

THE EU AND THE VALLEYS

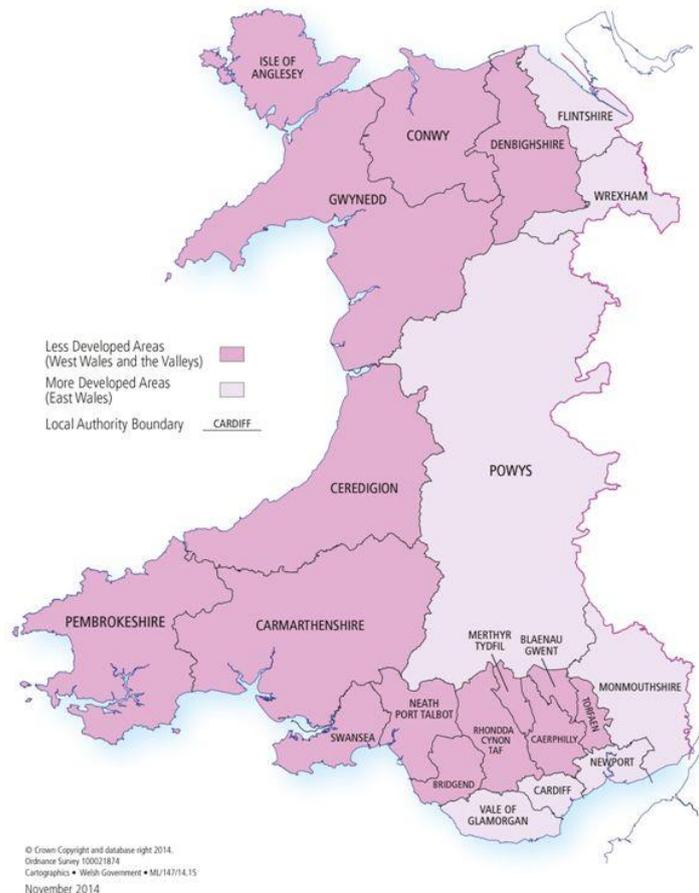
What the EU does for You

Laying out information about the role of the European Union in the Valleys area of Wales.

Office of Derek Vaughan MEP

The European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund

European Structural Fund Programme Regions in Wales for 2014-2020



The map above highlights the West Wales and Valleys Region (purple). As a part of this area the Valleys is eligible for extra European funding through the European Regional Development and European Social Funds. This powers a whole range of projects, which will be covered later, but it's important to be aware that the EU is providing extra cash to help improve the local economy and provide job opportunities. Through these two funding streams West Wales and the Valleys will receive **£1,604,680,597** by 2020. This money will go into research, innovation and making small businesses more competitive.

An Approach that brings Results for Jobs...

This funding has created jobs across the Valleys, as the figures below show:

Blaenau Gwent – 1,100

Bridgend – 1, 890

Caerphilly- 2,215

Merthyr Tydfil- 895

Neath Port Talbot- 1,305

Rhondda Cynon Taff- 2,408

Torfaen- 1,380

Total- **10,010**



SINCE **2007** THE EU HAS
CREATED **10,010** JOBS IN THE
VALLEYS

Welsh European Funding Office

Spotlight- Bridges into Work

Unemployment is a major problem, and one its biggest causes is a lack of the required skills. But after a certain age people often find themselves locked out of training courses and education, meaning they cannot get the skills they need to find work. This scheme tackles this issue by providing intensive training and one-to-one mentoring to improve skills and employability of more than 2,000 over-25s in the Valleys. It has received £7,000,000 in European funding. This is an example of how the EU has given people the tools that they need to improve their lives themselves.

... and Businesses!

It also helps create and assist businesses. Across Wales **18,220** businesses have been helped and **11,910** businesses have been created.

5,185 of those assisted have been in the Valleys as well as **3,425** of the businesses created.

This is why **80%** of the Businesses surveyed by the Confederation of British Industry said that IN was good for the British economy.



