



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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# Regional Investment in Wales after Brexit

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Securing Wales' Future

# Questions

# 1 Background

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**We have experience of nearly 20 years of EU funding in Wales: delivered in close collaboration between the Welsh Government, the European Commission, and our partners across the whole of Wales.**

The legacy of those partnerships is a stronger and more collaborative Wales. We now have the opportunity to use and build on those partnerships to help design a new approach to regional investment outside of the EU.

Wales continues to face structural weaknesses and additional needs compared to the rest of the UK, but there are also a range of opportunities and strengths to build on.

With the financial outlook for investment in Wales continuing to be a challenge, and remaining uncertain in the future, we must develop an approach which focusses carefully on the outcomes

we want to deliver in order to address those needs and take advantage of those opportunities.

We have some time to run on our current EU funding programmes, but now is the time to discuss the future.

The publication of our policy paper [Regional Investment in Wales after Brexit](#) represents the first step in this dialogue and we want to hear your views on what will work best for Wales' future.

The paper builds on an emerging consensus across Wales of the need for a new 'made-in-Wales' approach that will bring together different policies,

programmes and investments in pursuit of enhanced regional development outcomes and the greatest possible impact.

It provides an initial outline of a new approach to future regional development and Investment, underpinned by investment principles that are consistent with the goals of the Welsh Government's new [Prosperity for All](#) strategy, the direction set out in our Economic Action Plan, and within the framework of the [Wellbeing of Future Generations Act \(2015\)](#).

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*“The decades of Wales’ partnership with the European Union (EU) will leave a legacy on which we will build our economic future. The Welsh Government is best placed to lead this process and we are committed to working with our partners in Wales and beyond to design the most effective approach.”*

**Carwyn Jones AM**

First Minister of Wales

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## 2 Principles

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**The investment principles set out in the paper, which commit us to a more integrated and collaborative approach to future investment, include:**

- Strengthening partnership working through strategic, strong and inclusive partnerships
- Focussing on the long-term via a multi-annual programming approach, in order to provide investor confidence
- Mixing complementary national, regional and local investment approaches built around functional economic regions
- A greater role for inclusive regional partnerships in planning and decision-making, facilitated by an associated alignment of resources
- Greater integration of different policy areas focussing on people and places, bringing together different funding sources and funding models
- Strengthening the focus on outcomes, but ensuring they encompass measures around inequality, wellbeing, inclusion and environmental sustainability
- Strengthening monitoring and evaluation, but simplifying evidence requirements and ensuring proportionality
- Simplifying rules and criteria, whilst ensuring fair treatment and a level playing field for all
- Taking greater risks to encourage innovation and attract private sector investment; and
- Promoting cross-border collaboration across Wales, the UK, the EU and beyond

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*“We want to know what our partners think and we will continue that conversation in the period ahead... We must think now, together, about the kind of Wales we want to build in the future and how best to achieve it.”*

**Mark Drakeford AM**  
Cabinet Secretary for Finance

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## 3 Questions

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The following questions are intended to stimulate thinking and inform possible responses to the paper. We welcome views on all aspects of the paper and are equally keen to learn of any other elements which you feel need to be included / prioritised.

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### 1. What are your views on the overall approach set out in the paper?

You may want to consider what has worked well in current and previous programmes, and what are the greatest opportunities and challenges for a future regional investment approach in Wales.

### 2. What are your views on the principles identified in the paper?

You may want to consider whether any are missing, which are most important to your area of work / business / community, and whether there are any specific challenges or issues associated with delivering against those principles that need to be considered.

### 3. What are your views on the core priorities or objectives for investment that should be set by the Welsh Government?

You may want to consider how national priorities and objectives might be set to ensure that there is sufficient flexibility for locally- and regionally-tailored solutions to be generated. You might also want to identify any areas of investment that should not be supported or which might be lower priority for investment.

### 4. In delivering a new approach to regional investment what do you think the most appropriate roles and responsibilities are for: (a) the Welsh Government; (b) regional partnerships; and (c) local partnerships?

In terms of the Welsh Government's role, you may want to consider the scope of oversight and direct delivery you would expect from the Welsh Government in both national investments and the approaches adopted to deliver at a regional and local level. At a regional and local level you may want to comment on the right partnership models to plan and deliver regional and local investments and the links between them and with the Welsh Government. You may also have ideas on how different sectors and geographical areas can be fully represented in partnerships, including recognising different challenges faced by rural, urban, and coastal areas.

## **5. What are your ideas about ensuring the right mix of national (all-Wales), regional (e.g. North Wales), and local (e.g. community-led) investments?**

You might want to consider how investments can be better coordinated and planned at different levels and how links can be strengthened between those different levels. You may have experience of where this has worked well or not worked so well in different policy areas that could provide valuable lessons.

## **6. What are your views on the benefits that should be retained from our delivery of those programmes currently funded by the EU?**

The paper sets out a number of benefits the Welsh Government proposes to retain (e.g. partnership approach, multi-annual programming, monitoring and evaluation, etc.). There may also be areas not covered in the paper that could be highlighted.

## **7. What opportunities are there for us to do things differently and with greater impact?**

The paper sets out some areas in which EU rules have constrained regional investment or added complexity. It identifies some opportunities to do things differently (e.g. remove complexity, remove geographic inflexibilities, combine funding streams, etc.). There may also be areas not covered in the paper that could be highlighted.

## **8. What ideas do you have which may help create an entirely new or innovative approach to regional investment?**

The paper sets out some initial thoughts, built on discussions to date, but this question provides the opportunity for entirely new ideas to be put forward to redesign delivery models, investment approaches, or priorities for investment; including considering how an appropriate attitude for risk can be promoted.

## **9. What EU programmes should Wales seek to retain access to and how?**

Welsh organisations currently participate in a range of EU programmes and networks, such as Horizon 2020 for research, ERASMUS+ for educational exchange, Creative Europe for the creative industries sector, Connecting Europe for infrastructure, LIFE for environmental projects, etc. Wales also participates in a number of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) programmes, including a specific cross-border programme with Ireland and engagement in the Atlantic Area and North-West Europe. You may want to consider relative priorities of common interest, how the international co-operation agenda can most effectively be pursued and whether alternative arrangements could be put in place across the UK or in Wales.

## 10. How would you like to be engaged in our development and delivery of a future regional investment model for Wales?

We are beginning a process of engagement and 'co-design' and this question provides an opportunity to identify potential mechanisms by which you might be engaged meaningfully in that process. We particularly welcome views from partners and stakeholders on how we might engage a full range of different partners and increase the involvement of the private sector and communities from the outset.

## 4 How to respond

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**We welcome views in these areas, and any other views you may have which are not covered by the questions, by 23 March 2018.**

You can send your responses:

**By e-mail:** [RegionalinvestmentafterBrexit@gov.wales](mailto:RegionalinvestmentafterBrexit@gov.wales)

**By Post:** Planning and Strategy Division  
Welsh European Funding Office  
Welsh Government  
Rhydycar  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF48 1UZ

**Responses to these questions may be made public – via the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to be kept confidential, please confirm in writing when submitting your response. Alternatively, if you are happy for your response to be published, but would prefer for it to be anonymised, please indicate this in your response.**

*"I hope partners across Wales will join with us to determine what approaches will work best for our country's future."*

**Carwyn Jones AM**  
First Minister of Wales