interactive.pdf

Assessment of effect
Objective
Specific Objective 5.1: Enabling and protecting economic development potential through investment in flood and coastal flooding management where there is demonstrable market failure.
Actions ▪ Design and lay-out so that flood risk and surface water management is actively addressed in a sustainable way. ▪ Initiatives that actively involve businesses and communities in the planning and management of flood risk. ▪ Knowledge transfer and exchange of information relating to adaptions to climate change, risk management and resilience.
Relevance The Programme aims to reduce the impact of flooding though mitigation measures and promotes knowledge transfer relating to climate change adaptions, risk management and resilience. Disabled people are more vulnerable to the effects of climate change and flooding, particularly individuals with mobility problems.
Spatial and demographic relevance ▪ Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: disabled people. ▪ Geographical areas where effect could be felt: Cornwall, north Norfolk, the north east and north west. ▪ This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for disabled people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

5.6 Priority Axis 6: Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency

5.6.1 Summary of Priority Axis 6

Priority Axis 6 has two Investment Priorities and includes two specific objectives. The structure of Priority Axis 6 is detailed in the table below:

Table 5.6: Priority Axis 6: Investment Priorities, Specific Objectives and actions

Priority 6
Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency.

Investment Priority 1 of Priority Axis 6
Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystems, including through Natura 2000 and green infrastructure.
Specific Objective 6.1
Investments in Green and Blue infrastructure and actions that support the provision of ecosystem services on which businesses and communities depend to increase local natural capital and support sustainable economic growth.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
- New habitat creation that enhances the connectivity and resilience for Priority sites and species in a manner that may also provide additional benefits such as attracting inward investment, employment opportunities and greater employee retention.   - Revitalisation of brownfield land and other sites, regeneration of sites through soil desealing and decontamination and measures to increase the biodiversity, recreation and aesthetic quality of the site.   - Sustainable drainage to improve water quality and in some cases local air quality (with potential for associated carbon reductions also).   - Investment in green and blue infrastructure such as green corridors in urban areas and waterways.
Investment Priority 2 of Priority Axis 6
Promoting innovative technologies to improve environmental protection and resource efficiency in the waste sector, water sector and with regard to soil, or to reduce air pollution.
Specific Objective 6.2
Investment in the uptake of innovative technologies and resource efficiency measures to increase environmental protection, resilience and performance of businesses and communities.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
- Provision of support and advice for businesses in the management and reuse of energy, materials, and water, reducing waste.   - Investment in the development of "green" products and services.   - Support and advice for the dissemination of innovative technologies.

5.6.2 Assessment of Priority Axis 6

Improving resource efficiency offers opportunities for innovation and wealth creation.[126] This Priority does not refer to a specific sector, but to a wide range of businesses and their supply chains, which are responding to a common set of challenges. This Priority will most likely facilitate growth in these areas. It is also likely that ERDF Programme actions within this Priority will offer longer term benefits for younger people through protecting the wider ecosystem, and supporting sustainability and economic growth.

It is, however, unlikely that this Priority will have any disproportionate positive or negative impacts on any protected characteristics. This is not to say that people with any and all protected characteristics will not feel the benefits of the Programme, but that these benefits will not fall disproportionately on certain sections of the population.

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[126] Technology Strategy Board (2009) Resource Efficiency Strategy 2009-2012, available at:
https://www.innovateuk.org/documents/1524978/2139688/Resource+Efficiency+Strategy/57ee65ac-cfc2-4e4e-8adb-008129e472f6

5.7 Priority Axis 7: Sustainable transport in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

5.7.1 Summary of Priority Axis 7

Priority Axis 7 has two Investment Priorities and includes two Specific Objectives. The structure of Priority Axis 7 is detailed in the table below:

Table 5.7: Priority Axis 7: Investment Priorities, Specific Objectives and actions

Priority Axis 7
Sustainable transport in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly
Investment Priority 1 of Priority Axis 7
Supporting a multi-modal Single European Transport Area by investing in the TEN-T
Specific Objective 7.1
Improve the accessibility of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly by enhancing integration with the TEN-T road and rail network.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
▪ Targeted investment in the Comprehensive TEN-T road network, in particular enhancements to the A30 to alleviate congestion at identified bottlenecks ▪ Targeted investments in the Comprehensive TEN-T rail network in particular improvements to signalling infrastructure on mainline from London to St Ives and development of strategic transport hubs at key spots along the railway line.
Investment Priority 2 of Priority Axis 7
Developing and improving environmentally-friendly (including low-noise) and low-carbon transport systems, including inland waterways and maritime transport, ports, multimodal links and airport infrastructure, in order to promote sustainable regional and local mobility.
Specific Objective 7.2
Improve accessibility and connectivity within Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly through developing sustainable means of transport.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
▪ Investments in ticketing technologies and information systems. ▪ Public transport network improvements. ▪ Development of transport hubs. ▪ Improvements to sea transport links. ▪ Urban traffic management control systems to give public transport priority, resulting in quicker public transport journeys. ▪ Cycling infrastructure to discourage use of private cars and could include new routes linking to current and future employment development sites. ▪ Alternative fuel infrastructure and incentives to encourage the uptake of low carbon vehicles as part of a strategy for sustainable transport.

5.7.2 Assessment of Priority Axis 7

This section highlights the effects and opportunities that could be achieved through inclusive delivery of Programme actions. The opportunities for Priority Axis 7 are separated out by relevant protected characteristics.

Improving public transport

There are large numbers of people in rural areas who do not have access to a car and therefore are dependent on public transport. Public transport is important for the sustainability of these communities, enabling people to access employment, public services and leisure and social activities. Groups that tend to use public transport more than others in Cornwall are: younger people, older people, disabled people, and women, particularly women with children.

For example: Cornwall's Young People's Manifesto highlights that young people want public transport to be more reliable and accessible.[127] In addition, young people described how they wanted more bus stops with shelters and lighting, particularly in rural areas. This Priority could also have particular benefits for the disabled population, due to Cornwall's particularly high population of disabled people. Over 21% of the total population of Cornwall self-reported that their day to day activities were either limited 'a lot' or 'limited a little' by a long term health problem or disability, which compares to only 10% nationally.[128] Whilst improvements to public transport is important for older people, as many do not have access to their own vehicles and public transport is not always accessible.

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 7.2: Improve accessibility and connectivity within Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly through developing sustainable means of transport

Supported actions

- Public transport network improvements.
- Development of transport hubs.
- Cycling infrastructure – which could include new routes linking to current and future employment development sites.

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[127] Children's Trust Cornwall (2014) Young People's Manifesto, Priority 5 – Transport, available at: http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children-and-family-care/cornwall-childrens-trust/involvement/young-peoples-manifesto/priority-5-transport/

[128] Disability Cornwall (2013) Numbers of disabled people in Cornwall – A discussion paper, available at: http://www.disabilitycornwall.org.uk/PDF/Disability_in_Cornwall.pdf

Relevance

As the Programme will involve making public transport improvements, it has the opportunity to improve access to public transport for younger people, older people, disabled people, and women. Transport can act as barrier to these groups accessing services and lead to isolation, particularly for older people.

Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: younger people, older people, disabled people and women.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: particular benefit would be achieved through improvements to access in rural areas.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for younger people, older people, disabled people and women, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

5.8 Priority Axis 8: Sustainable Transport

5.8.1 Summary of Priority Axis 8

Priority Axis 8 has two Investment Priorities and includes two Specific Objectives. The structure of Priority Axis 8 is detailed in the table below:

Table 5.8:   Priority Axis 8: Investment Priorities, Specific Objectives and actions

Priority Axis 8
Sustainable transport
Investment Priority 1 of Priority Axis 8
Enhancing regional mobility by connecting secondary and tertiary nodes to TEN-T infrastructure, including multi-modal nodes.
Specific Objective 8.1
Improving regional mobility and the economy viability of areas by linking them to the TENS-T network with transport infrastructure.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
- Improvements to the Strategic Transport network where they can be shown to unlock jobs and improve regional mobility by enhancing connectivity with the TEN-T Network.   - Support key transport initiatives to support growth, based around improvements to existing interchanges and routes and making use of multi-modal opportunities, in order to improve connectivity with the TEN-T network.   - Improve the accessibility and viability of Priority employment and development sites in the LEP area by improving connectivity with the TEN-T Network.   - Infrastructure to connect local networks to TEN-T networks.
Investment Priority 2 of Priority Axis 8

Developing and improving environmentally-friendly (including low-noise) and low-carbon transport systems, including inland waterways and maritime transport, ports, multi-modal links and airport infrastructure, in order to promote sustainable regional and local mobility.

Specific Objective 8.2

To remove pressure from road network by promoting other forms of transport that support sustainable development, jobs and growth.

Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:

- Investments in ticketing technologies and information systems.
- Smart transport systems.
- Development of transport hubs.
- Measures to facilitate access to public transport, including bus and railways, and thereby reduce carbon emissions.
- Measures to address over-crowding.
- Public transport network improvements, particularly to key employers.
- Sustainable transport Promoting Sustainable Transport and Removing Bottlenecks in Key Network Infrastructures.
- Investment in cycling, linking to current and future employment development sites.

5.8.2 Assessment of Priority Axis 8

This section highlights the effects and opportunities that could be achieved through inclusive delivery of Programme actions. The opportunities for Priority Axis 8 are separated out by relevant protected characteristics.

Improving access to employment for young people through sustainable transport

Public transport is an important factor for young people being able to access employment. As this Priority focuses on promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks, it has the opportunity to increase the accessibility of public transport and employment sites for young people.

