

Engaging with Europe: **The West Midlands Regional European Strategy**



Contents

Foreword	03
Introduction	04
Choosing Key Priorities	06

Key Priorities	
• Engaging with the Single Market	08
• Engaging with Europe's Research and Innovation Agenda	10
• Tackling Climate Change and Ensuring Environmental Protection	12
• The Social Cohesion Dimension	14

Turning Aspirations to Reality	16
Conclusions	18
Jargon Buster	20
Useful Contacts	22

Foreword

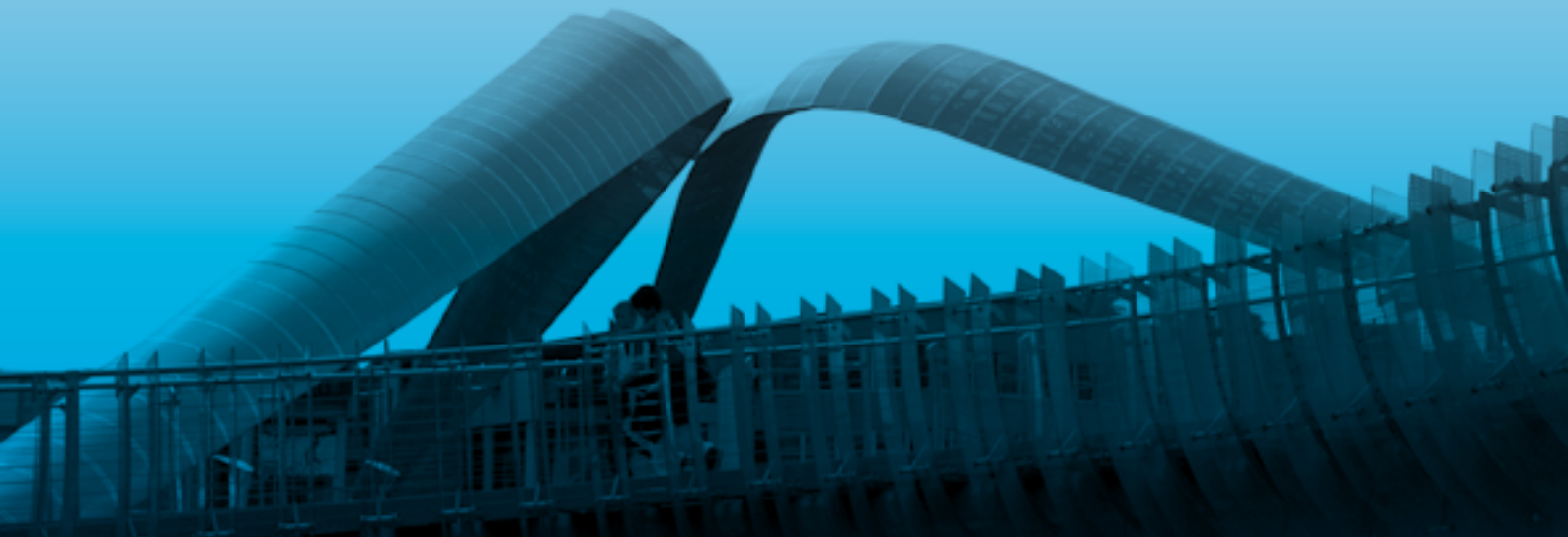
The European Union (EU) is a single market of almost 500 million people. It brings together 27 countries and 268 regions. It offers huge opportunities for our organisations, communities and citizens. This strategy sets out how the West Midlands region – its 5.3 million people representing just over 1 per cent of the EU population – intends to increase its engagement with European activity and maximise the benefits which will flow to us.

The strategy focuses on four priorities: business, research and development, the environment and social cohesion. In each of these areas it sets out the policy, funding and people issues and lays down a limited number of priorities for action.

The document has been developed and amended by partners from across the Region. It charts a course for the Region to follow over the next five years. It is a practical document intended to stimulate dialogue and promote activity. To back this up, the partners have established EU Connects as a new unit able to advise on EU funding programmes and help organisations, both large and small, to apply for them. This will complement the role of the West Midlands in Europe office which gives the Region both a high profile presence in Brussels and an entry point into EU institutions.

There are other delivery arms as well and, for the first time, we have a strategy which brings these together into a coherent, practical and focused way - one which will best enable the West Midlands to maximise its achievements. As the Chair of the European Strategy Board I shall endeavour to ensure that this strategy makes a real impact. I am sure you will help too.

Sir Albert Bore
Chair of the European Strategy Board
June 2008



Why is Europe important to the West Midlands?

What should be the main priorities for action by regional partners over the next five years?

How should we work in Brussels to maximise the influence and impact of the West Midlands?

This short document seeks to answer these questions and to set out clearly what the Region intends to achieve within Europe. Already, companies, colleges and communities across the Region are involved and engaged with European activity. We recognise that they will wish on occasions to continue to undertake their own European activity that meets their interests and needs.

