



SME COMPETITIVENESS AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Contribution of RDAs

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- Background
- Role of EEDA
- What EEDA does for business
- European funding and key transnational projects





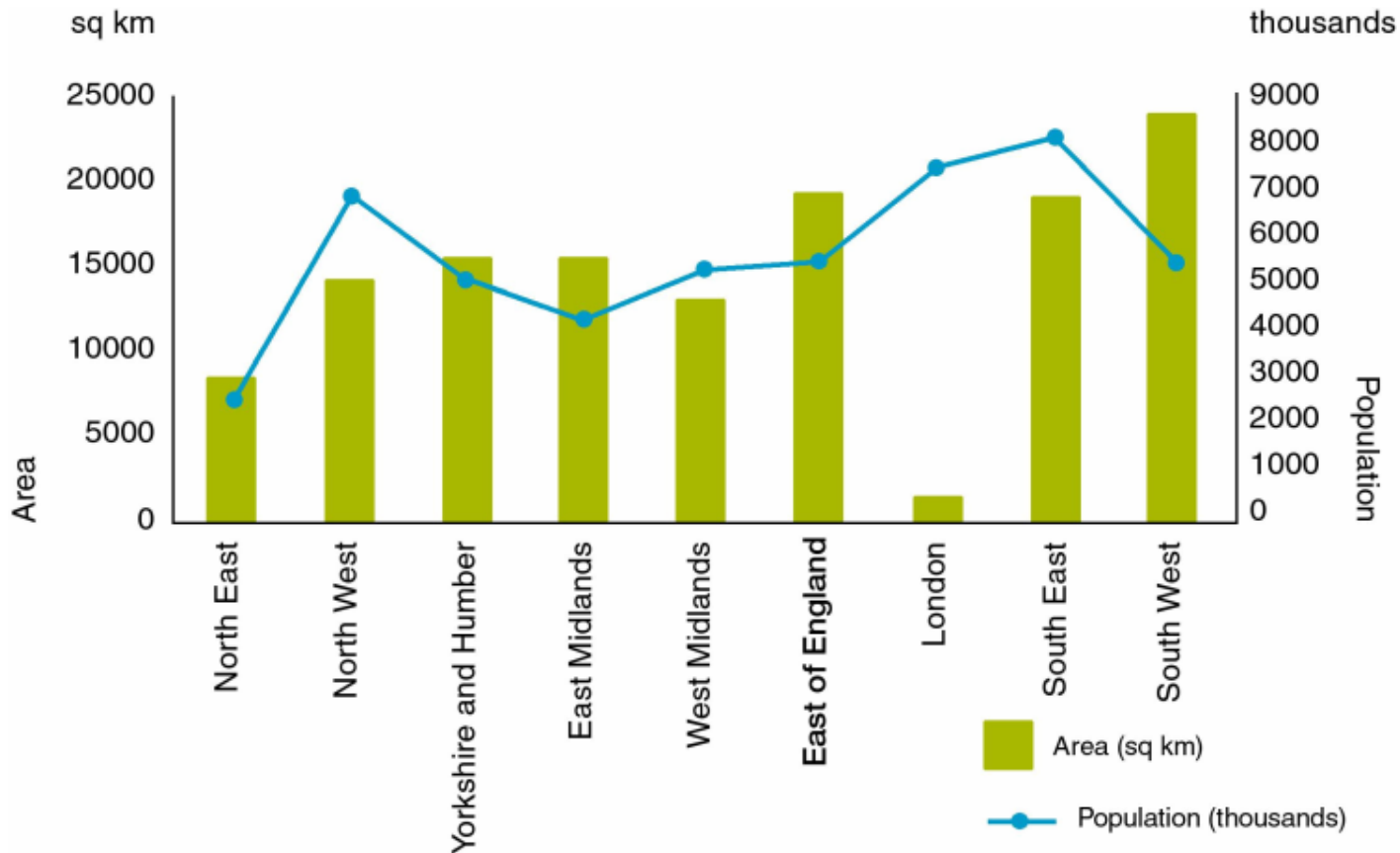


Background

- A diverse region with a reputation for creativity and innovation
- One of the fastest growing economies in the UK, the East of England has a £100 billion economy

Huge area and growing population

Population and area of English regions



EEDA in context

- EEDA is one of nine Regional Development Agencies in England
- ‘single pot’ of funding in recent years – more flexibility to spend budget on regional priorities
- EEDA lead role – Defra
- key challenge – to use £140 million annual budget to influence £25 billion annual public expenditure in the region