Accessible public transport is important for young people to access employment, education and training.[129] This is especially important as many young people lack access to a car due to cost and age limit restrictions on driving. In 2012, only 36% of people aged 17-20 held a full driving licence.[130]

People aged 17-20 make up a significant proportion of bus users in the UK, accounting for 13% of all trips in this age group.[131] However, travel costs can make it difficult for young people to sustain employment, particularly for young people working part-time and/or in low paid occupations.[132]

[129] Bourn R. et al. Campaign for Better Transport (2013) No Entry! Transport barriers facing young people, available at:
http://www.bettertransport.org.uk/sites/default/files/research-files/No_Entry_final_report_definitive_0.pdf
[130] Department of Transport (2013) National Travel Survey 2013, available at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/243957/nts2012-01.pdf
[131] Department of Transport (2013) National Travel Survey 2013, available at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/243957/nts2012-01.pdf
[132] Jones K. (2012) The Work Foundation, Transport Barriers to Youth Employment, available at:
http://www.theworkfoundation.com/DownloadPublication/Report/327_Transport%20Policy%20Paper%202.pdf

It is important to note that accessibility does not just relate to provision, it is also important that it is affordable, particularly as financial constraints can disproportionately affect NEET young people trying to access the labour market.

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 8.2: To remove pressure from road network by promoting other forms of transport that support sustainable development, jobs and growth

Supported actions

- Development of transport hubs.
- Public transport network improvements, particularly to key employers.
- Cycling infrastructure – which could include new routes linking to current and future employment development sites.

Relevance

As the Programme will involve making public transport improvements, it has the opportunity to improve access to public transport for younger people. Transport can act as a barrier to young people's employment and therefore this Priority could work to addressing this, particularly as the Operational Programme refers to network improvements to key employers. Cost of public transport can also be a barrier and therefore this will need to be considered in line with any improvements. Through improving the cycle infrastructure, this will give young people more choice in how they access employment at a much lower cost than the private car or public transport.

Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: younger people.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: younger people live in greater proportions in urban areas, and in large cities and majors towns in particular.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for younger people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

Opportunities to enhance the employment and social mobility benefits of improved transport networks for disabled people

A lack of accessible transport is seen to be a key factor in the social exclusion of disabled people[133] and is key barrier to their employment. As actions related to this Priority involve improving public transport networks, this Priority could implement actions which specifically work towards the provision of transport which meets the needs of disabled people.

Disabled people are far more likely to experience unemployment than other sections of the population.[134] Consistently, disabled people have been significantly less likely to be an employee or self-employed, and are nearly three times as likely to be economically inactive.[135]

60 per cent of disabled people have no car available to the household, compared with 27 per cent of the overall population, so they are more reliant on other people for lifts (such as family and friends) as well as public transport.[136] However, around a fifth of all disabled people report difficulties accessing public transport as a result of their impairment or disability.[137]

Activity within the Programme is aimed at addressing these challenges are detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 8.2: To remove pressure from road network by promoting other forms of transport that support sustainable development, jobs and growth

Actions

- Development of transport hubs.
- Measures to facilitate access to public transport, including bus and railways, and thereby reduce carbon emissions.
- Public transport network improvements, particularly to key employers.

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[133] IMTACT (2010) Report into the impact of the Accessible Transport Strategy in improving access to transport for people with a learning disability
[134] Office of Disability Issues (2013): 'Disability Equality Indicators'. See: http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/disability-statistics-and-research/disability-equality-indicators.php
[135] Office of Disability Issues (2013): 'Disability Equality Indicators'. See: http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/disability-statistics-and-research/disability-equality-indicators.php
[136] Papworth (2010): 'Disability in the United Kingdom 2010'. See: http://www.papworth.org.uk/downloads/disabilityfactsandfigures2010_100202152740.pdf
[137] ONS (2011) Opinions Survey

Relevance

Disabled people tend not to own a car and report difficulties accessing public transport, as this Priority specifically includes measures to facilitate access to public transport, this Priority could help address some of the barriers disabled people face.

Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: disabled people.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: disabled people tend to live in the highest proportions in coastal areas including Cornwall, Norfolk, Northumberland and the North West.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for disabled people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

Improving access to sustainable transport for parents with young children

Similarly, this Priority can also help to improve access to sustainable transport for parents with young children. This is particularly important for lone parent households, as 37% do not have access to a car or a van, compared to only 8% of couple households with dependent children.[138]

As such, parents of young children can often face access challenges, particularly when using public transport. A Department for Transport study[139] on social exclusion and public transport indicated that particular problems with transport infrastructure included:

- Problems with buggy / pram accessibility, resulting in a tendency to walk.
- Insufficient time to embark and disembark safely with babies and small children.
- Unwillingness of bus drivers to adapt for children, failing to stop for family groups, or refusing to wait for them to sit down.
- High cost of travel once some of the children are at fare-paying age.

In addition, journeys can involve complicated trip chains, this can be expensive and time consuming, and the effect of this is exacerbated if travelling on public transport whilst pregnant or with prams or pushchairs.

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

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[138] ONS (2011) Car or van availability by household composition

[139] Equality and Human Rights Commission, (2009), 'Equality Issues in Wales- A Research Review';

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 8.2: To remove pressure from road network by promoting other forms of transport that support sustainable development, jobs and growth

Actions
- Measures to facilitate access to public transport, including bus and railways, and thereby reduce carbon emissions
- Measures to address over-crowding.
- Public transport improvements.

Relevance

The Programme activities have the opportunity to improve access to public transport for parents with young children. Travel planning would need to take into account the needs and usage of parents with young children, and the different sites they need to access e.g. schools. In addition this Priority includes measures to address overcrowding it could help to improve access for women with small children.

Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: children and women.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: children make up the largest proportion of the population in urban areas, while the proportion of women does not vary significantly throughout the country.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for children and women, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

Opportunities to improve access to public transport for older people

Older people – particularly those of retirement age, but also older working age people – have been shown in a range of studies to particularly susceptible to, and specifically impacted by, social exclusion as a result of transport issues. As the number of older people in the UK increases, the potential impacts of local public transport services on this group are likely to increase.[140]

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[140] Department for Transport (2010): 'National Travel Survey'; Centre for Research in Social Policy (2007): 'Evidence Base Review on Mobility: Choices & Barriers for Different Social Groups'; Department for Transport (2000): 'Social exclusion and the provision of public transport'; Campaign for Better Transport (2007): 'Buses Matter'

Of those aged 70+, almost two-fifths (39%) experienced difficulties travelling on foot, by bus or getting in and out of a car.[141] This compares to only 4% of those aged 16-49. Bus usage was higher for those aged 60+ than middle age groups, particularly for females. This pattern is related to the provision of concessionary travel schemes for older people and the differences in driving licence holding across age groups.[142]

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 8.2: To remove pressure from road network by promoting other forms of transport that support sustainable development, jobs and growth

Actions

- Measures to address over-crowding
- Measures to facilitate access to public transport, including bus and railways, and thereby reduce carbon emissions

Relevance

Overcrowded public transport may act as a barrier to older people using these services. This is because it is less likely that they would have access to a seat and they may feel uncomfortable in crowded places. In addition, they may find it difficult to access public transport if they have to travel far to access it, as they are more likely to have mobility problems. Therefore, the actions under this Priority can help to address some of the barriers faced by older people accessing public transport.

Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: older people.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: older people tend to live in peripheral parts of the country, with many living in coastal, where they often make up a large proportion of the population.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for older people, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group

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[141] Department for Transport (2013) National Travel Survey 2012, available at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/243957/nts2012-01.pdf
[142] Department for Transport (2013) National Travel Survey 2012, available at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/243957/nts2012-01.pdf

Opportunity: improve access to sustainable travel for BAME communities

The barriers that BAME communities face when accessing public transport tend to differ from those discussed above relating to other equality groups. For example barriers can include fear of racial attacks and language difficulties.[143] This Priority has the opportunity to address these barriers and increase the usage of sustainable transport for BAME communities.

Hate crime can be a problem for BAME transport users; this can result in considerable physical and/or psychological impacts on victims and their families. Victims will often take action themselves to reduce the chance of suffering another attack which may include changing how they travel to work, or even how often they leave the house.[144] The physical and psychological impacts of hate crime therefore could constitute a barrier to BAME individuals accessing or continuing in existing employment.

The 2012 National Transport survey found that the proportion of adults (individuals aged 17 and above) living in households with a car was highest among those from White backgrounds (81%), compared to 59% to 71% for those from non-White backgrounds.[145] Therefore access to public transport can be seen as even more important to BAME communities to access employment.

Labour market status by ethnic group recently released by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) shows that the White ethnic group has the lowest unemployment rate of 7%, whilst the highest unemployment rate of 17% was found in the Pakistani/Bangladeshi group.[146]

Activity within the Programme aimed at addressing these challenges is detailed in the box below:

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 8.1: To remove pressure from road network by promoting other forms of transport that support sustainable development, jobs and growth

Supported actions

- Measures to address over-crowding.
- Measures to facilitate access to public transport, including bus and railways, and thereby reduce carbon emissions.

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[143] Department for Transport (2012) Transport for Everyone: an action plan to promote equality
[144] Home Office (2009): 'Hate Crime – the cross government action plan'
[145] Department for Transport (2013) National Travel Survey: 2012, available at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/243957/nts2012-01.pdf
[146] Department for Work and Pensions (2014) Labour market status by ethnic group, available at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/269689/labour-market-status-by-ethnic-group.pdf

Relevance

As BAME groups are more likely to fear being the victim of hate crime and are more likely to have experienced it compared to the rest of the general population, they may be less likely to use services that are overcrowded as this may make them feel more vulnerable. In addition, as access to public transport is important for BAME groups to access employment, the actions under this Priority could deliver particularly positive benefits for this group.

Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: people from BAME communities.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: people from BAME communities tend to be concentrated in the urban areas of the south east of England. By far the largest ethnic minority populations are found in Greater London, followed some way behind by Birmingham, the Black Country and Leicester.
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for BAME communities, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

5.9   Priority Axis 9: Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty and any discrimination

5.9.1   Summary of Priority Axis 9

Priority Axis 9 has one Investment Priority and two Specific Objectives. The structure of Priority Axis 9 is detailed in the table below:

Table 5.9:   Priority Axis 9: Investment Priorities, Specific Objectives and actions

Priority Axis 9
Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination
Investment Priority 1 of Priority Axis 9
Undertaking investment in the context of community led local development strategies.
Specific Objectives 9.1 and 9.2
9.1: To build capacity and mobilise resources at community level that overcome persistent barriers to growth and employment in lagging areas or deprived communities. **9.2:** Reduced risk of poverty and social exclusion through improved access to economic growth and development opportunities.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include (using ERDF CLLD investment):
■ Animation and capacity building activity in targeted areas which seeks to mobilise community resources and build upon local assets to mitigate risk of social exclusion and embed improved economic performance. ■ Provision of community hub facilities to support SMEs (including social enterprise) in targeted

areas.
- Activity that seeks to promote entrepreneurship and self-employment in deprived areas and targeted communities.
- Tailored business support activity, mentoring, coaching, information, advice and guidance.
- Support for access to new markets related to climate change, energy saving and production, care, health, culture and the digital economy.
- Support for local and community based initiatives that focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and/or facilitate the transition to a low carbon society.
- Small equipment grants.
- Provision of business space/ premises/hot-desking facilities.
- Support for clustering / networking/cooperation/local supply chains / collaboration.
- Investment in small scale infrastructure linking deprived neighbourhoods and areas of need with areas of opportunity and employment growth.
- Support to embed and apply innovation in a local context (e.g. new products/services/ways of working) that builds on community assets.
- Support for new forms of enterprise (including the social economy and social enterprises).
- Support for activity linked to renovation of local housing, local energy production and conservation and new uses for existing buildings.

5.9.2   Assessment of Priority Axis 9

This section highlights the effects and opportunities that could be achieved through inclusive delivery of Programme actions.

Tackling social deprivation using targeted spatial Community Led Local Development (CLLD) support

In 2013 there were 3.5 million workless households.[147] The highest percentage of workless households was in the North East at 23%, whilst the South East had the lowest at 13%. Analysis of the Household survey data found that 11% of adults in the UK experience three or more of the six areas of disadvantage (education, health, employment, income, social support, housing and local environment).[148] This leads to negative impacts for people and the lives of their children. Disadvantages are more likely to be exacerbated by factors like ethnicity, gender or disability (which are discussed later in this section).

CLLD approaches are used to help ERDF to target investment in highly localised areas. The funds are used to tackle barriers to growth and disadvantage and are financed under Thematic Objective 9 of the European Structural and investment Funds. Priority Axis 9 is focussed on promoting social inclusion and combating poverty and discrimination. The Operational Programme refers to investment being targeted in urban, peri-urban and non-LEADER rural areas where there are concentrations of deprivation. Within these areas, actions will be focuses on the 20% most deprived areas by reference to the 2010 English Indices of Multiple Deprivation.

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[147] ONS (2013) Working and Workless Households, 2013 – Statistical Bulletin, available at:
http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_325269.pdf

[148] HM Government (2012) Social Justice: transforming lives, available at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/49515/social-justice-transforming-lives.pdf

As such, CLLD is well positioned to support activity focussed upon reducing inequality and tackling disadvantage in areas of particular need and specifically addresses problems that are often felt disproportionately by certain sections of society, including:

- Economic inactivity, which is a particular challenge for younger people and people from some BAME groups who have experienced significant and rising barriers to employment as a result of the 2008 recession.
- Entrepreneurship, where barriers continue to exist for younger, older and disabled people, as well as people from some BAME groups, women and people from some religious communities.
- Access to the labour market, where structural challenges may prevent older working age people from accessing employment following redundancy, or disabled people seeking first time employment following departure from education due to a lack of the skills required to secure employment.

Assessment of effect

Objective

Specific Objective 9.1: To build capacity and mobilise resources at community level that overcome persistent barriers to growth and employment in lagging areas or deprived communities.

Specific Objective 9.2: Reduced risk of poverty and social exclusion through improved access to economic growth and development opportunities.

Supported actions

- Tailored business support activity, mentoring, coaching, information, advice and guidance.
- Capacity building activity in targeted areas which seeks to mobilise community resources and build upon local assets to mitigate risk of social exclusion and embed improved economic performance.
- Provision of community hub facilities to support SMEs in target areas.

Relevance

As the actions under this Priority specifically target areas of deprivation, the activities to promote entrepreneurship, self-employment, targeted business support and connecting areas of deprivation and areas of employment, can particularly benefit those groups that are particularly affected by deprivation.

Spatial and demographic relevance

- Protected characteristics with the opportunity to benefit: young people, disabled people, older people, and BAME communities.
- Geographical areas where effect could be felt: most urban areas have high levels of deprivation in the conurbation of Manchester, Liverpool, and Newcastle, as well as large metropolitan areas in Yorkshire, the Humber, and the West Midlands, Areas in the North east quarter of London also show high levels of deprivation. Although there are concentrated areas of deprivation, there are also pockets of deprivation across every region in England. For example, 56% of the local

authorities in England contain at least one area which is amongst the most deprived.[149]
- This Priority is anticipated to have particularly positive impacts for young people, disabled people, older people, and BAME communities, and is unlikely to deliver negative impacts for any protected characteristic group.

5.10 Priority Axis 10: Sustainable Urban Development

5.10.1 Summary of Priority Axis 10

This Priority Axis 10 has 13 Investment Priorities and 13 Specific Objectives. The structure of Priority Axis 10 is detailed in the table below:

Table 5.10: Priority Axis 10: Investment Priorities, Specific Objectives and actions

Priority Axis 10
Sustainable Urban Development
Investment Priority 1 Priority axis 10
Strengthening research, technological development and innovation by: promoting business investment in R&I; developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the Higher Education sector; promoting investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation; and supporting technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advance manufacturing capabilities and first production, in particular in key enabling technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies.
Specific Objective 10.1 & 10.2
10.1: Increase the number of SMEs innovating to bring new products and processes to the market **10.2:** Increase collaborative research and innovation between large enterprises, research institutions and public institutions to improve SME commercialisation
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
■ Advice and support to bring new products to market, especially those linked to 'key enabling', the 'eight great and health science technologies'. This can include stimulating the demand for new services and products, and public procurement programmes designed to drive innovation. ■ Advice and support to help research and prove the feasibility of an idea including protecting, obtaining and exploiting intellectual property rights. ■ Direct support to undertake applied research and product development, potentially including prototypes, for SMEs. ■ Translating basic research into technological and applied research. ■ Developing pilot lines, demonstration activities, early product validation actions, advanced manufacturing capabilities. ■ Promoting R&D&I business advisory services, also in the field of services, creative hubs, cultural and creative industries and social innovation, pilots and demonstration activities.

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[149] Communities and Local Government (2011) The English Indices of Deprivation 2010, available at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6871/1871208.pdf

- Promoting R&D&I business advisory services, also in the field of services, creative hubs, cultural and creative industries and social innovation, pilots and demonstration activities.
- Encouraging the development of new business models that will enable emerging technologies to be more rapidly commercialised.
- Building innovation collaborations between businesses of different types and across sectors;
- Creating new linkages and developing capacity in and across clusters, value chains, and knowledge transfer networks.
- Promoting cooperative partnerships between research, education and innovation institutions.
- Promoting entrepreneurship and business creation among students/graduates: combination of training and business experience, start-ups. This could include graduate schemes or support for Higher Education Institution spin-outs delivering innovation including social enterprises.

Investment Priority 2 of Priority Axis 10

Extending broadband deployment and the roll-out of high-speed networks and supporting the adoption of emerging technologies and networks for the digital economy.

Specific objective 10.3

Increase the coverage and take up of superfast and ultrafast Broadband in areas where the market is failing, particularly where this is creating a barrier to SME growth.

Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:

- Support businesses to access new markets through improved ICT connections.
- Support businesses to implement productivity improvements.
- Support SMEs to increase growth.

Examples of actions which may be supported are:

- Extension of superfast broadband networks.
- Projects providing vouchers for SMEs for superfast or ultrafast connections.
- London-wide promotional campaign, around the opportunities that high-speed internet provides for SME businesses.
- Urban Broadband Funds enhanced and extended, targeting high-growth business clusters in London.
- Projects to establish local digital exchanges that allow for the co-location and sharing of services.

Activities will target businesses and SMEs, including social enterprises.

Investment Priority 3 of Priority Axis 10

Developing ICT products and services, e-commerce, and enhancing demand for ICT.

Specific objective 10.4

Increase the number of SMEs using and having access to digital technologies including trading on line.

Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:

- Support SMEs to access new markets through improved ICT connections.
- Support SMEs to develop ICT skills.
- Support SMEs to implement productivity improvements.
- Support SMEs to increase growth.

Examples of actions which may be supported are:
- Revenue business support measures for SMEs.
- Projects providing vouchers for SMEs.
- Investment in infrastructure to connect SMEs to broadband networks.

Activities will target SMEs, including social enterprises,

Investment Priority 4 of Priority Axis 10

Supporting the capacity of SMEs to grow in regional, national and international markets and to engage in innovation processes.

Specific objective 10.5

Increase growth capability of SMEs.

Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
- Business coaching and mentoring.
- Building management capacity for growth.
- Developing local networks of growth firms to collaborate and support to achieve growth.
- Delivering tailored, specialist, strategic and technical support to SMEs with the capacity and ambition to develop advanced manufacturing capabilities.
- Supporting supply chain interventions to strengthen and grow the domestic supplier base in key advanced manufacturing sectors.
- Providing advice on access to finance.
- Providing finance and investment readiness advice and support for businesses.
- Providing finance to address market failures and gaps faced by SMEs.
- Providing SMEs with advice, expertise and support to start and/or increase trading in new markets, including support for SMEs to connect with contacts in remote market, promoting the internationalisation agenda at a local level and encouraging more innovative (R&D intensive) and high growth SMEs to export.
- Providing advice and support to help SMEs to overcome barriers (legal, regulatory, cultural and financial).
- Connecting local companies, clusters, networks or other multi-business partnerships to national and international partners.
- Providing direct service brokering and signposting support to local businesses.
- Promoting public sector procurement opportunities, including contracts for low carbon, resource efficient sectors.
- Provision of managed workspace or grow-on space.