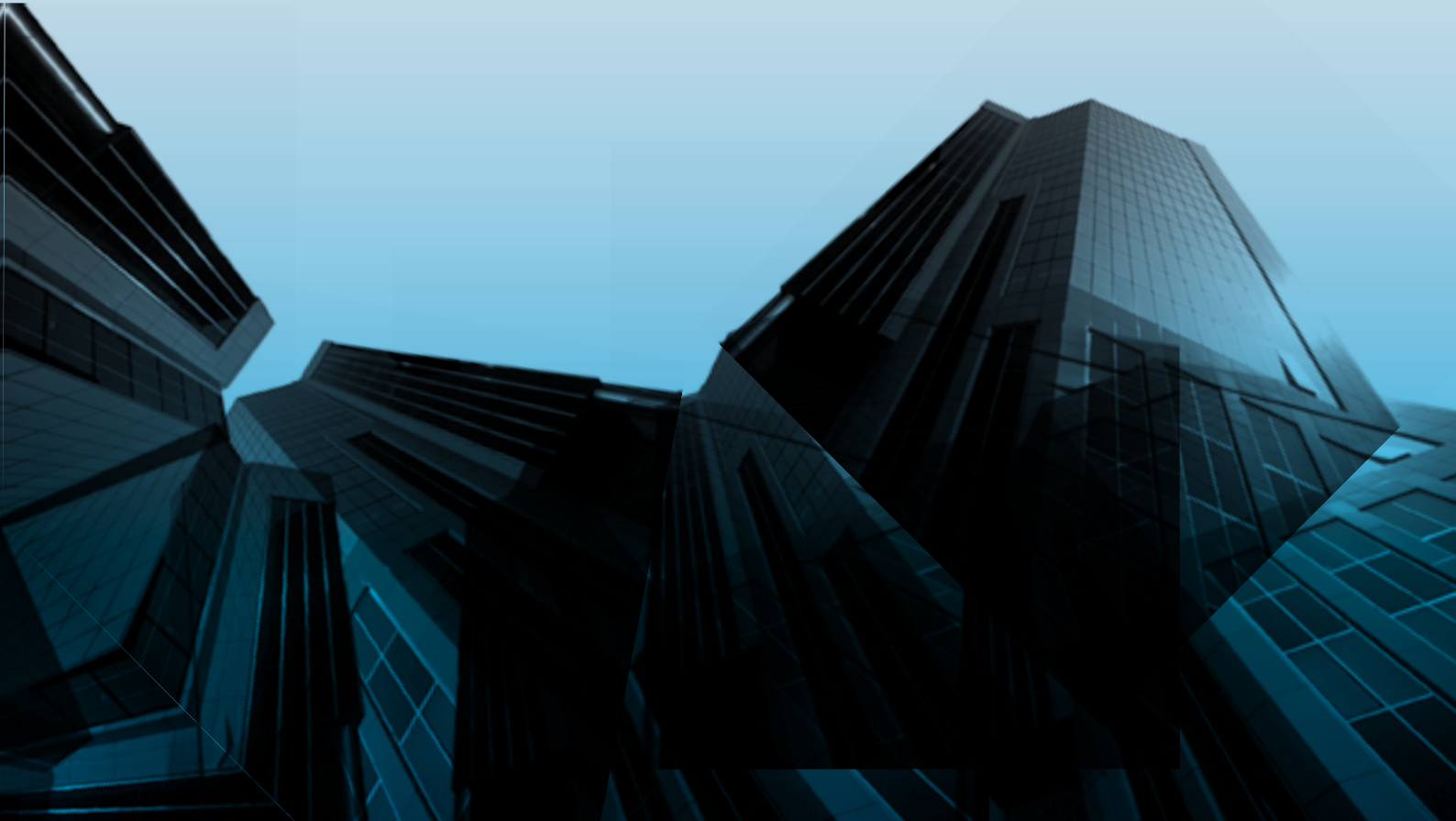
This strategy is not designed to stand in their way. Rather, this report is designed to build on and complement that work and to outline the European activity we can do together. It focuses on the Region's engagement with Europe, what our priorities should be and how we intend to make a success of them.

Introduction

Over the past two decades most of the day-to-day European activity undertaken within the West Midlands has focused on the use of EU Structural Funds, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). Many parts of the Region have benefited greatly from resources made available under ERDF while all parts of the West Midlands have been eligible for ESF resources. The retention of these Funds for 2007-2013, albeit on a reduced scale, means that continued attention will need to be given to the most effective use of these funds in the forthcoming period.


However, this strategy looks beyond Structural Funds and makes the case for a more comprehensive approach to European working. It has been drafted at a key moment in the EU's development, as Europe strives to fulfil its Lisbon strategy¹ for growth and jobs and to adapt to the challenges posed by climate change and the wider impact of globalisation. During 2008-2009 the EU will conduct a root-and-branch review of its budget to suggest how it can be best aligned with the Union's policy priorities. These are among the matters that form the background and context to this strategy.

¹The objective of the Lisbon Strategy is 'to deliver stronger, lasting growth and create more and better jobs'. The original goals emerged from the Lisbon European Council summit of March 2000, and the target date for achieving them was set at 2010. This involves substantial modernisation of Europe's education and training systems to be carried out by states and taken forward on a European level through cooperation, sharing of experiences and the setting of common goals.



Choosing Key Priorities

This document has selected a small number of key priorities for our European activity. These link the main themes of the contemporary European agenda with the core objectives of the Region, identified above all in the West Midlands Economic Strategy (WMES). The four priorities are:



1. To maximise the opportunities of the Single Market. We want the Region - its businesses, institutions and citizens - to be both comfortable and confident when operating within it and beyond

2. To become a more successful player within the innovation, research and development arena across Europe

3. To respond to the challenges of climate change and environmental protection. There is a broad consensus that this needs to be undertaken at a European level

4. To engage with the social cohesion dimensions of Europe

To progress in these four areas the Region needs to be well-connected both in EU institutions in Brussels and more generally networked across the EU as a whole.

This will enable the Region to engage fully in Brussels, to maximise the range of EU funding opportunities that are available, and to learn good practice by linking with innovative cities and regions across the EU.

The following section outlines the main thinking for each priority. We have sought to organise these around three elements: policy, programmes and people, the 'three Ps', linking these explicitly to key regional objectives.

Engaging with the Single Market

Context

The WMES aims “to increase the value of international trade carried out by West Midlands businesses, expand the number of businesses competing in overseas markets and generate a stronger flow of inward investment into the Region.”² The Single Market is effectively our internal market. It is a central element of the Region’s trade and business flows, with just eight EU countries accounting for 54.5 per cent of UK exports. Full and effective engagement with it has to be a central task of this strategy.

Policy

Policy development and legislation on different aspects of the European economy is occurring all the time. Key areas of importance to the Region will be better regulation models including changes in state aid and services of general interest, new policies on procurement both to foster innovation and to develop a more sustainable economy, more emphasis on sustainable production and consumption and a sustainable industrial policy within the EU³.

