

Role & Overview

The Economic Intelligence Unit (The EIU) provides in-depth socio-economic analysis across Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall, Wolverhampton, the WMCA and the broader Midlands area. Our evidence-driven insights inform policy-making at all stages, supporting strategy development, project feasibility, programme management, and impact assessment.

The Economic Intelligence Unit provides:

- A robust evidence base supporting the delivery of local economic growth alongside the provision of economic intelligence and indicators for local and regional clusters / sectors.
- Evidence to fortify local place and investment plans such as Place Based Strategies and the upcoming Industrial Strategy alongside strategic and economic cases for Treasury green book business case development.
- Spatial analysis, including various geo-visualisations, dashboards, maps, story maps and other dynamic presentations to highlight place-based opportunities.
- In-depth labour market analysis.
- An Intelligence Hub and Data Portal to access all of our reports and insights.

Offer

Through this expertise, the team can offer partners a thorough exploration of economic landscapes, providing the necessary tools for informed decision-making and strategic planning across every step of the way.

The EIU has the skillset and expertise to apply all of its activities to various geographical levels and can provide a flexible intelligence response to meet bespoke requirements on a one-off or ongoing basis. An example of some of the products include:

Measuring Success: Annual Economic Review & Place-Based Narrative

- The Strategic Performance Management Framework (PMF) offers a comprehensive assessment of key economic indicators, including productivity, employment, infrastructure, competitiveness, sustainability, and public service reform.
- An Annual Economic Review provides crucial intelligence for local business cases, ensuring alignment with devolved governance and funding settlements.
- The EIU provides access to an extensive evidence base, enabling the development of compelling place-based narratives and strategic propositions.
- We create bespoke outcome monitoring models and support Place-Based Plan development.
- Our bespoke Investment Prospectus for local areas offer insights into local economic movement patterns, supporting regeneration and place-based interventions.

Place-Based Analysis: Geo-visualisation and Spatial Analysis

- We offer advanced GIS and spatial intelligence to enable detailed mapping of infrastructure, economic activity, and environmental transformation.
- We support decarbonisation initiatives, including Black Country Industrial Cluster, Industrial Decarbonisation of Northern Ireland and Green Growth strategies.

Employment & Skills Strategy: Inclusive Growth & Workforce Development

- We provide both quantitative and qualitative labour market intelligence, offering real-time insights into workforce trends.
- Through partnerships with national networks we integrate industry expertise into skills planning.
- We actively support local Skills Boards, delivering intelligence briefings and deep-dive sector analysis (e.g., Digital and Green Skills for Growth).
- Our data-driven approach ensures inclusive apprenticeship uptake and supports education and skills deep dives.
- We work with Integrated Care Partnerships to address socio-economic inequalities in education, employment, and health.

Business Competitiveness: Growing the Business Base

- We deliver strategic company intelligence, providing sector-specific insights and real-time monitoring of economic shocks (e.g., Brexit, global conflicts, cost-of-living crises), identifying barriers and future opportunities – linked to skills and investment opportunities.
- The West Midlands Metals and Materials Forum connects businesses, trade bodies, and universities to foster sector growth and resilience.
- Business segmentation analysis helps identify high-growth and innovative firms, informing strategic policy interventions.
- We leverage new datasets (e.g., Data City) to enhance understanding of local business diversity, including minority-owned enterprises, sectoral makeup, and business base segmentation including strategic companies, high-growth companies and spinouts.

Intelligence Hub and Data Portal

- Our Intelligence Hub and Data Portal offers partners interactive dashboards, bespoke reports, and access to comprehensive socio-economic datasets.

Measuring Impact: Evidence-Strategy-Delivery Framework

- We provide a full-cycle analytical approach, linking evidence to policy development, programme implementation, and impact measurement.
- Our unique ‘total place’ methodology ensures a holistic understanding of economic interventions at both strategic and operational levels.
- Cross-thematic spatial analysis helps assess the effectiveness of interventions and identify further requirements.

National & Regional Networks

- We play a key role in regional intelligence collaboration, working with the Midlands Engine, WMCA, and leading academic institutions.
- Our national partnerships include engagement with the What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth and the ONS.
- As a representative on strategic forums, we ensure the West Midlands' economic priorities are well-positioned in national policy discussions.