Activities will target SMEs, including Social Enterprises.

Investment Priority 5 of Priority Axis 10

Promoting entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, including through business incubators.

Specific Objective 10.6

Increase entrepreneurship, particularly in areas with low levels of enterprise activity and amongst under-represented groups.

Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:

- Strengthening entrepreneurial and enterprise culture using targeted engagement, outreach and mentoring.
- Support for entrepreneurship and self-employment in particular amongst under-represented groups by developing entrepreneurial skills and attitudes with a focus on increasing the number of business start-ups (including social enterprises).
- Promoting entrepreneurship and business creation among students and graduates.
- Provision of affordable workspace, including provision of start-up incubator facilities and grow-on space.
- Provision of business advice and guidance including mentoring and advice on access to finance
- Providing advice and support to help those starting businesses to overcome barriers (legal, regulatory, cultural and financial).
- Ensuring good access to appealing environments and maximising the regeneration potential of these places of work.
- Addressing market failures in the provision of start-up finance, e.g.:
  - Seed finance and start-up loans;
  - Early stage growth, Equity, quasi-Equity, Loan or Mezzanine funds;
  - Microloan funds delivered by Community Development Finance Institutions; and
  - Proof of Concept funds.

Beneficiaries will be individuals will ambition to start-up a business and SMEs in early stage of operation. It will also include social enterprises and those wishing to set-up social enterprises.

Investment Priority 6 of Priority Axis 10

Promoting research and innovation in, and adoption of, low-carbon technologies.

Specific Objective 10.7

Increase innovation in, and adoption of, low carbon technologies.

Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:

- R&D, innovation, supply chain work for low carbon technologies and materials, including carbon capture and carbon storage, wave and wind energy, smart grids, distributed generation, solar and photovoltaics, heat networks, heat pumps and low carbon heat for energy intensive industries.
- Technology centres of excellence and test facilities, including relevant Catapult centres.
- Renewable technologies in the UK renewable energy roadmap.
- Development of climate change mitigation and adaptation technologies.
- Research, development, demonstration and adoption of technologies and systems that support low-energy transport and accelerate the establishment of new technologies such as low emissions vehicles (electric, hybrid and hydrogen).
- Knowledge transfer with HE/FE and Businesses.
- Supporting low carbon tech start-ups and greater commercialisation of low carbon products and processes.
- Developing financing methods that encourage the adoption of proven low carbon technologies and generate long-term financial savings.
- Demonstration and deployment of decentralised, low carbon and renewable energy technologies
- R&D&I and supply chain development for low carbon and resource efficient technologies and materials (including small scale pilot programmes that test the market with new low carbon solutions and the use of secondary materials).

Investment Priority 7 of Priority Axis 10
Promoting the production and distribution of energy deprived from renewable sources.
Specific Objective 10.8
Increase implementation of whole place low carbon solutions and decentralised energy measures.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:

- Develop "whole place" low carbon initiatives through approaches such as smart cities and communities that include low carbon transport infrastructure, energy efficiency, low carbon energy supply and smart meter/smart grid programmes and related ICT platforms, technologies and applications.
- Support the development of low carbon energy (power and heat) generation, distribution and supply measures in residential, public and commercial buildings.
- Invest in the development of high-efficiency, low carbon co-generation district heat and power networks capable of supplying both local homes and businesses.
- Support the establishment of sustainable infrastructure for waste management, including waste to energy systems with associated heat off-take and heat distribution networks along with recycling processing reprocessing and remanufacturing facilities.
- Provide project development funding to support the capacity and activity required to effectively work with the range of development and delivery organisations to bring forward projects and take them to market in areas including energy efficiency, decentralised energy, waste management and green infrastructure.
- Develop green infrastructure and other climate change adaptation activities.

Investment Priority 8 of Priority Axis 10
Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multimodal urban mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures.
Specific Objective 10.8
Increase implementation of whole place low carbon solutions and decentralised energy measures.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:

- Development of "whole place" low carbon initiatives through approaches such as smart cities and communities that include low carbon transport infrastructure, energy efficiency, low carbon energy supply and smart meter/smart grid programmes and related ICT platforms, technologies and applications.
- Development of green and blue infrastructure and other climate change mitigation or adaptation activities to reduce whole place energy requirements.
- Low carbon modal shift/ smarter choices, smart systems, electric/ultra-low carbon/hydrogen vehicle infrastructure and supply chain development.
- Low carbon transport, including electric/low carbon vehicle infrastructure, cycle paths, walking and waterways.
- Smart Cities, urban mobility, urban design.
- Smart grids and demand management.
- Low carbon modal shift and smart systems.

Investment Priority 9 of Priority Axis 10
Increase energy efficiency and implementation of low carbon technologies in all types of enterprise.

Specific Objective 10.9
Increase energy efficiency and implementation of low carbon technologies in all types of enterprise.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
- Low carbon innovation in relation to waste and re-use.   - Energy efficiency in enterprises including industrial processes, designing out waste, recovery of 'waste' heat energy and CHP.   - Non Domestic Low Carbon Technologies and Energy Efficiency.   - Moving to renewable and low carbon fuels to generate heat and power.   - Building retrofit and energy efficiency especially whole building solutions exemplifying next phase technologies which are near to market.   - Low carbon construction techniques.
Investment Priority 10 of Priority Axis 10
Supporting energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructure, including in public buildings, and in the housing sector.
Specific Objective 10.10
Increase energy efficiency and implementation of low carbon technologies.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
- Provision of advice and support to increase the use and take up of low carbon technologies and energy efficiency.   - Non Domestic Low Carbon Technologies and Energy Efficiency.   - Low carbon innovation in relation to waste and re-use.   - Moving to renewable and low carbon fuels to generate heat and power.   - Building retrofit and energy efficiency especially whole building solutions exemplifying next phase technologies which are near to market.   - Domestic energy efficiency and low carbon construction techniques.
Investment Priority 11 of Priority Axis 10
Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure.
Specific Objective 10.11
Investments in Green and Blue infrastructure and actions that support the provision of ecosystem services on which businesses and communities depend to increase local natural capital and support sustainable economic growth.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
- New habitat creation that enhances the connectivity and resilience for priority sites and species in a manner that may also provide additional benefits such as attracting inward investment, employment opportunities and greater employee retention.   - Revitalisation of brownfield land and other sites, regeneration of sites through soil desealing and decontamination and measures to increase the biodiversity, recreation and aesthetic quality of the site.   - Sustainable drainage to improve water quality and in some cases local air quality (with potential for associated carbon reductions also).   - Investment in green and blue infrastructure such as green corridors in urban areas and

waterways
Investment Priority 12 of Priority Axis 10
Promoting innovative technologies to improve environmental protection and resource efficiency in the waste sector, water sector and with regard to soil, or to reduce air pollution.
Specific Objective 10.12
Investment in the uptake of innovative technologies and resource efficiency measures to increase environmental protection, resilience and performance of businesses and communities.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
▪ Provision of support and advice for businesses in the management and reuse of energy, materials, and water, reducing waste. ▪ Investment in the development of "green" products and services. ▪ Support and advice for the dissemination of innovative technologies.
Investment Priority 13 of Priority Axis 10
Providing support for physical, economic and social regeneration of deprived communities in urban and rural areas.
Specific Objective 10.13
Unlocking growth potential in disadvantaged urban areas and increasing urban cohesion Increase growth capacity of SMEs.
Indicative actions under this Investment Priority may include:
▪ Improve accessibility through existing public space to ensure that places of work are accessible and well connected to neighbouring employment sites, residential areas and the wider community, town centres and public transport hubs. ▪ Physical enhancements of employment sites and premises and surrounding areas including high streets and town centres. ▪ Improve connectivity and quality of the local environment as well as links to and between green infrastructure. ▪ Conversion/refurbishment of vacant/derelict premises with commercial potential. ▪ Advice and support for social enterprises and social innovation.

5.10.2 Assessment of Priority Axis 10

This section highlights the effects and opportunities that could be achieved through inclusive delivery of Programme actions.

Opportunities to tackle deprivation in urban areas through Sustainable Urban Development

Sustainable urban development must form a minimum of 5% of ERDF expenditure in England. Because of London's status as an urban area, England will almost certain achieve this through investment in the capital alone.

The Government is also keen to ensure that other cities should be able to participate in the European Union Urban Development Network. Therefore authorities in urban areas with large populations (in excess of 600,000 people will be invited to submit proposals to deliver integrated actions for sustainable urban development.

There are therefore opportunities to promote equality through the dedicated Programme strands focussing on sustainable urban development. With higher density urban populations comes greater numbers and proportions of people with protected characteristics who might be disproportionately or differently affected by the implementation of the ERDF Programme. As evidenced in chapter three, the urban parts of the UK have generally higher proportions children, younger people, disabled people, as well as people from BAME and minority faith communities.[150] *Targeted support in these areas has the potential to deliver significant gains in terms of enhancing equality of opportunity* by addressing structural barriers (such as transport, infrastructure and business support) to access, inclusion and participation.

It will, of course, be essential for effective governance arrangement to be put in place to ensure that all sections of the local community have the opportunity to benefit from SUD actions, where they are successful. *Measures must be put in place to deliver the level playing field required to achieve the equality outcomes that are sought* through, for example, the cross-cutting principles (see below).

5.11 Priority Axis 11: Technical Assistance

5.11.1 Summary of Priority Axis 11

This Priority Axis has two Specific Objectives relating to the technical delivery of the programme. These are detailed in the table below:

Table 5.11: Priority Axis 11: Specific Objectives

Specific Objective 1:
To ensure that the activities which fall within the scope of the programme are managed, monitored and evaluated in line with the Common Provisions Regulation, ERDF Regulation and the Commission's delegated and implementing regulations
Specific Objective 2:
To facilitate access to the programme and communicate the impact that the European Structural and Investment Funds have, including by providing robust governance support to the PMC and sub-committees and high quality advice and information to partners involved in the design and delivery of projects.