Programmes

There are a range of European programmes which can help to promote this activity. Most importantly, the ERDF and ESF programmes for

the period 2007-2013 have a broad range of initiatives designed to boost the Single Market. Interregional Co-operation programmes (“INTERREG”) have significant potential, particularly in their innovation strands. Given the origin of the West Midlands immigrant communities, the specific ‘Asia Invest’ programme should be an opportunity for the West Midlands to enhance trade activity beyond the EU boundaries working on trilateral projects with at least one other EU Member State and one Asian country. The Leonardo da Vinci programme aims to improve the provision of work-based learning through partnership with other EU partners. Along with other elements of the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013 it offers opportunities to support and import new skills.

People

Businesses need to feel comfortable and confident to operate effectively within the Single Market. Business networks and missions within mainland Europe can help develop partnership and networking opportunities

Key Priorities

contributing to increased export and learning activities. The EU Leonardo programme has elements which can help professional staff become more conversant with business practices in other Member States and make new links for companies.

Actions

This priority will use EU and other programmes:

- To boost exports to other EU member states. In particular, it will focus on boosting the Region's European trade in relation to the business clusters identified in the WMES
- To promote the West Midlands as a Region for inward investment attracting new companies from mainland Europe, especially small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in high growth sectors
- To enhance the skills of the workforce and their knowledge of the Single Market
- To work with EU business partners for joint co-operation in Third country markets beyond Europe.

Organisation

These initiatives will be led by UK Trade and Investment. They will be delivered through the Confederation of West Midlands Chambers of Commerce. This activity will be supported by the appointment of a 'Single Market Supremo' for the Region.

Case Study

DISTRICT (Developing Industrial Strategies Through Innovative Clusters and Technologies) is a three year project under the EU INTERREG 3C programme, helping Europe's regions form partnerships to work together on common projects focused on the knowledge economy and technological innovation. Four different European Regions - Tuscany in Italy, West Midlands, Sachsen in Germany and Västra Götaland from Sweden have been involved in the project.

DISTRICT has focussed on three thematic areas:

- Connecting cluster and business networks to innovation, within the global context
- SMEs innovation projects, in collaboration with universities and research centres
- Innovation in financial engineering, seed venture capital, start-ups and spin-offs.

This work has enabled West Midlands organisations to try out new ideas and test new products with European partners; made new connections; and enabled further project work to be developed.

² *Connecting to Success. West Midlands Economic Strategy. (November 2007) p.46.*

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/environment/sip.pdf>

Engaging with Europe's Research and Innovation Agenda

Context

The WMES sets the objective "to take the West Midlands to the forefront of intellectual property development and...to increase the commercialisation of opportunities generated by research institutions and businesses in the West Midlands"⁴. That is why the EU's 7th Framework Programme is so important. Yet historically, the West Midlands has been a poor performer in these programmes in comparison to other parts of the UK, something that has implications for the Region's future prosperity.

Policy

Much policy development in the area of Research and Innovation is handled by Member State governments or national scientific and technical agencies. Nevertheless, there are research issues with an important regional dimension, or where this dimension has been insufficiently developed, while the promotion of Science Cities is attracting interest across Europe.

Programmes

The key EU funding stream for Research and Innovation is the 7th Framework Programme (FP7). Its budget is huge: at more than €50 billion between 2007-2013 it represents the third largest element of EU expenditure. Its resources are bid for competitively, so a higher success rate for the Region will be a signal that the West Midlands is becoming more competitive. Many of the core priorities of FP7 fit with the focus of the Region's Innovation and Technology Council and the Birmingham Science City initiative. This reinforces the case for concentrating the major regional effort into this Programme.

Alongside the 7th Framework Programme, the EU is also running a number of smaller initiatives which have an innovative focus and are particularly valuable for SMEs. The most significant of these is the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme, which incorporates funding opportunities for the deployment of existing energy and ICT technologies. Funds will also be available through the ERDF programme under the priority "Promoting Innovation and Research and Development".

People

One of the most significant elements of FP7 is its labour mobility strand – known as Marie Curie. This is designed to promote the mobility of researchers and young career professionals. With funding approaching €5 billion, Marie Curie represents a real opportunity to attract top quality research talent to the West Midlands.

Actions

- To promote submissions to the ten policy themes in FP7 with particular reference to regional priorities
- To promote submissions to Marie Curie under FP7
- To support applications to the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme
- To utilise the potential of the Innovation and Knowledge Priority of the RCE programme to promote trans-national exchanges, pilot projects and strengthen the Birmingham Science City initiative.

Organisation

Advantage West Midlands has currently devoted significant staff and financial resources to the promotion of research and innovation. The Higher Education Association is also closely engaged in this area. The two bodies will operate in partnership to take this work forward.

Case Study

TRIFID - Training and Research In the Fundamentals of Inflammatory Disease FP6 Marie Curie Early Stage Training.

TRIFID is a Marie Curie Early Stage Training project coordinated by University of Birmingham. Over a four year period TRIFID will recruit six students for a 36 month training project leading to a PhD. TRIFID will also offer three 12 month training studentships in specific aspects of inflammation biology, aligned to one of the five research projects. TRIFID is based at Birmingham University, a centre of excellence for clinical inflammation research. For the three year studentships TRIFID also includes a collaborative exchange with a leading centre in Europe whose model systems and research methodologies complement and extend those available at Birmingham. In this way TRIFID will give multidisciplinary training in a range of state of the art skills that could not be provided by one centre alone. Students will receive a salary and will also be provided with funds to cover relocation to the UK and also for travel to the European partner laboratory during the exchange visit.

⁴ *West Midlands Economic Strategy p.49*

Tackling Climate Change and Ensuring Environmental Protection

Context

The European Council meeting in March 2007 called for major cuts in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 and a shift to renewable energies. The WMES notes that to meet EU and UK targets for reductions in CO₂, the West Midlands must consider the three key sources of emissions: the home, transport and the economy. It proposes to invest in low carbon technologies which move the Region towards greater energy self-sufficiency, more decentralised and sustainable production, greater levels of efficient energy consumption and improved waste management facilities. How can the Region's European activity help achieve this qualitative shift?

