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“Clusters and Social Inclusion”

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Social and economic inclusion is now a central plank of UK and Scottish government policy. Equally, it is also a mainstream goal for economic development agency, Scottish Enterprise, and one to which practitioners are being urged to contribute a sustained, coherent and effective commitment. Inclusion issues have therefore moved up the economic agenda.

At the same time, a "cluster approach" to economic development suggests that a skilled and flexible workforce is a key factor condition of industrial competitiveness and underpins successful clustering. **The wellbeing of the workforce** therefore has emerged as a common goal for both sets of practitioners.

Are there ways in which practitioners working in these areas could gain from each other's experience? Could activities sometimes be integrated to mutual advantage? Would a "cluster analysis" of social inclusion issues help identify synergies and gaps?

This paper is intended as a starting point for discussing such possibilities.

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