SINCE 2007 THE EU
HAS CREATED **3,435**
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5,185 MORE IN THE
VALLEYS AREA

Project Examples in the Valleys

Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone Project

A campus run by Coleg Gwent to provide all of the A level learning in Blaenau Gwent. This state of the art campus Learning Zone was part of the regeneration of the old Steelworks site in Ebbw Vale. It offers 32 A Level subjects and vocational courses. The 2014 cohort of A Level Students achieved the best results in the borough's history, just 2 years after the campus opened in 2012.



E.U. Funding- **£8,075,000**

Ebbw Vale Town Centre Regeneration

Description: Improvement of Ebbw Vale town centre to increase accessibility and local quality of life. The improvements include, new handrails, upgrading of the steps, re-surfacing footpaths, boundary rails, improved lighting, landscaping works (including tree management), introduction of access ramp (for improved access), installation of street furniture (seating and bins) and much more.



E.U. Funding- **£4,524,997**

Abertillery has also received £13 million for regeneration in Abertillery and the surrounding area. One example of the use of this funding was the redevelopment of the multi-storey car park.

Heads of the Valleys Road

This is a highly ambitious and partly completed scheme that involved realigning 4.7km of the current route, along with upgrading 3.1km of the former three lane road to form a dual carriageway with grade separated free flowing junctions. A total of 4 km of additional cycle routes was provided



by the project with further enhancements to the old A465 for the benefit of the local community. This included a rest area at Garn Lydan with extended parking, tourist information and viewpoints towards the Valleys Regional Park and Brecon Beacons National Park.

E.U. Funding £ **82,000,000**

Bridgend Town Centre

Major improvement to Bridgend town centre to make it more attractive to tourist users and businesses looking to move into the area. This project also improved the living standards of local people, so that they have local spaces that they can be proud of.



E.U. Funding: **£3,506,411**

Maesteg Market

Maesteg Market is situated on Talbot Street in the heart of Maesteg Town Centre's retail area and consists of permanent indoor stalls and casual and permanent outdoor units. It gives secure letting to businesses, allowing local businesses space in which to operate.

The market hall is located on the ground floor of a three storey; Grade 2 listed Victorian stone building, which is occupied on the ground and first floor by the Town Hall. This project was given a huge boost by European funding.



EU Funds: **£1,787,304**

Ogmore Walkway

This an EU backed stunning walkway along the river Ogmore, that is designed to stimulate the local café culture as well as allowing great views and becoming a tourist attraction in its own right. The construction of the walkway also provided jobs in the local area.



E.U. Funding: **£2,500,000**

Bargoed Regeneration Programme

This programme has already improved retail areas in Bargoed and is currently focused on improvements in and around Collier's Walk to improve pedestrian access and create more sites for future business development. This lays the groundwork for future improvements by the local community and businesses in Bargoed. The third phase of this project was even nominated for a prestigious Institution of Civil Engineers award.



E.U. Funding: **£4,339,830**

Newbridge Redevelopment

This was a large scale investment in renovating the businesses and town centre of Newbridge to create a more attractive environment for local people and businesses looking to move into the area. This redevelopment included the building of the Calzaghe Bridge in honour of the Welsh boxing legend Joe Calzaghe.



E.U. Funding: **£6,502,503**

Flood and Coastal Risk Management Caerphilly

This project involved the improvement of flood defences in New Tredegar. This required the raising of New Birchgrove Bridge to help the river flow more freely during heavy rain and prevent clogging around its arches. Flood embankments and walls were also built to increase the protection for local buildings and New Tredegar Leisure Centre. These defences are vital to make sure the area is insured from violent flooding. In 2010 the Environment Agency Wales already said that the scheme had already “proved its worth”.

EU Funding: £3,285,728

Merthyr Tydfil Institute for the Blind

The Merthyr Institute for the Blind has been strongly backed over the years by funding from the European Union. This organisation provides training, development and employment to those who are disadvantaged and unemployed including those with disabilities and long term health conditions.

This provides people with the support they need in order to gain control over their lives through employment and training in a co-operative environment based at Triangle Business Park in Pentrebach.