This strategy argues that action can be taken in these areas while applying the principles of balanced spatial development outlined in the West

Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy. European issues have a particular significance for the Region's rural areas for two reasons. Firstly, the Common Agricultural Policy is a significant feature of the EU budget and farmers' income. Secondly, moves to shift resources towards the broader rural economy are underway with the introduction of the EU funded English Rural Development Programme (ERDP).

Policy

The flow of policy and legislation coming from EU institutions on sustainable development is already substantial and is likely to grow. Upcoming initiatives will look at energy, waste, emissions, the urban environment, green public procurement and the EU's environmental technology sector. These will all impact on the Region, alongside further potential revisions to agricultural and rural policy.

Programmes

In the coming period it will be increasingly important to consider the environmental dimension within mainstream EU programmes.

The Region should seek to make a major effort to succeed within the main environmental strands of the FP7 programme in thematic areas such as energy and environmental protection.

Specific EU funding programmes include Intelligent Energy Europe for renewable energy, transport and energy efficiency, and LIFE+ for the development and implementation of EU environmental policy and legislation. The Region should also maximise the environmental potential of the ERDP and seek to link projects here with other EU funded opportunities.

People

With the increased prominence of the climate change agenda there is an appetite to learn quickly from elsewhere amongst professionals and practitioners in a range of relevant fields.

Actions

- To contribute to the on-going debate on the Common Agricultural Policy and make the case for a continued shift of resources from agricultural subsidy to rural development
- To support applications for EU environmental programmes
- To encourage study visits, placements and partnership building with European partners on climate change issues including energy conservation, sustainable construction and waste.

Organisation

West Midlands partners are currently taking forward a regional Climate Change Action Plan. The European dimension could bring significant additional value to this Plan⁵. It is envisaged that under the leadership of Government Office for the West Midlands, partners will stimulate European initiatives that will help meet Action Plan objectives, such as helping businesses in the Region to become more energy efficient, and promoting this as a strong economic driver.

Case Study

The National Industrial Symbiosis Programme (NISP), based in Birmingham, works with businesses to identify sustainable resource management solutions.

NISP West Midlands, part-funded by AWM, is one of the most mature environmental programmes in the country with over 600 members. It has helped divert over 1.7million tonnes of industrial waste away from landfill, saving 4.4 million tonnes of virgin material across the UK. Furthermore it has generated £100million of new sales for its members and reduced CO² emissions by over 2 million tonnes. NISP has been recognised by the European Commission as an exemplar programme for eco-innovation and best practice. Following a visit to Brussels in 2007, NISP are discussing with both the Commission and representatives from a number of Member States to explore the potential for replication of NISP's activity across Europe.

⁵ www.wmra.gov.uk/page.asp?id=227

The Social Cohesion Dimension

Context

The philosophy of the European Union has always hinged on a combination of economic efficiency and social cohesion. The EU's Social Agenda 2005-2010 covers policies designed to provide jobs, fight poverty and promote equal opportunities. These social cohesion dimensions are very important to the West Midlands.

For example, there are significant pockets of urban and rural deprivation; the Region's main conurbation has the highest concentration of black and Asian communities outside of London; and the Region as a whole has also experienced high rates of migrants from Central and Eastern Europe into both its urban and rural areas.⁶ Furthermore, the WMES states that "The West Midlands workforce remains less qualified than that of other regions" and that we need to "develop an appropriately skilled workforce" and "stimulate a stronger culture of learning."⁷ Until now, activity on these issues has been mainly through the major ERDF and ESF programmes, where substantial sums of money have been invested to tackle urban and rural deprivation and provide training courses to develop the skills of unemployed people. How can Europe help with these challenges?

Policy

European policy developments and legislative initiatives on social cohesion cover a very wide spectrum. In the coming period two matters are of major importance for the West Midlands. Firstly, the Region will want to be fully involved in discussions leading to the EU Budget Review in 2008-9. Secondly, it will seek to follow relevant issues on migration and refugees arising from the implementation of the 2004 Hague Programme, which aims to strengthen freedom, security and justice in the European Union.

Programmes

Totalling €750 million, the ESF programme along with elements of the ERDF programme are the main channels where EU resources will be available to tackle social cohesion issues during the next funding period. These resources are guaranteed. However, there are a wide range of alternative funding opportunities open to the Region where competitive bidding is required, and where until now the performance of the Region has been weak. Under the theme of social cohesion this strategy proposes two programmes which should have initial priority. Firstly, the Lifelong Learning Programmes, most notably Leonardo which focuses on vocational training, but also Comenius, which supports projects in schools.

Secondly, given the multi-racial nature of the Region, the West Midlands should actively consider its engagement with the Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows programme, especially the two strands of the European Refugee Fund and the Fund of the Integration of Third-country Nationals.

People

The 'people' aspect of the social cohesion agenda has many elements. This strategy suggests four areas of potential activity:

Firstly, a range of EU transnational programmes offer opportunities for people, especially youngsters, to broaden their horizons and experiences.

Secondly, learning by linking is important in relation to making a success of multi-racial communities. There is much to be gained from learning from the varied experiences of other conurbations on this issue. In addition, there is scope for both urban and rural areas to develop transnational initiatives involving new migrants, possibly with authorities from their home countries.

Thirdly, this strategy needs to look to future generations. There is scope here for the Region to focus the national government target for every school to have an international partner onto schools in EU Member States and use

EU programmes such as Comenius to help educational activity in this field.

Fourthly, language learning should be encouraged. The value of this should not be underestimated; if more of our citizens were able to speak another European language it would increase employability and greatly facilitate our engagement with Europe.

Actions

- To ensure effective linkages and information-sharing with the ERDF and ESF programmes in order to tackle social cohesion issues and the skills deficits facing the Region
- To draw on European experience and relevant programmes in matters of urban and rural cohesion
- To encourage submissions to the EU Life-long Learning Programmes, especially for those undergoing vocational training
- To support engagement with those EU programmes promoting effective integration of minorities into society
- To encourage every school in the Region to twin with a school in an EU Member State and explore the potential to establish an International School in the Region.