EEDA's statutory responsibility

- set up in April 1999 under the 1998 RDA Act¹
- statutory responsibilities:
 - further economic development and regeneration
 - promote business efficiency, investment and competitiveness
 - promote employment
 - enhance development and application of skills relevant to employment
 - contribute to sustainable development in the UK

¹ View act at <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/19980045.htm>

The regional economic strategy

skills base
that can
support a
world-class
economy

growing
competitiveness,
productivity and
entrepreneurship

global
leadership in
developing and
realising
innovation in
science,
technology and
research

high quality
places to
work and live

social inclusion
and broad
participation in
the regional
economy

making the most
from the
development of
international
gateways and
national and
regional transport
corridors

a leading
information
society

an exemplar in
environmental
technologies
and the efficient
use of
resources

Focusing on priorities

- improving skills for employment
- better business support
- success in science and innovation
- growth areas and urban renaissance
- regenerating communities
- sustainable economic growth, particularly in rural areas
- international quality transport and infrastructure
- promoting the region

What EEDA does for business

With over 430,000 businesses in the region,
EEDA:

- sets and shapes a regional business support strategy
- delivers and pilots national programmes in the region

- oversees the delivery of better targeted support services for priority sectors, hard to reach groups, innovation in knowledge based and high-tech businesses and incentives for business growth
- supports international trade through East of England International₂
- brings partner organisations together to create skills and training programmes

² <http://www.eeia.com>

Business Link Service

- From April 2007 the new service, contracted and funded by EEDA, is providing:
- an information and intelligence service
- business advice services
- a new package of support for start ups
- topical events, workshops and seminars

<http://www.eeda.org.uk/businesssupport.asp> for further information on EEDA's business support activities

European funding and key transnational projects

- **European Social Fund (ESF)** - £155m approx

used to service needs that are not generally covered by mainstream provision:

- workers without basic skills
- supporting women into enterprise
- English training for migrant workers
- improving capability: developing leaders, managers and innovators

•European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) - £74m approx

- promoting innovation and knowledge transfer – particularly from universities to businesses – to increase productivity
- stimulating enterprise and supporting successful business by overcoming barriers to business creation and expansion

- ensuring sustainable production and consumption including support to help businesses and communities reduce their carbon footprint

Leonardo HARVEST Project (Holistic Approach to Regional Vocational Sector-based Training)

Focuses on language and culture skills gaps
in the food and drink, agriculture and
agro-tourism sectors

Project value	€490, 940
EU contribution	€368,204 (75% of total)
Match funding	€122,736 (25% of total)
Project duration:	2 years (October 2006 – September 2008)

Main partners:

- EEDA (UK)
- MARR (Malopolska RDA, Poland)
- Chamber of Agriculture (Bács-Kiskun, Hungary)
- BARDA, Bulgarian Association of RDAs and Business Centres (Bulgaria)

Based on 3 core phases:

1. Communication needs analysis of up to 300 companies (75 East of England)
2. Creation of 'roadmap' of support for business language and culture
3. Language materials development and testing with 80 companies (20 East of England)

MINEM Project (Meeting the Information Needs of Economic Migrants)

Funded through the European Year of Workers Mobility 2006, the project focuses on providing better information to migrant workers and good practice for employers. It will also aim to influence leaders and policy makers
Project duration: December 2006 – March 2008

Main partners:

- Community Action Dacorum (NGO)
- EEDA
- Regional Labour Office, Krakow, Poland
- Agencia de Desenvolvimento Regional de Tras-os-Montes e Alto Douro, Portugal
- Proyectus Afies, Spain
- BARDA, Bulgarian Association of Regional Development Agencies and Business Centres, Bulgaria

The project will:

1. Produce pre-arrival information packs
2. Produce an interactive DVD
3. Identify and promote good practice by employers
4. Research evolving and settled migrant communities
5. Produce a website
6. Communicate with politicians, leaders and policy makers and seek to influence policy developments

Stop Press!!

Leonardo 'Transfer of Innovation' Project

Transfer of innovation from HARVEST project to Life Sciences (Biotech) sector

Partners:

- Medicon Valley (Denmark/Sweden)
- BioIndustry Park Canvese (Northern Italy + parts of France and Switzerland)
- Bulgarian Association of Regional Development Agencies and Business Centres

Thank you for your attention

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