EU Funding: £3,000,000



River Taff Central Link Bridge

St Tydfil's bridge has increased access to the town centre by giving priority lanes for buses and reducing the number of traffic lights. This is a very practical example of the kind of infrastructure projects E.U. money can help with. This project was a part of a broader town regeneration package that received **£ 7 million** worth of E.U. funding.



Merthyr Old Town Hall

Led by Merthyr Housing Association this project renovated the Old Merthyr Town Hall which has now been turned into Redhouse Old Town Hall. The centre will also form a base for the Creative and Performing Arts department of The College Merthyr Tydfil which will create opportunities for local school children to learn and develop the artistic part of their curriculum. This also provides spaces for hire for shows, events and weddings.



EU Funding: **£2,000,000**

European money has also helped to save Merthyr Football club through the Community Development Programme which is funded with structural funds.

Harbour Way

This project created a 4.8 km road link to link Port Talbot Town Centre and Junction 38 of the M4 motorway. This improves access between the heart of the town and the main trunk road in South Wales. This gives benefits to businesses and the local community, as well as opening up local brownfield sites to further investment. Thus helping to stimulate the local job market.



EU Funding: **£55,000,000**

Neath Port Talbot Regeneration

This was a package of regeneration works in the commercial centres of Neath and Port Talbot which included Croeserw Community Enterprise Centre which was built along with environmental improvements within Croeserw. Officially opened to the public in 2013, the centre provides accommodation for community enterprises and small start-up businesses. Training rooms and workshops allow for training courses to be delivered on site and a café serves refreshments and/ or catering. The external floodlit games area has proven popular with local sporting clubs.

E.U. Funding Received: **£9,600,000**

Swansea Bay Science and Innovation Campus

This was the first project in Wales to receive backing from the European Investment Bank. This new Engineering Quarter will provide cutting edge research capability for the Swansea Bay area which will be integrated with local businesses to help convert world leading research into commercially viable products.



E.U. Funding: **£95,000,000**

Ynysangharad Park

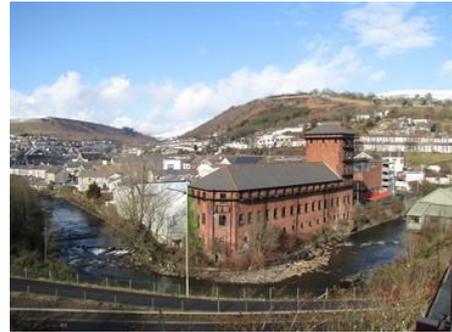
The lido in this park has long been in need of renovation to make it into a real attraction and an asset for the area. This lido will improve local quality of life and increase visitors to the town; it is the only listed one in the whole of Wales. The new complex includes a cafe to provide extra employment opportunities to the area. The lido was officially opened to the public in August 2015.



E.U. Funding: **£3,000,000**

Valleys Kids

This project, backed by the European Structural Funds, works closely with children and young people across 4 valleys regions including the Rhondda, to try and give them the vital support that they need when they are perhaps not getting it from elsewhere. They offer free IT classes, job support and advice including through developing job opportunities themselves through the Factory in Porth.



Townscape Enhancement Programme

This highly successful programme in Rhondda Cynon Taff has allowed businesses to invest in improving themselves with works that they might not otherwise be able to afford. This has allowed businesses to boost their chances of gaining investment and customers and improving the look of the town, making it more welcoming to visitors and locals. The famous Cafe Royale received £18,653 to have a complete redevelopment of its shop front. This was a part of an overall scheme of regeneration that cost about £10.5 million.

Pontypool Regeneration

E.U. funding has made a major impact in the regeneration of Potnypool. For instance, Pontypool Indoor Market has received a major refurbishment thanks to E.U.

funding that was brought into the project. This has brought a surge of interest from independent retailers looking to have business space in the new market, which will provide a focal point for the ongoing regeneration of Pontypool. Another part of this regeneration project was also the full regeneration of the former Globe Hotel in Crane Street with £340,000 awarded to regenerate that property.



Folly Tower Pontypool

Financed in part by the European Regional Development Fund in 1993 to ensure that the project could be completed, this tower was restored to provide a new local tourist attraction and to increase local quality of life.