Organisation

This work will be overseen by West Midlands Regional Assembly, working closely with EU Connects and relevant partners.

Case Study

Since 2005 Wolverhampton City Council has provided training for English language teaching assistants and arranged paid work placements in schools in its partner towns of Kobanya, a borough of Budapest in Hungary and Walbrzych in Lower Silesia, Poland. The course is funded under the EU Leonardo programme and starts with an accredited course for 'Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages' followed by a four or eight month placement abroad. 58 placements have already been completed and a further hundred are in the pipeline. The scheme has proved a huge success giving training opportunities to people from a wide range of backgrounds, many of whom have subsequently taken up permanent appointments or moved onto further educational training.

⁶ see the detailed study, *The Economic Impact of Migrant Workers in the West Midlands*, (November 2007)

⁷ *West Midlands Economic Strategy*, p.46.

Turning Aspirations to Reality

The West Midlands needs to have effective mechanisms for turning these aspirations into reality. A number of these are outlined below.

Influencing policy

Partners will liaise closely with MEPs on key areas of regional interest and co-ordinate activity where possible. We shall make particular efforts to link up with MEPs who are actively engaged in those areas identified as priorities in this report. In a similar way, on issues with a specific regional and local dimension the partners will draw on the Region's members within the Committee of the Regions.

Networks

Another key policy influencing mechanism can be fulfilled by EU networks. The main one in which we are most actively engaged is the European Regional Research and Innovation Network, ERRIN. This network has the potential to present a powerful regional case to the European Commission and Parliament on key research and development issues. Alongside this policy role, ERRIN and other networks also offer a framework in which to conduct joint learning and the preparation of bidding partnerships.

Interregional Links

The West Midlands recently decided to rationalise its existing region-region relationships and to concentrate on those with Lower Silesia and Lodz in Poland and Shandong in China. This report gives a clear basis on which to develop these region-region links in a practical manner. The trans-national priority of the 2007-2013 Regional Competitiveness and Employment programme will also enable the Region to explore further collaboration with 'leading edge' regions in Europe.

Funding

West Midlands partners have recognised that there is currently a discrepancy within the Region between the funding opportunities offered by the large number of EU trans-national programmes and the low level of our achievements. EU Connects, the major new initiative funded by the partners, was established in order to

close this gap. The centre is designed to strengthen the Region's capacity to engage with European funding programmes, acting as a central hub of expertise and knowledge on bidding and partnering to complement the Brussels based activities of West Midlands in Europe. This strategy sets some initial arenas for EU Connects to explore.

Governance Arrangements of EU activity within the West Midlands

European activity depends on partnership working. We have simplified officer arrangements in order to bring greater clarity to the roles, tasks and reporting lines of all regional groups and to ensure there is a clear thread of accountability through to the Assembly's European Strategy Board.

West Midlands in Europe, Brussels

The West Midlands in Europe (WMiE) office in Brussels is an important regional asset. A clear set of priorities and a closer working relationship with key regional stakeholders will allow the Brussels office to exploit the EU dimension for policy influencing on behalf of the Region in a focused manner, as well as facilitate the exchange of best practice and information into the Region. The office has a role to play in all four priorities with its own distinctive contribution to make. Above all, as a base in Brussels it will be the Region's source of early intelligence within the EU institutions and our route into the corridors of power.

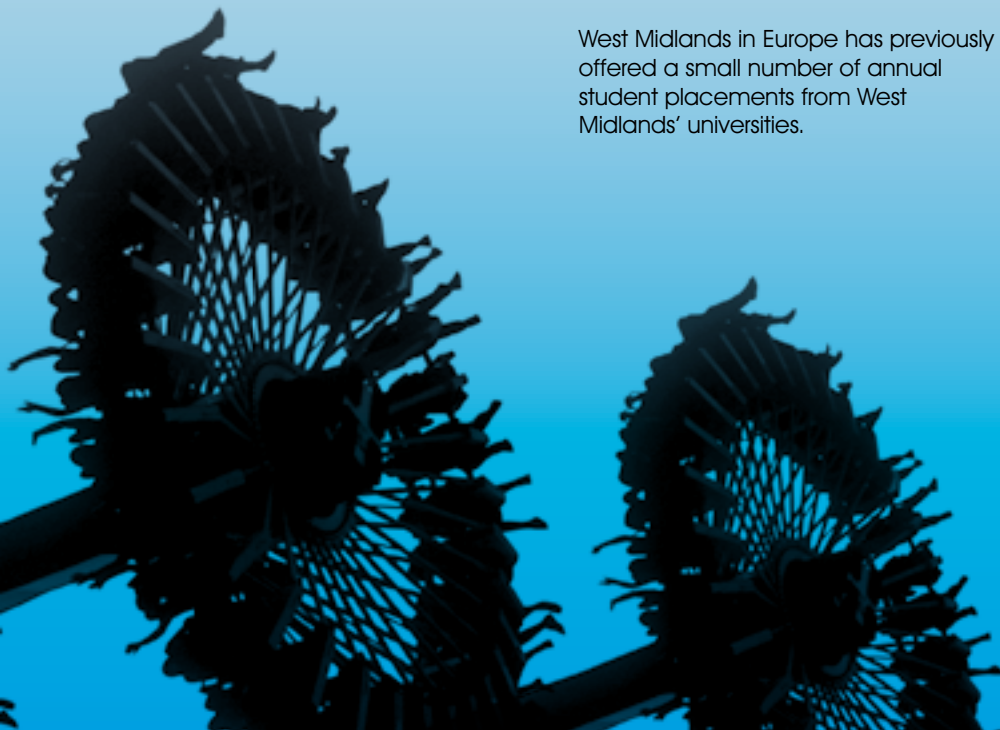
West Midlands in Europe has previously offered a small number of annual student placements from West Midlands' universities.

It is now proposed to supplement this programme with professional secondments to Brussels from regional partners, to build capacity and contacts to and from the Region. Match funding for this programme will be sought from EU/regional sources.