5.11.2 Assessment of Priority Axis 11

No specific impacts have been identified in association with this Priority Axis, which is primarily concerned with providing technical support, assistance and guidance to delivery bodies.

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[150] See Chapter Three: Socio-demographic baseline. The evidence presented within this chapter is based on Census 2011 data, mid-year update statistics where available, and ONS and labour market survey data.

6 Programme delivery, implementation and management

6.1 Introduction

Working through and alongside the various Priority Axes of the ERDF Operational Programme are a number of other processes and mechanisms. These are primarily focussed around three areas:

- financial engineering instruments, to target investment where it is needed, and to lever investment from the private sector; and
- cross-cutting principles, facilitating a greater focus on wider issues of importance – including equality – across all seven Priorities.

In addition, the way in which the further development and implementation of the 2014-2020 ERDF Operational Programme for England is managed will have a considerable bearing on the extent to which the impacts and opportunities identified in the preceding chapters can be realised. As such, this chapter provides an assessment of the challenges and opportunities within the delivery and management of the Programme including:

- project selection processes;
- general administrative arrangements;
- provision of Technical Assistance;
- programme governance and partnership arrangements; and
- co-ordination with other funds.

6.2 Financial Instruments

Financial instruments within the 2014-2020 Programme are comprised of four key elements:
- Providing access to finance for SMEs;
- Non-domestic energy efficiency measures;
- Low-carbon retro-fitting of social housing; and
- Delivery of local impact funds.

For the most part, the use of financial instruments will support the equality impacts and opportunities outlined in the Priority Axes chapters above, namely:

- Supporting SMEs run by people with protected characteristics (such as **younger people, older people, disabled people,** people from **BAME communities, women,** people from some **religious communities** and **LGB and T people**) through access to finance and financial assistance.

  Access to support will need to be designed to ensure that people from these different demographic, social and community groups are able (and feel able) to apply to them. Research shows that all experience barriers to accessing finance and *the ERDF Programme presents an opportunity to address those barriers, but also runs the risk of reinforcing them unless an accessible application process is designed for implementation*.

- Supporting improvements to local environmental conditions through improved air quality as a result of carbon reduction measures, which may benefit those prone to respiratory illnesses, including **children** and **older people**.

  These effects will be indirect (in that carbon reduction leads to changes in air quality, which in turn leads to health benefits) and long term and may be challenging to monitor and evaluate over the life of the Programme. Nonetheless, *a reduction in instances of conditions such as asthma amongst children and older people is achievable*, if not over the lifetime of one Programme cycle.

- Addressing fuel poverty amongst low income groups (including, particularly, **older people** and **disabled people**) through low-carbon retro-fitting of social housing stock.

  Social and income inequality are closely linked. People from a range of social and demographic groups face income inequality and, in many cases, poverty. In particular, older people, disabled people, people from some BAME communities, women, and LGB and T people can be more likely to find themselves in social housing. *Amongst social housing tenants, low incomes can lead to fuel poverty, which this financial instrument can address*.

- The delivery of local impact funds aim to promote investment into the social economy through loans to Social Sector Organisations. Many such organisations are run by, or in affiliation with, community groups that represent people with protected characteristics. Tapping into the expertise of the third sector has the potential to yield a great deal of positive outcomes for these groups and *their expertise should be harnessed to maximise accessibility of the Programme*.

6.3 As with the territorial allocations outlined below, the financial instrument model primarily supports Priority Axis 9 (focussed on social inclusion) and therefore directly responds to objectives that have the potential to yield equality benefits. Cross-cutting principles

The Partnership agreement between the UK government and the European Commission sets out the cross-cutting principles for the 2014-2020 ERDF Programme for England. The cross-cutting principles within the Operational Programme document are:

- sustainable development; and
- equal opportunities and non-discrimination.

6.3.1 Sustainable development

There has been a broad shift in emphasis within the first of these themes from the more narrowly defined 'Environmental Sustainability' to 'Sustainable Development'. This opens up the theme from a purely environmental focus to one of the wider sustainability agenda, which incorporates both economic and, importantly, social elements. This allows a far greater level of integration between the cross-cutting principles and far more scope for strategic economies of scale between their objectives. *Realising*

ambitions around equality, therefore, is likely to be more achievable with both principles working together alongside the Priority Axes of the Programme.

Nonetheless, there remains a focus on the environmental aspects of the Sustainable Development cross-cutting principle. There is therefore some risk of tension between the European Commission's view of sustainability as a predominantly environmental concept and the usefully more expansive definition now available to DCLG, which incorporates the social and economic factors noted above. *A focus on the fuller definition of sustainability should therefore be retained wherever possible*, to ensure that developments truly are sustainable (and are therefore best equipped to address equality issues), and not simply 'environmentally friendly'.

6.3.2   Equal opportunities and non-discrimination

The retention of a cross-cutting principle around equal opportunities is to be welcomed and demonstrates a continued commitment to equality on the part of the EU and the UK Government. The broad equality principles of the Programme are stated as being:

- Ensuring that no beneficiaries are excluded from participation in the Programme on the grounds of their protected characteristics.
- Considering the needs of all potential beneficiaries at project design stage in order that the service is appropriately delivered.
- Ensuring all physical regeneration, such as new buildings and upgrades to existing premises, meet minimum accessibility requirements (in this case the Equality Act 2010).
- Delivering services that are responsive to the needs of all communities and under-represented groups.
- Ensuring support is targeted towards under-represented communities where relevant.
- Delivering responsiveness to, and inclusiveness of, under-represented groups in delivery and management.

Communicating the message of integration around this cross-cutting principle – that equality needs to be embedded within projects from the outset, and not simply an afterthought – will be a challenge within an ERDF Programme that is inherently output-driven. The proposed mechanisms for recording data – and commitments to principles such as digital be default (see below) – will help to make capturing equality effects easier at every level – from projects, through sponsoring organisations, LEPs up to DCLG. However, without an understanding of why equality is important, that process of embedding will struggle to take root within day to day practice. *The administrative arrangements set up as part of the Programme and discussed in the next section will be essential in ensuring that the Equal Opportunities cross-cutting principle is fully integrated.*

In addition, specific statements are made within the consultation documentation regarding particular protected characteristics. These include statements on disability, ethnicity, and age – three characteristics where 'minority' populations may experience differential impacts to other sections of the general public (as outlined in preceding chapters). In the case of disability the document provides a statement of intent, stating that 'all activities funded by the Programme will need to be accessible to disabled people and be responsive to their individual needs'. However, in the other cases only demographic data is provided,

suggesting an underdevelopment of these themes within the current draft of the document. Moreover, it is unusual that these should be singled out within consultation materials as it suggests a greater level of attention has been paid to these characteristics, potentially at the expense of others. *It is recommended, therefore, that the same treatment is provided to all nine protected characteristics wherever possible, to ensure that due regard is paid to all aspects of equality as the Programme is developed further and delivered*.

6.4 Project selection

The project selection process is fundamental to unlocking the potential within the Programme to deliver meaningful benefits to people with different protected characteristics.

The application process takes place in two stages:

Stage 1 – Outline Application: Outline application covering purpose of project, planned outputs and intended outcomes, strategic fit and value for money

Stage 2 – Full Application: Full technical application with the Managing Authority undertaking a full technical appraisal against all of the criteria

The inclusion of 'contribution of the project to cross-cutting principles' (which, as detailed above include both sustainability and equality) within the core selection criteria of the project selection process is to be welcomed. However, there are a number of further recommendations for delivery of the project selection process that could help to further support equality. These include:

- The inclusion of sections on equality in both the outline application and full application stages of the project application process to ensure that all projects understand the requirements surrounding equality at each stage of the process.
- Close working between DCLG and local partnerships and sub-committees to ensure that both local priorities for achievement of equality goals and national ambitions for equality of opportunity are met within the process.
- The potential inclusion of equality within the gateway criteria for project selection, in order to ensure that equality is established as a key element of project development from the outset.
- As stated above, the inclusion of dedicated team members to support the application of the cross-cutting principles within project development, application and approval processes and continued to support through to the delivery stage.

Project selection is a key point at which equality can be integrated fully into the delivery process for the ERDF Programme. It is therefore essential that opportunities are taken to place requirements upon projects sponsors and delivery organisations to ensure that they are well placed to deliver on the equality ambitions of the Programme.

6.5   Administration arrangements

The proposed simplification of the administrative process for ERDF for the 2014-2020 Programming period is to be welcomed. In many instances, eligible activity is easily lost amongst challenging forms and administrative requirements. Certain sections of society and certain types of organisation (such as social enterprises) may be particularly deterred, such as those supporting people with disabilities, or whose first language is not English. *A single, simple, accessible process is potentially the best means by which all people who are eligible for ERDF support are able to secure it*.

This can be supplemented by the establishment of clear roles and responsibilities for the delivery team – ensuring that an appropriate person within DCLG is responsible for equality could help to ensure that the benefits of the Programme for equality groups are realised. Some consideration could therefore be given to *establishing an equality and diversity contact within the ERDF management and administrative structures* or, at minimum, a single point of contact for issues relating to the cross-cutting principles of the Programme.

The consultation documentation also makes reference to the **'customer journey'** as the primary focal point for delivery. The focus on the customer is a positive step in terms of equality – *by placing the beneficiary (the 'customer') clearly in the frame when designing, developing, implementing and monitoring the ERDF Programme, the focus remains on the outcome*. In this way, improving equality of opportunity, reducing social, cultural and economic exclusion, and improving access to jobs, training and services can be directly pursued.

The application of the **digital by default** principle is to be commended. The digital age has provided a greater level of access to systems and processes by beneficiaries than ever before and has greatly facilitated the collection of data to support evidence-based programming. However, as evidence presented under Priority Axis 2 has suggested, digital access is not the default for many people with protected characteristics. Research suggests that internet access is lower amongst older, disabled and BAME people[151] and that this lack of access can in turn deter people from undertaking tasks that require use of the internet. There is a risk, therefore, that 'digital by default' does not effectively 'mind the gap' between different sections of the general public in terms of digital literacy. As a consequence *it is recommended that a conscious effort be made to ensure that alternatives to online. Details of this are covered within the recommendations at the end of this report*.

