



Regional Key Competencies

- a way to manage structural changes (ATB)

The South West of England

The South West is the largest region in England (23,837 sq. km), covering one fifth of the land area of the country. The region has a very varied and exceptionally attractive landscape.- It is highly rural, with over half of the people in the region living in rural areas.

Being able to travel to training, jobs and services is a major regional issue, particularly for the more remote rural areas in the south and west

The region has a population of almost five million (around 8% of the UK population). Between 1981 and 2001 the South West had the fastest growing population of any English region (12.5%). The population increase is largely due to people moving into the region. Over one fifth of the population is over retirement age.

The South West has one of the smaller economies of the English regions with a Gross Value Added (GVA) of £69 billion in 2002 and accounted for 8.9% of the total GVA for England

The region has what can be defined as a healthy labour market^[1], that is one that adapts smoothly to change. It is, however, characterised by a low value economy with low wages and low productivity. We have a number of important sectors in our economy that report difficulties in finding the right skills and training to meet their needs. Employers report confusion in the plethora of ways in which to access support. We are failing to meet our targets in respect of literacy and numeracy skills. We have high levels of net outflow of young people and graduates. There are also markedly differing fortunes between areas within the region, with low output per head and earnings levels, and high unemployment, in the west of the region, while the reverse is the case in the north and east of the region.

Links to Key sites

[State of the Region](#)

Up to date Profile of the South West Region

[SLIM](#)

Key source of information and intelligence on skills and learning in the region

[South West Regional Development Agency](#)

Agency Established to improve the standard of living for the people in the region by aligning regional and sub-regional organisations behind the Regional Economic Strategy

[The South West Regional Assembly](#)

The Voice of Democracy in the Region

In the South West there are 10 Unitary Authorities, and 6 County Councils.