Major Policy Issues

This strategy identifies four key areas where the Region will engage in European activity. Of these, we believe the theme with the most potential for impact is the research and innovation agenda. This priority relates directly to the Region's aspiration to become a high-tech, high value added economy; it is the area with the most available EU programmes; and it is where the Region has significantly under-performed in the past.

Inevitably, there will be overlap between the four priority areas. The new governance arrangements will encourage close co-ordination between officers and staff across these themes. A few major policy issues will not fit easily into these priority 'boxes', for example, the forthcoming Budget review. The Assembly's European Strategy Board will assume responsibility for these and ensure that effective policy engagement on major legislative issues that will have a significant impact on interests within the Region will take place.





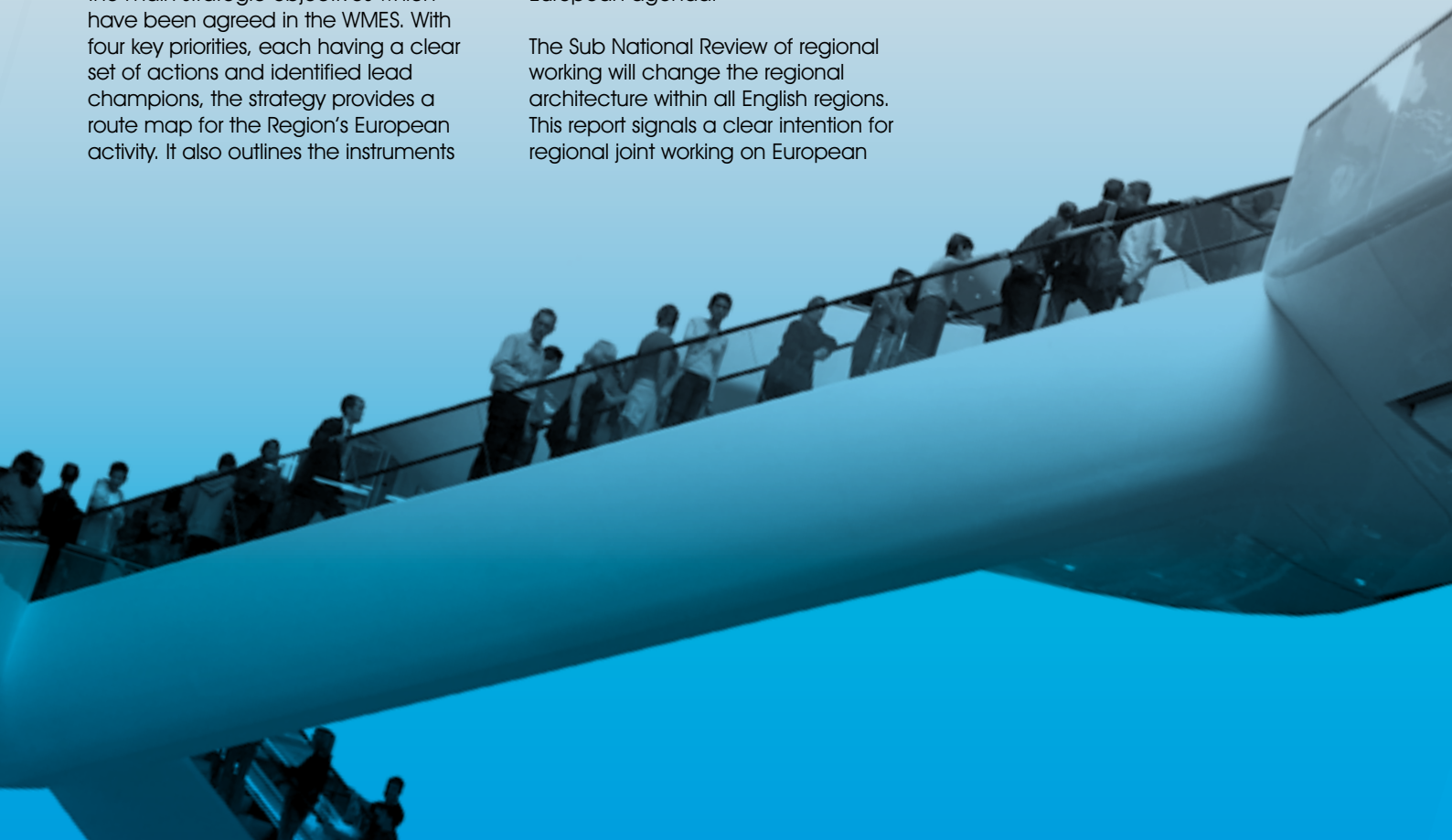
Conclusions

All the major partners across the Region have contributed to the strategy outlined in this report. It sets out a clear direction for our European activity over the next few years, closely aligned to the main strategic objectives which have been agreed in the WMES. With four key priorities, each having a clear set of actions and identified lead champions, the strategy provides a route map for the Region's European activity. It also outlines the instruments

at the Region's disposal for carrying through this work, including the WMIE Brussels office and EU Connects. It offers the West Midlands a clear way forward for practical engagement with the European agenda.

The Sub National Review of regional working will change the regional architecture within all English regions. This report signals a clear intention for regional joint working on European

matters to continue under both current and new arrangements which will be developed within the lifetime of this strategy.