Nonetheless, *the design of appropriate IT systems can support effective implementation*, clear points of contact and provide the necessary infrastructure for delivering monitoring and evaluation that are robust and that can capture the relevant level of detail to ensure that aspirations around equality can be met.

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[151] For example, A recent survey found that 13% of people aged 55 to 64 and 53% of people aged 65+ do not have basic online skills. Ipsos MediaCT (2013): 'Media Literacy: Understanding Digital Capabilities follow-up'. Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/overview/assets/bbcmedialiteracy_20130930.pdf

6.6 Technical Assistance

Certain aspects of the ERDF and ESF Programmes are designed specifically to support their management and implementation. The objective of Technical Assistance (sometimes included as a Priority Axis in itself) is to facilitate robust governance, accountability and partnership engagement to support implementation and management of Fund. Up to half of the ERDF and ESF Technical Assistance budget will be made available to LEPs and local partners to support the delivery of ESIF Funds strategies in 2014-2020 subject to the requirements set out in European regulations.

Technical Assistance therefore needs to be available and accessible to all local partnerships. That said, there is very little evidence to suggest that the application of the Technical Assistance principles within the Programme will have any disproportionate equality effects on people with different protected characteristics. The Primary role of technical assistance is to support partnership working and governance of the Fund. These are discussed below.

6.7 Partnership working

It is acknowledged by DCLG that the successful delivery of ERDF will depend on close working between the Department (as the Managing Authority) and the LEPs who will 'co-ordinate and bring in local partners on a fully inclusive basis'.[152] The Local Sub-Committees (considered further below) are intended to provide the formal basis for this partnership.

DCLG is responsible for managing the Operational Programme by working in partnership with economic and social partners and bodies representing civil society at national, regional and local levels throughout the whole Programme cycle consisting of preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

LEPs are responsible for local coordination through a local ESIF strategy (produced in the first quarter of 2014), reflects the overarching economic goals set out in the area's Strategic Economic Plan. This LEP-organised partnership will be responsible for bringing forward those projects that meet local and national goals.

This partnership arrangement opens up new possibilities to ensure that equality considerations are incorporated in the direct delivery of the ERDF Programme at a local level (as noted below, regarding governance of local sub-committees).

However, without appropriate representation, *there are risks that relevant equality considerations will not be sufficiently incorporated into local Programme design and delivery* (including potential barriers that some groups may face in accessing ERDF monies, as well as some of the potential benefits of the scheme).

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[152] Department for Communities and Local Government (2014): 'European Regional Development Fund. England Operational Programme 2014- to 2020: Consultation Summary'

For example, Programme documentation notes that 'local partners will undertake a role in publicising and communicating opportunities for investment'[153] – this represents a significant *opportunity to maximise local access to fund for a range of different groups, but also represents a risk if resources are stretched, or there is a lack of knowledge about social or demographic challenges* on the part of LEPs or their partners.

The Local Sub-Committee will be effective gatekeepers of ERDF funds at a local level (being involved in the decision-making process at every stage of project selection and approval) and it is therefore essential that a mechanism for ensuring that equality considerations for part of the project approval process. This could be achieved through appropriate selection of members of the Committee, or including with the Committee's articles an objective regarding equality.

Further details of how to ensure that project selection can incorporate equality findings are included within the recommendations at the end of each chapter, as well as in the conclusions to the report.

6.8   Governance

The UK Government has established a Board to oversee the governance of the ESIF Programme and to act as a shadow Programme Monitoring Committee for ERDF (and other EU funds) in England.[154]

The Committee will be chaired by the Managing Authority for the Operational Programmes and the secretariat will be provided by the Managing Authority. It is envisaged that it will meet four times a year. Membership will be drawn from a wide range of partners across the public, private and voluntary sectors.

There are **opportunities** within this structure to maximise equalities benefits through, for example, *the inclusion on the Board of a third sector member with a focus on equalities* (for example, through liaison with the EHRC, or the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO). Local issues could be address through one of the 39 sub-committees set up in LEP areas to co-ordinate delivery of the funds. These committees provide an opportunity to ensure that local issues (including local equality issues) can be taken into account, ensuring that activity is appropriate and targeted.

This structure will be supported by a number of sub-committees,[155] which may include:
- Thematic committees covering the main priorities – which could include equality representatives for those priorities where key equality impacts are identified (such as around SME competitiveness, where Women in Business, or one of the many Ethnic Minority Business Services could play a role);
- Cross-cutting thematic committees for equalities and sustainability – where there is a clear opportunity to work closely with equality stakeholders to maximise the benefits of the Programme for different sections of society ;

[153] Department for Communities and Local Government (2014): 'European Regional Development Fund. Technical Annex 2014 to 2020'
[154] Department for Communities and Local Government (2014): 'European Regional Development Fund. England Operational Programme 2014- to 2020: Consultation Summary'
[155] Department for Communities and Local Government (2014): 'European Regional Development Fund. Technical Annex 2014 to 2020'

■ Functional committees for communications, evaluation and other relevant topics – which could also examine issues around equality, including access to information, services and the funds themselves.

As the exact format for these committees has not yet been determined and it is to be left to local partners to decide[156] *there is a significant opportunity to maximise opportunities to promote equality within Programme governance*.

6.9 Co-ordination with other funds

Co-ordination between ERDF, the wider ESIF Growth Programme and other funding mechanisms is essential for effective delivery that maximises value for money. ERDF is used within match funding arrangements (often being used as match for national and local authority funding sources, and vice versa). This presents an opportunity for ERDF monies to be targeted and utilised to address local issues which could include the achievement of equality objectives where these are deemed to be appropriate.

There remains a risk, however, that ERDF funding becomes targeted not where it is needed, but where match funding is available. This may *shift the emphasis away from the intervention logic chain towards other considerations potentially weakening benefits to equality groups*. As such, co-ordination activity is to be welcomed but should be focussed on delivering the intended benefits of the ERDF, and not simply on securing the largest quantities of funding.

In addition, co-ordination with European Investment Bank funding (though the financial instruments assessed in the previous chapter) provides a range of opportunities to ensure that the opportunities afforded by investment through the Priority Axes can be realised to benefit of all sections of society.

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[156] Department for Communities and Local Government (2014): 'European Regional Development Fund. Technical Annex 2014 to 2020'

7 Conclusions and recommendations

7.1 Overview

This final chapter draws together the findings of the research undertaken as part of this Equality Assessment. It provides:

- a set of summary conclusions by protected characteristic, and by ERDF Priority Axis and across all protected characteristics regarding the 2014-2020 ERDF Operational Programme as a whole; and
- a series of recommendations designed to support the further development and implementation of the Programme and ensure that equality of opportunity is maximised.

7.2 Conclusions

This section provides a summary of potential effects and opportunities on people with each of the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act, as well as on the Priority Axes of the proposed ERDF Programme, and geographically by LEP areas across England – it is designed to summarise where impacts will be felt and by whom.

7.2.1 Overall assessment of effects and opportunities

It is the conclusion of the Equality Assessment team that the ERDF Operational Programmes in England for the 2014-2020 Programming period provides opportunities to support people with protected characteristics. DCLG has produced a Programme for investment in business, infrastructure and sustainability that will result in broadly positive effects for people with protected characteristics over that period and in the long term.

Some of these effects will be felt by all eligible people (including people with protected characteristics), and others will fall disproportionately on certain social and demographic groups. There are also unlikely to be any disproportionate negative effects on any specific groups of people.

However, the benefits of the ERDF Programme to certain groups are not always apparent within the Operational Programme document. In particular, some opportunities and potential effects will not be felt unless measures are taken as part of Programme and project implementation to ensure there is appropriate focus and adequate accessibility. It is likely that, without appropriate focus and targeting of resources at particular social and demographic groups (including the young, the old, disabled people, people from some BAME groups, LGB people, and trans people), there is a serious risk of missed opportunities to maximise equality. This is particularly the case for those characteristics for which there is very little evidence from which to direct ERDF-funded activity, such as gender reassignment and sexual orientation.

The potential positive impacts of the 2014-2020 Programme are most likely to be realised if they are accompanied by effective implementation supported by the recommendations below.

7.2.2 Overall assessment by protected characteristic

The table overleaf summarises the effects identified across chapter five, highlighting the protected characteristics likely to experience them to a disproportionate extent when compared to other sections of the general public.

The impacts and opportunities are listed out by Priority Axis. A tick indicates where an impact or an opportunity has been identified for a particular social or demographic group.

Table 7.1:   Assessment by protected characteristic and Priority Axis

Impacts and opportunities by Priority Axis	Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy and Maternity	Race and Ethnicity	Religion and Belief	Sex	Sexual Orientation
Priority Axis 1: Research and Innovation									
Opportunities to support young graduates to enter the labour market	☑								
Opportunities to promote the inclusion of young people into technology, applied research and manufacturing careers	☑								
Opportunities to promote the inclusion of women into technology, applied research and manufacturing careers	☑							☑	
Priority Axis 2: Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, ICT									
Opportunities to improve digital connectivity for disabled and older entrepreneurs	☑	☑							
Priority Axis 3: Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs									
Opportunities to support SMEs and entrepreneurial activity through financial and enterprise initiatives	☑	☑	☑			☑	☑	☑	☑
Priority Axis 4: Supporting the shift towards a low carbon economy in all sectors									
Opportunities to reduce the number of older and disabled people living in fuel poverty	☑	☑							
Improve the health of children and older people through long term improvements to air quality	☑								

Opportunities to improve access to public transport for younger, older and disabled people	☑	☑							
Supporting employment opportunities for younger people in low carbon sectors	☑								
Priority Axis 5: Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management									
Managing the effects of climate change on children, older people and disabled people	☑	☑							
Priority Axis 6: Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency									
No equality effects identified									
Priority Axis 7: Sustainable transport in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly									
Improving public transport access	☑	☑			☑	☑		☑	
Priority Axis 8: Sustainable transport									
Improving access to employment for young people through sustainable transport	☑								
Opportunities to enhance the employment and social mobility benefits of improved transport networks for disabled people		☑							
Improving access to sustainable transport for parents with young children					☑				
Opportunities to improve access to public transport for older people	☑								
Opportunity: improve access to sustainable travel for BAME communities						☑			
Priority Axis 9: Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty and any discrimination									
Tackling social deprivation using targeted spatial Community Led Local Development (CLLD) support	☑	☑				☑	☑	☑	
Priority Axis 10: Sustainable Urban Development									
Opportunities to tackle deprivation in urban areas through Sustainable Urban Development[157]									

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[157] Priority Axis 10 cuts across the content of Programme and includes Investment Priorities drawn from the other 9 Axes. As such, no specific impacts or opportunities have been directly attributed to this Priority.

