



West Midlands
Combined Authority



WMCA
**Employment &
Skills Strategy**



West Midlands
Combined Authority

Work Local and Youth Pathways

Supporting youth in the West Midlands

Our ambition is to develop an integrated skills system for the region through which we can stimulate economic growth, deliver better outcomes for residents and businesses, and create healthier thriving communities.

c.£170m skills investment...

...focused on local & regional priorities



West Midlands
Combined Authority

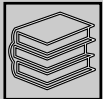
Economic growth



Meeting future skills needs through upskilling and reskilling



Moving residents into employment and supporting career progression



Provide a good education up to Level 2 for those who need it



Building strong and inclusive communities

Tackling inequalities

Our ambition is to make this region the best place for young people to start their career



Offer 1: Youth Pathways to help young people (16 to 24) 'not in employment, education or training', or at risk of NEET, find their first job or put them on a career path.

How can youth employment benefit the region's economy?

Supporting business growth

Acute job vacancies in the region are slowing business growth. In September there were 43,458 job postings across the WMCA area.

Building a resilient workforce

Evidence shows being unemployed under 23 years is linked to lower wages and higher risk of future unemployment.

Boosting GDP and harnessing opportunity

Adding up to £69bn to UK economy, investing in YP benefits long-term productivity and competitiveness. YP bring new ideas, different perspectives, and skills.

Growing industry talent pipeline

Evidence shows high quality careers guidance and work experience is highly effective in reducing the risk of YP becoming NEET.

The Challenge in the WMCA area



	Youth Claimant count (Aug 24)	Youth claimant rate (Aug 24)	% change since pre-pandemic Mar20	% change since Aug 23	% change since Jul 24
UK	291,250	5.2%	22.3%	8.1%	1.3%
WM 7 Met	26,245	9.2%	37.0%	12.5%	2.2%
Birmingham	13,730	10.6%	50.8%	16.6%	2.6%
Coventry	2,400	5.6%	56.4%	10.3%	0.4%
Dudley	1,805	7.6%	3.1%	3.1%	0.3%
Sandwell	2,835	9.9%	34.0%	11.0%	2.2%
Solihull	910	6.0%	10.3%	15.9%	4.6%
Walsall	2,210	9.8%	15.4%	7.3%	2.6%
Wolverhampton	2,360	11.0%	23.6%	5.8%	1.9%

We also have

- a **high NEET** rate 16-17 years, **5.2%** at the national average for NEET/Not Known.
- a **high economic inactivity** rate, **44.6%** for young people aged 16-24.

Mayor's Youth Plan: the initial offer



Pre-employment training in the region's fastest growing sectors and green skills, with a guaranteed interview, like the Path 2 Apprenticeship programme underway



Dedicated work coach support for young people who are out of work



Fully-funded training, up to level 3, to help young people develop the skills needed for work



Access to mental and physical health support, including talking therapies.



Building on existing youth hubs to provide all young people with access to a range of support and services, including debt and careers advice.



Employer pledge – 20,000 work placements



Delivering on our Mayoral Pledges

The WMCA Youth Plan

Develop the evidence base	Better communicate existing offers for young people	Strengthen and grow existing offers for young people	Design targeted interventions for the young people that need it most	Drive for systemic, long-term change for young people
Data & Research	Marketing & Comms	Ideas & Innovation	Localised, Place-Based Delivery	Strategy development & Policy Intervention

<----- Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Measurement----->

For further information

Mahfia.Watkinson@wmca.org.uk

Fiona.Aldridge@fisss.org.uk