Jargon Buster

Funding Programmes

EU Structural Funds:

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) www.erd.f.comunities.gov.uk
- European Social Fund (ESF) www.esf.gov.uk

The Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) www.lifelonglearningprogramme.org.uk :

- Comenius www.britishcouncil.org/comenius.htm
- Erasmus www.erasmus.ac.uk
- Grundtvig www.grundtvig.org.uk
- Transversal Study Visits www.transversal.org.uk
- Leonardo www.leonardo.org.uk

INTERREG (EU Interregional Co-operation Programme) www.interreg3c.net

ERDP (English Rural Development Programme) www.defra.gov.uk/erdp

7th Framework Programme www.cordis.europa.eu/fp7

Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP) www.ec.europa.eu/cip

Organisations & Groups

AWM (Advantage West Midlands) - the Regional Development Agency (RDA) for the West Midlands. This is one of nine RDAs in England that were established to transform the English regions through sustainable economic development. www.advantagegw.co.uk

West Midlands Regional Assembly – one of eight regional partnership bodies in the UK bringing together representatives from local authorities, the business sector including higher education and other regional stakeholders. www.wmra.gov.uk

HEA (Higher Education Association) - encourages collaborations that contribute to the regional economy and wider community by linking Universities, Industry, and Government. Provides consultancy, training,

short courses with student and graduate placements, research and technology transfer. www.wmhea.ac.uk

GOWM (Government Office for the West Midlands) - co-ordinates the delivery of Government policy in the Region, helps people to understand that policy, and informs Ministers of the Region's needs. www.gos.gov.uk/gowm

EU Connects - the new EU-funded regional resource for the West Midlands, offering advice and support to assist organisations in applying for European funding to deliver trans-national projects. www.euconnects.org

Committee of the Regions (CoR) - the official voice of local and regional government in the Europe Union. It is based in Brussels. www.cor.europa.eu

European Council - the meeting of Heads of State and Government of all the EU countries, plus the President of the European Commission. The European Council meets, in principle, four times a year to agree overall EU policy and to review progress. It is the highest-level policy-making body in the European Union. www.consilium.europa.eu

European Parliament - the only directly elected parliamentary institution of the European Union (EU). Together with the European Council it forms the bicameral legislative branch of the Union's institutions. The Parliament is composed of 785 MEPs (Member of the European Parliament). www.europarl.europa.eu

European Commission - the politically independent institution that represents and upholds the interests of the European Union as a whole. It proposes legislation, policies and programmes of action and it is responsible for implementing the decisions of the Parliament and the Council. www.ec.europa.eu

UKTI (UK Trade and Investment) - the Government organisation that helps UK-based companies to succeed in an increasingly global economy.
www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk

ERRIN (European Regional Research and Innovation Network) - designed to help regional actors participate fully and effectively in the European Research Area. ERRIN aims at providing a set of research and innovation initiatives to support sustainable regional development.
www.errin.eu

ESB (European Strategy Board) - a partnership supported by the West Midlands Regional Assembly that brings together politicians and lead officers of member bodies across the West Midlands with a European remit.

Strategy and Policy

Lisbon Strategy - the objective of the Lisbon Strategy is 'to deliver stronger, lasting growth and create more and better jobs'. The original goals emerged from the Lisbon European Council summit of March 2000, and the target date for achieving them was set at 2010.

2004 Hague Programme - a five-year programme for closer co-operation in justice and home affairs at EU level from 2005 to 2010.

Science City Initiative - cities of the world that provide scientific contributions to their country. Six English Science Cities were designated as such in the 2005 UK Budget: Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Nottingham and York.

CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) - first introduced in 1960, to ensure that Europe had secure food supplies at affordable prices. The European Commission began reviewing the CAP in 1999. The EU agreed further reforms in 2003, with the emphasis on high-quality farm produce and animal-friendly farming practices that respect the environment and preserve the countryside. The EU plans to cut back on direct subsidies to farmers, so as to redress the balance between EU agricultural markets and those of the developing world.

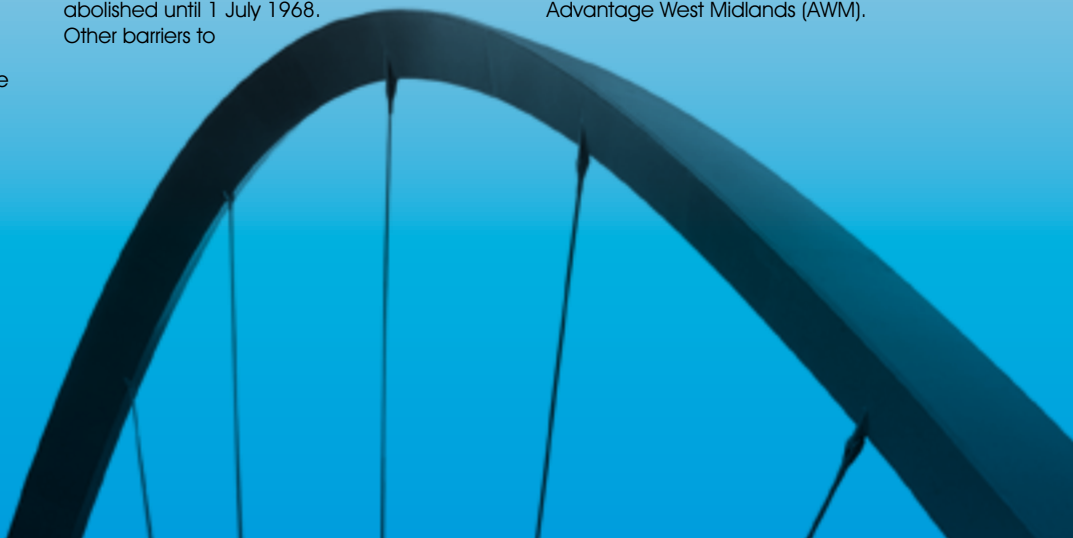
Single Market - When the EEC (see below) was founded in 1957, it was based on a 'common market'. In other words, people, goods and services should be able to move around freely between the member states as if they were all one country, with no checks carried out at the borders and no customs duties paid. However, this took a while to achieve: customs duties between the EEC countries were not completely abolished until 1 July 1968. Other barriers to

trade also took a long while to remove, and it was not until the end of 1992 that the 'Single Market' (as it became known) was in place.

West Midlands Regional Economic Strategy "Connecting to Success" - launched on 10 December 2007. This sets out the Region's approach to closing the £10 billion output gap by seeking to raise output per head in the West Midlands to at least the average for the UK as a whole.

WMRSS (West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy) - the main purpose of the WMRSS is to provide a long term land-use and transport planning framework for the Region. The framework guides the preparation of local authority development plans and local transport plans. It determines the scale and distribution of housing and economic development across the Region, investment priorities for transport and sets out policies for enhancing the environment.

