

**Date:** 6 March 2002  
**Time:** 14.00 - 17.30  
**Venue:** Committee Room 1, National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff Bay  
**Title:** Working Group on Enlargement

**Purpose**

1. To provide the Economic Development Committee with an up-date of the work of the European and External Affairs Committee Working Group on Enlargement.

**Recommendation**

2. The Committee has previously asked to be kept informed of progress and Members are invited to note the present position.

**Background**

3. The Working Group on Enlargement met for the first time on Monday 8 October 2001. A report of that meeting was put before the European and External Affairs Committee on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October and before the Economic Development Committee on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> November.

4. The Working group has since met on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2002. A report of that meeting was put before the European and External Affairs Committee on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> February. A copy of the relevant paper EUR -01-02(p6) is attached.

5. The paper included several recommendations, as follows:

- A shortlist of possible candidates for the Welsh Assembly Government to "twin" with should be put before the European and External Affairs Committee;
- In line with the conclusions and recommendations of the Wales European Information Network (WEIN) audit reports, the Welsh Assembly (through European and External Affairs Division) examines how it might facilitate the work of WEIN by sharing responsibilities for its support and providing practical assistance for its administration;
- That the Welsh Assembly Government build upon the work that has already been done by WEIN, by undertaking a review to establish exactly what information the

public, private and voluntary sectors actually require, and in which format it would be best presented.

6. Members of the European and External Affairs Committee were invited to consider the shortlist of possible candidates for Wales to "twin" at [Annex A](#) of EUR-01-02(p6) and report back their views within two weeks. The other two recommendations, regarding the work of WEIN, were accepted.

## **European and External Affairs Division**

### **EUROPEAN AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE EUR-01-02(p.6)**

**Date:** 13 February 2002  
**Time:** 9.30am  
**Venue:** Committee Room 3, National Assembly Building  
**Title:** Working Group on Enlargement

#### **Purpose**

1. To report on the second meeting of the Working Group on Enlargement, which took place on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2002.

#### **Recommendation**

2. Members agree the recommendations put forward by the Enlargement Working Group and take a view on which of the EU candidate countries and regions the Assembly should "twin" with.

#### **Background**

3. At its meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2001, the European Affairs Committee agreed

the draft terms of reference for a working group to consider enlargement issues. This Enlargement Working Group met for the first time on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2001. A report of that meeting was presented to the European Affairs Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2001 and the Economic Development Committee on 14 November 2001. The second meeting of the Group took place on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2002.

#### **Report on Enlargement Working Group Meeting, 16<sup>th</sup> January 2002**

4. Graham Styles (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) explained what was involved in the EU funded Twinning programme (as distinct from the "political" twinning referred to at paragraphs 2 and 9). Rodney Berkeley (Department of Trade and Industry) then outlined the key issues involved in setting up and participating in a Twinning project. No specific recommendations were made, although the Group agreed that information on Twinning should be circulated more widely (where appropriate) to the private and voluntary sectors.
5. Paper WGE(02)01 up-dated the Group on the activities that had taken place between the Welsh Assembly Government and the Candidate countries since their last meeting in October.
6. Paper WGE(02)02 provided an up-date on the position reached by each of the 12 Candidate countries in the Enlargement negotiation process.
7. Paper WGE(02)03 showed the links Wales has already established with the candidate countries. It was acknowledged that the paper encompassed a wide area of activity and was not entirely complete, but provided a suitable basis upon which to build.
8. The Group concluded that it was important for the Assembly to take an early view on which of the enlargement countries and regions it should "twin" with. It was agreed that a shortlist of possible candidates should be put before the European and External Affairs Committee. **[Annex A](#) of this paper sets out a number of options for the Committee's consideration.** It draws upon a synopsis of links identified so far (Annex B) and brief profiles, prepared by the Wales European Centre, of six regions previously identified as possible candidates (Annexes C1 – 6).
9. Paper WGE(02)04 put forward proposals to determine the scope for improving the information mechanisms available across Wales. The following recommendations were agreed :
  - In line with the conclusions and recommendations of the Wales European Information Network (WEIN) audit reports, the National Assembly (through European and External Affairs Division) examines how it might facilitate the work of WEIN by sharing responsibilities for its support and providing practical assistance for its administration;
  - That the National Assembly build upon the work that has already been done by WEIN, by undertaking a review to establish exactly what information the public, private and voluntary sectors actually require, and in which format it would best be presented.
10. Paper WGE(02)05 provided the Group with an up-date on the Assembly Government's response to the Second Cohesion Report.

## Compliance

11. Standing Order 15 covers the European Affairs Committee's activity. The working group was established on the basis of the Assembly's powers under section 40 of the Government of

Wales Act. It is an informal advisory group whose main task will be to report to the European Affairs Committee. The Assembly Compliance Office has been previously consulted and is content with the compliance aspects.

### **Financial Implications**

12. There are no additional financial implications for the Assembly arising from the issues covered in this report.

### **European and External Affairs Division**