7.2.3   Overall assessment by Priority Axis

The extent to which equality effects are attributable to the individual Priority Axes varies.

Priority Axis 1: Strengthening research, technological development and innovation

Overall, Priority Axis 1 presents opportunities for beneficial impacts as part of delivery, on the basis that the recommendations set out below are appropriately applied.

This Priority primarily provides opportunities to draw currently marginalised sections of the population into research and development activity, STEM careers, and innovation and enterprise. There are a number of groups – such as **women** and **young people** – who represent significant pools of untapped potential within these sectors. However, the funds (and other, complimentary resources) will need to be appropriately targeted to ensure that the opportunities within ERDF are open to them.

This Priority Axis also provides opportunities to support entry into the labour market for new graduates – who remain at risk of unemployment following completion of their studies – in these areas.

Priority Axis 2: Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, ICT

There are opportunities for some benefits to arise from the measures contained with Priority Axis 2. Full access to ICT can be a challenge for a number of groups – most notably **older people** and **disabled people** – who may lack the skills, inclination, financial means, or opportunity to make full use of broadband or mobile communications where they own their own business.

There is some potential for beneficial impact within this Priority Axis, therefore, but activities will need to be promoted and communicated effectively to reach these groups. The presumption of online access, and overuse of the 'digital by default' approach could present barriers to full participation of these groups in the ERDF Programme.

Priority Axis 3: Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs

Priority Axis 3, if properly implemented, offers opportunities to a broad range of people with protected characteristics looking to start or grow their own business.

Drawing down appropriate finance, and securing support, advice and guidance on starting a business can be particularly challenging for many sections of the population including: **younger people**, **older people**, **disabled people**, **trans people**, **people from some ethnic minority communities**, **people from some religious communities**, **women** and **LGB people**.

If implemented with these groups in mind (see below) this Priority Axis could contribute to overcoming a range of barriers faced by these groups.

Mott MacDonald

Priority Axis 4: Supporting the shift towards a low carbon economy in all sectors

Priority Axis 4, concerning 'the shift towards a low carbon economy' is less likely than other Priority Axes to result in benefits for equality. However, indirectly and in the long term this shift may result in environmental improvements in areas such as air quality. This may in turn help with a reduction in respiratory-related conditions in certain sections of the population – such as **children** and **older people**.

It is important to be realistic about the potential effects of the priority in terms of equality. Benefits are dependent on a range of external factors and are likely to come long after the 2014-2020 ERDF Programme has finished delivery.

Priority Axis 5: Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management

Priority Axis 5 has some potential to manage long term risks associated with environmental change. Here, mitigating the effects of and adapting to climate change may support a reduction in the impacts of the effects of climate change on groups least able to deal with them – such as **children**, **older people** and **disabled people**.

As with Priority Axis 4 above, this Priority Axis has some potential to provide opportunities for long term benefits in terms of equality. However in this case, as above, this Priority is focussed on system wide changes that may provide benefits to the whole population.

Priority Axis 6: Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency

No impacts or opportunities were identified within Priority Axis 6 that are directly relevant to equality. This does not mean that people with protected characteristics will not benefit from activities within this Priority Axis, merely that there is no evidence to suggest that it will lead to disproportionate effects or specific opportunities for equality groups.

Priority Axis 7: Sustainable transport in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and Priority Axis 8: Sustainable transport

Priority Axis 7 and 8 target an aspect of transport infrastructure that has the potential to provide benefits to a number of different social and demographic groups. Sustainable transport entails support for non-motorised and public transport modes (including walking, cycling and bus use), which are used disproportionately by **younger people**, **older people**, **people from ethnic minority communities**, **women** and **families with young children**.

Targeted activity in this area is likely to result in a number of positive effects for these groups – improving access to employment, skills, social and cultural activity for these groups. However, the level of investment in this Priority is relatively small and as such

Priority Axis 9: Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty and any discrimination

Priority Axis 9 has the potential to impact a number of protected characteristic groups (including young people, older people, disabled people, and people from some BAME groups) through actions focused on improving multiple deprivation, specifically access to employment. These groups tend to face a number of barriers to employment, which are heightened by deprivation. These barriers will be addressed through the promotion of entrepreneurship, self-employment, tailored business support, and investment to improve access between deprived neighbourhoods with centres of employment growth.

However, as with certain other priorities within the Programme (namely Priorities 7 and 8), the level of investment is comparatively small and as such overall effects are likely to be limited.

Priority Axis 10: Sustainable Urban Development

There are opportunities to promote equality through the dedicated Programme strands focussing on Sustainable Urban Development. With higher density urban populations comes greater numbers and proportions of people with protected characteristics who might be disproportionately or differently affected by the implementation of the ERDF Programme. Targeted support in these areas has the potential to deliver significant gains in terms of enhancing equality of opportunity by addressing structural barriers (such as transport, infrastructure and business support) to access, inclusion and participation.

However, measures must be put in place to deliver the level playing field required to achieve the equality outcomes that are sought.

7.2.4   Consideration of equality in the development of the ERDF Programme

Overall, the 'Equal Opportunities' cross-cutting principle has been reasonably well integrated into the wider ERDF Operational Programme document. There is some evidence of gaps and a number of Priority Axes make no substantive mention of issues relating to equality beyond outline reference to the cross-cutting principle. This suggests a lack of integration in practice. This is partially explained by a lack of overlap between the content of the Programme document and the equality agenda, but in some cases the need to consider equality appears to be more of an additional consideration than a fundamental principle of Programme design.

To understand the impact of the 'Equal Opportunities' cross-cutting principle, DCLG will need to assess in a practical and measurable way, the extent to which the ERDF Programme is successful in advancing the equality of opportunity for the groups protected by the Equality Act, tackling discrimination against them, and fostering cohesion between them. This is considered within the recommendations below.

7.2.5 Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

The Programme presents a number of opportunities to secure benefits for equality groups. However, in the vast majority of cases, the realisation of these benefits is reliant to a great extent on the way in which they are delivered.

Careful consideration needs to be given to the requirements of people with different protected characteristics when delivering the actions under each Priority Axis. In many cases benefits are wholly dependent on a process of appropriate targeting through information, communication and engagement with specific sections of local communities. In addition, ensuring that the project application processes are appropriately designed to maximise accessibility – particularly with regards to disseminating awareness of opportunities, design of forms and guidance, and availability of support from national and local partners – will be essential in removing potential barriers to access.

Monitoring and evaluation, and the collection of project data provides a good point of access to understanding where individual projects, as well as the Priority Axes and the ERDF Programme as a whole, are having an impact on equality of opportunity. The recommendations below consider monitoring and evaluation procedures required to maximise the value of this aspect of the Programme.

7.2.6 Contribution to national strategic equality goals

The Programme is reasonably well-positioned to contribute to the achievement of European and UK equality ambitions. It presents a number of opportunities to support the general aim of the PSED to promote equality of opportunity between different sections of society – most notably those concerning financial and enterprise support for SME's, and ICT and transport infrastructure improvements.

While some of the Priority Axes will contribute very little to the achievement of equality ambitions in England, this is not considered to be an issue. The programme is not specifically targeted in this way – and it falls on the ERDF team to maximise the benefits to different sections of society through design and delivery, whilst preventing unnecessary barriers to accessing the fund.

The Programme also presents opportunities to contribute to the achievement of the Europe 2020 goals by supporting the European platform against poverty. This is designed to ensure economic, social and territorial cohesion, guarantee respect for the fundamental rights of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, and enabling them to live in dignity and take an active part in society.

Through this Equality Assessment, the stakeholder re- engagement that has been undertaken through the consultation process and the development of the equality cross-cutting principle, *there is evidence that equality has been considered and integrated into the design and development of the draft ERDF Programme for 2014-2020*.

7.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the EIA, the following recommendations have been made for the implementation of the Programme:

- To deliver tailored provision of actions for protected characteristic groups
- To support Programme delivery organisations to draw on the untapped potential of particular groups
- To develop a communication strategy that includes guidance on equality
- To include specific equality objectives and indicators in the monitoring and evaluation strategy, and ensure progress against these is monitored regularly
- To provide Programme delivery organisations with the opportunity to undertake equality training provision.

A description of each recommendation and guidance is proved below:

To deliver tailored provision of actions for protected characteristic groups

The Programme offers a range of opportunities to positively impact protected characteristic groups. In order for these opportunities to be fulfilled, the Programme needs to recognise the need for a range of approaches to be used to ensure the Programme is accessible for all people with protected characteristics, in the further development of the Programme, through the implementation of tailored actions.

Some Priority Axes are likely to involve a greater level of engagement with protected characteristic groups than the other Priorities, and therefore Programme delivery organisations will need to be aware of the barriers that these groups may face to engaging with the Programme. As a result, there are a number of actions that can be implemented.