RDI (Research, Development and Innovation) - one of the four priority policy strands identified in the West Midlands European Strategy. It aims to ensure the region becomes a more successful player within this area across Europe, and is led by Advantage West Midlands (AWM).



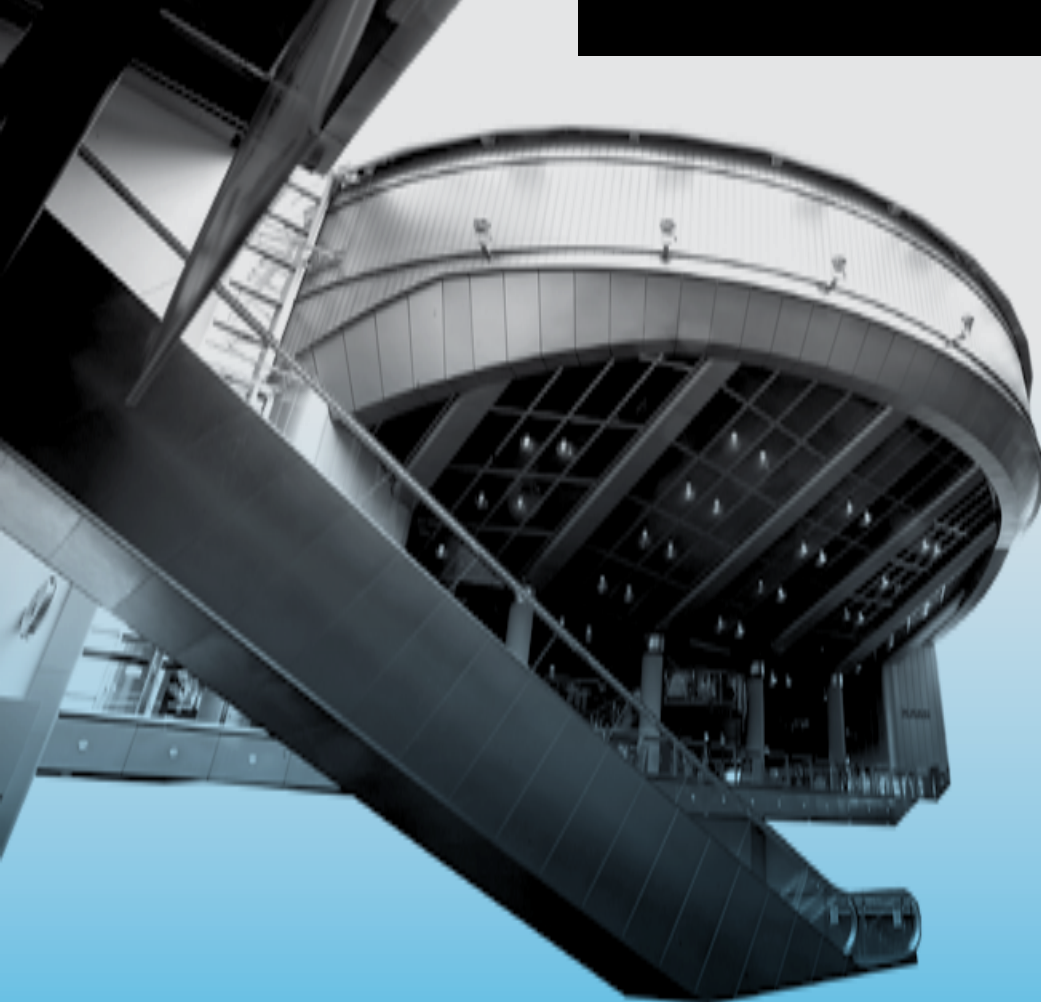
Useful Contacts

Lead responsibility for Priority 1; Single Market is being taken by UK Trade and Investment. The lead for taking this work forward will be Graham Ashmore, Head of European and Cluster Policy at UKTI. He can be contacted on 01384 360 464 or by e mail: grahamashmore@bccbl.com He will be supported by John Otter, who can be contacted on 07971 812241 or by email: johnotter@advantagewm.co.uk

Lead responsibility for Priority 2; Innovation, Research and Development is being taken by Advantage West Midlands in collaboration with the West Midlands Higher Education Association. The lead for taking this work forward is Jitka Dolezalova. She can be contacted on 0121 503 3640 or by email: jjtkadolezalova@advantagewm.co.uk

Lead responsibility for Priority 3; Climate Change and Environmental Protection is being taken by GOWM. The lead for taking this work forward is Nic Cole, he can be contacted on 0121 352 5203 or by e mail nic.cole@gowm.gsi.gov.uk

Lead responsibility for Priority 4; Social Cohesion is being taken by the Assembly. The lead for taking this work forward is Esther Knight. She can be contacted on 07748 775800 or by email: e.knight@wmra.gov.uk



EU Connects has been established to help the region's capacity to bid into EU trans-national programmes. The Manager of EU Connects is Julia Speht. She can be contacted at West Midlands Regional Assembly, Albert House, Quay Place, 92-93 Edward Street, Birmingham, B1 2RA. Tel. 0121 245 0180 or by email: info@euconnects.org

West Midlands in Europe (WMIE) represents the regional partners in Brussels. The Director is Glynis Whiting. The WMIE office can be contacted at Avenue d'Auderghem 22-28, B 1040 Brussels, Belgium. Tel: 00322 740 2710. email: info@westmidlandsineurope.org

Esther Knight, West Midlands Regional Assembly e.knight@wmra.gov.uk and Jon Bloomfield, Advantage West Midlands jonbloomfield@advantagewm.co.uk have been responsible for the preparation of this strategy.

Reports will be made on a regular basis to the Assembly's European Strategy Board which represents a cross-section of local authorities and agencies in the Region along with the West Midlands Members of the European Parliament (MEPs).

Thanks and acknowledgement goes to Olwen Dutton, Chief Executive of the Assembly and Mick Lavery, Chief Executive of AWM.



Please direct any requests for translation, interpretation, large text or audio tape versions of this document to Advantage West Midlands marketing team on 0121 380 3500.

West Midlands
Regional Assembly