A key area where this can occur is the delivery of business finance and support (Priority Axis 3). Young people, older people, disabled people and BAME groups often face challenges related to self-employment, access to finance and skills for enterprise. The provision of business support and finance can help address these challenges; this needs to be done in a way that recognises the diversity of the different groups, their needs and aspirations. For example consideration is required to ensure that Muslim businesses are able to able to access business finance e.g. finance which is compliant with Sharia Law. Although entrepreneurship is an important way of reducing youth unemployment, young people often lack the financial capital and experience to start their own businesses. By targeting these groups through the provision of activities that meets their needs (e.g. mentoring, business skills and structured capital support), the Programme can help address these barriers. By not addressing these barriers, the Programme may actually serve to enforce them, and result in inequality of impacts.

There is a tendency to look at equality groups in isolation to each other; however it will be important for the Programme to take account of instances where protected characteristics intercept. The need to consider groups was multiple identities, was also highlighted by some stakeholders. For example young disabled people, women from certain faith groups and older people from certain ethnic groups. As a result there is not a 'one-size fits all approach' that can be delivered, in order to respond to the needs of individuals with multiple protected characteristics may require the delivery of a variety of approaches.

Further to this, some LEP stakeholders expressed concern that the separation of ESF and ERDF has result in greater targeting of ESF, rather than ERDF, on equality issues, for example, the long term unemployed, BAME, lone parents and NEETs. As a result, LEP stakeholders urged for further integration between ERDF, ESF and EARFRD to maximise benefits and provided tailored support. It was suggested that this could be best achieved through place based solutions.

To support Programme delivery organisations to draw on the untapped potential of particular groups

By building on the previous recommendation, there are also a number of areas where the Programme could support the untapped potential in certain groups which are under-engaged and whose skills are under-utilised. These should be highlighted to Programme delivery organisations. For Priority Axis 3 older people can be a source of untapped potential with regard to entrepreneurship, they tend to leave the labour market due to redundancy or retirement from long-held positions, therefore they often have high levels of technical skills and access to finance. However, for older people a lack of entrepreneurship specific skills often serve as a barrier to enterprise; the actions of Priority Axis 3 can help address this through targeted supported aimed at improving business skills. Priority Axis 1 provides opportunities for currently marginalised groups in research and development activity, STEM careers, and innovation and enterprise. In particular, women and young people have been highlighted as sources of untapped potential due to their current underrepresentation in these areas.

To access this potential, the Programme will need to be appropriately targeted to ensure that the opportunities within ERDF are open to them.

The development of a communication strategy which incorporates equality

In order for all groups to have opportunity to benefit from the Programme, the ease with which they can access the actions that the Programme delivers needs to be considered. For this to occur, the Programme should ensure that a communication strategy that incorporates equality is implemented. The strategy should include guidance on the information format and dissemination.

Information on Programme activities needs to be accessible to all. An example of the importance of this can be illustrated through Priority Axis 6. This Priority may result in changes in transport provision. As those from protected characteristic groups (younger people, older people, women, disabled people and BAME groups) are more likely to use these services, it is important that they are made aware of any changes to how they are accessed.

In order for this to be achieved, information should be available in different languages and formats (e.g. Braille, British Sign Language or as Easy Read). Research has found that BAME entrepreneurs are less likely to be aware of the business support activities that are available to them. This is more likely to be the case for BAME groups that do not speak English as a first language.

The mechanisms need to be in place prior to the commencement of Programme activities to produce materials in different languages and formats. Being able to provide information in a timely manner illustrates that the Programme delivery organisations are inclusive and understand the needs of different groups.

Protected characteristic groups also face barriers when trying to access information. It is important that they are addressed so that people with protected characteristics are able to equally benefit from the ERDF investment in activities particularly in relation to strengthening technological development and innovation, improving access to ICT, supporting SMEs and the promotion of sustainable transport. Priority Axis 2 focuses on enhancing access to, and use and quality of, ICT. Older people are less likely to have access to the internet and less likely to possess the skills to use it effectively. How information about this Priority and its actions are delivered need to be considered, so that the groups that are already disadvantaged with regard to access are not further alienated from its benefits.

For material to be accessible, it is recommended that a range of medias are used in order to reach a wide audience. Stakeholders suggested the use of modern technology such as social media and online media. However, Programme delivery organisations should be discouraged from placing too much emphasis on the internet as a tool for outreach activity, although it can be a valuable tool – particularly for younger groups - it is not accessible to all.

Often organisations that represent and deliver targeted services to protected characteristic groups can act as gatekeepers for Programme delivery organisations to access those that are underrepresented. By working with these organisations, it will increase the likelihood of individual 'buy-in' to the services offered, increase trust, and promote a more inclusive delivery offer as these organisations will be able to guide the delivery of the Programme on the most effective ways of engagement.

Further to this, LEP stakeholders suggested that targeted promotion of ERDF projects by the LEPs and their partners across local areas would result in improved access for all social and demographic groups as projects come forward.

In addition, it is also important that the opportunities to access funds from the Programme are effectively communicated to small organisations and social enterprises. Stakeholders identified the risk of ERDF funds not reaching some hard to reach social groups (e.g. women and disabled people as well as carers, and offenders) meaning that effective representation of such groups would be necessary. In particular, social enterprises serving and supporting these groups tend to be small and lack resources necessary to apply for EU funded projects. There are various ways this could be overcome. For example, by helping

smaller social groups apply as part of a larger application with an umbrella organisation taking on the administrative responsibilities.

Stakeholders from around the country repeatedly emphasised the need for further guidance on bidding for ERDF funding and running an ERDF project, particularly for organisations representing groups who typically found accessing funds challenging. One LEP stakeholder suggested that 'production of guidance and a timetable that makes sense on the ground would be a real help'. Many noted a lack of sufficient guidance from central government for project sponsors, expressing concern that this would result in a missed opportunity to use ERDF to overcome some barriers of self-employment, employment and training. Provision of advice and support could also help uptake of ERDF opportunities by under-represented groups.

To include specific equality objectives and indicators in the monitoring and evaluation strategy, and ensure progress against these is monitored regularly.

By requiring projects to collect equality data as part of the monitoring and evaluation process, it is more likely that they will put in place the mechanisms to engage these groups and deliver services in an appropriate way. In order for this to be a successful process, DCLG will first need to compile a clear set of guidelines and performance indicators. These should be informed by the development of a logic model and evaluation framework. The Programme delivery organisations should also be provided with guidance about how the objectives can be achieved.

During consultation stakeholders stressed the importance of building in measurement and evaluation from the outset to allow project teams to fully consider the wider effects and overall quality of their projects. The development of specific monitoring frameworks to capture participation by specific groups (such as LGB and trans people) was also recommended to aid understanding of the challenges facing these communities. Furthermore, it was noted that monitoring the demographics that ERDF-funded organisations work with is an important first step in understanding and mitigating negative impacts. One LEP stakeholder noted that LEPs and their partners will likely expect to have meaningful monitoring data on this from all project sponsors.

To enhance this monitoring process, DCLG should also provide Programme delivery organisations with a clear set of indicators for measuring delivery against equality objectives through specific actions. This data will help inform the future delivery of the Programme and may serve to highlight any additional challenges faced by particular groups. The data may also help to establish certain groups that, despite tailored actions, still face barriers.

By monitoring equality data across the Programme at regular intervals, the Programme operational leads will be able to proactively identify any groups that are disproportionately not benefiting from the Programme funds and the actions that it delivers. As a result further mitigating actions can be implemented to ensure that the Programme is benefiting all people with protected characteristics within the target client group.

To provide Programme delivery organisations with the opportunity to undertake equality training provision

In order for an inclusive Programme to be delivered, the organisations that are engaging with service users need to be equipped with the appropriate skills and knowledge, and be able to deal with any equality related issues in a sensitive manner in order to prevent the disengagement of certain groups.

There are a number of areas across the Programme where the implementation of training could make a significant impact. Areas of training could focus on how to communicate Programme activities, how the needs of different groups differ, addressing discrimination and promoting cultural awareness. This assessment recommends a Programme-suite of equality training and materials are developed and made available to all Programme delivery organisations, resulting in an increased likelihood of the Programme opportunities being achieved. In addition to this, one LEP stakeholder suggested the involvement of equality and diversity champions at the national and local level. Alongside the provision of technical assistant to support an appropriate compliant communications strategy. This could be incorporated as part of the delivery of training and support to Programme delivery organisations.

7.4   Summary

Although the 2014-2020 ERDF Operational Programme for England does not always explicitly target specific protected characteristic groups, it does present a vast number of opportunities for DCLG to reduce the disadvantages faced by people from those sections of society. The recommendations presented will help the DCLG achieve these and assist delivery to organisations in the provision of an inclusive and beneficial Programme.

Appendices

Appendix A.   Stakeholder Engagement

A.1   Equality Assessment Stakeholder Engagement Questionnaire

Department for Communities and Local Government
2014-2020 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
Ex-ante Evaluation
Equality Assessment Stakeholder Engagement

Please complete this form in conjunction with the ERDF Programme Consultation Document (also provided) and be as specific as possible in your responses.

Name:	
Organisation:	
Role	

Q1. What do you think the potential positive or negative effects of the proposed ERDF Operational Programme are likely to be on...
- the group or groups that you work with or represent?
- other social groups (older or younger people, disabled people, LGBT people, from ethnic minority communities, people from particular regions communities, women or men?

Q2. How might any negative effects be mitigated for members of those groups?
- What measures could be implemented to mitigate any negative effects?

Q3. Are there further opportunities to enhance equality of opportunity through the programme?
- How could this be achieved?

Q4. Are there any ways in which access to the ERDF Programme might be improved for members of particular groups?

Q5. Do you have any other comments regarding the ERDF Programme?

A.2 Contact and responses

The above questionnaire was sent out to all 39 LEPS, approximately 300 local area authorities, and 37 equality groups. Responses were received from the following representatives:

- Association of Colleges
- Cheshire and Warrington Enterprise Partnership
- Coast to Capital LEP
- Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership and Cornwall Council
- Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership x 2
- Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership
- Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership
- Liverpool City Region LEP
- National LGB&T Partnership
- NCVO European Funding Network
- Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership
- University of Essex