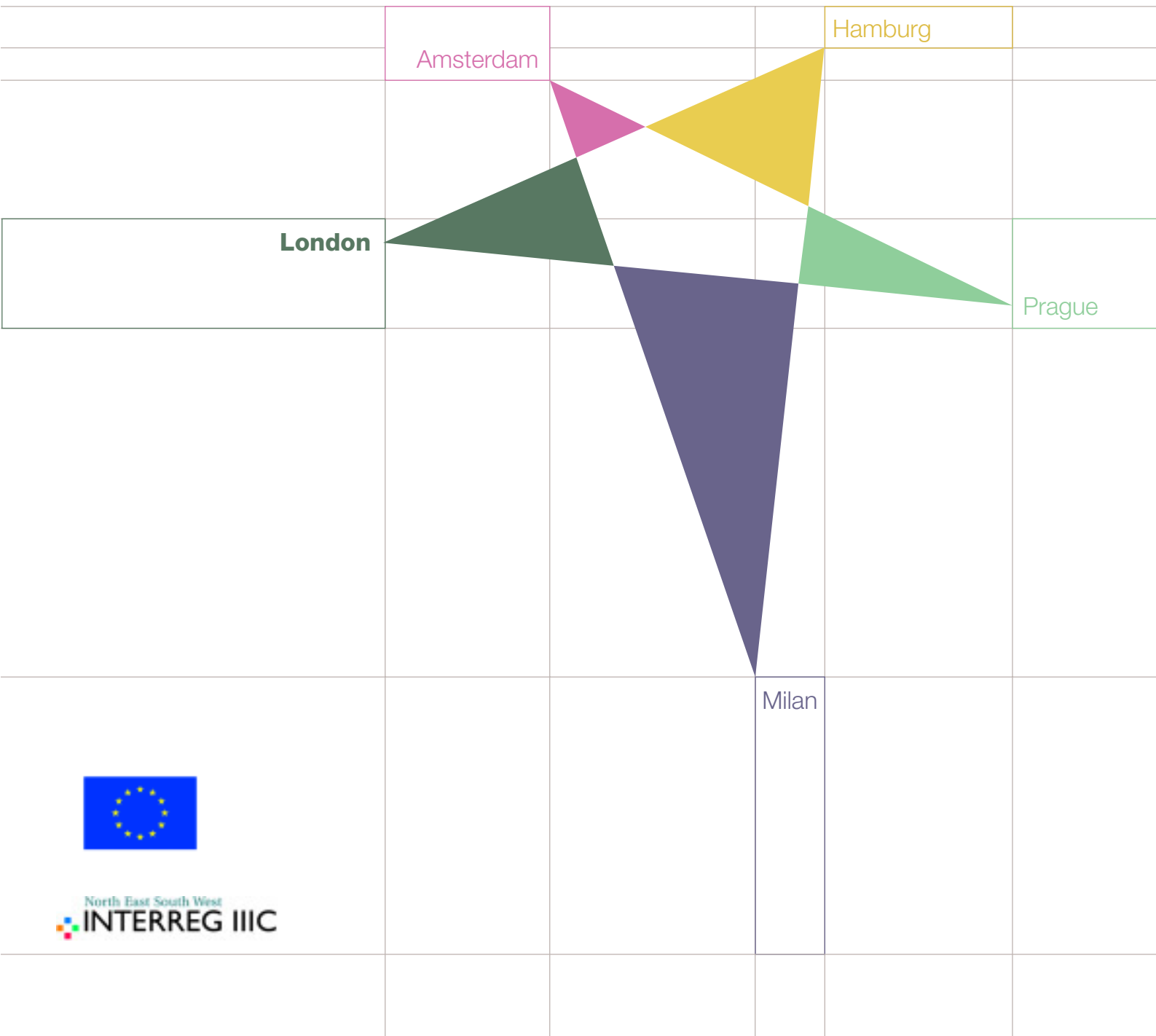


# European Learning Network



Enterprise and innovation in deprived urban areas:  
**sharing the European experience**

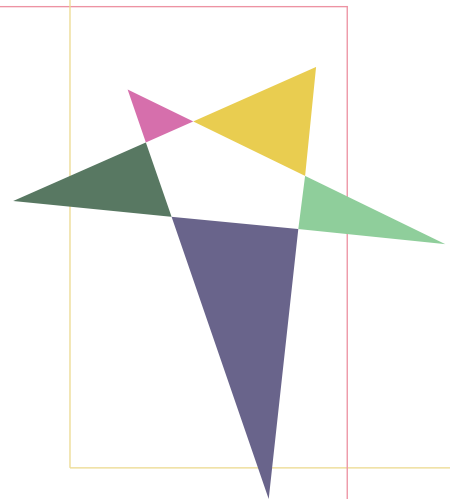


# The European Learning Network for enterprise and innovation in deprived urban areas: **sharing the European experience**

The core of the Learning Network is five partner cities – Amsterdam, Hamburg, London, Milan and Prague – which are all actively developing and implementing policies to promote enterprise in deprived neighbourhoods. Launched in November 2004, the network will develop common approaches to realising the economic and social potential of deprived urban areas and develop practical tools to support enterprise.

The success of our cities depends to a great extent on their capacity to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship, but much remains to be achieved. As urban areas strive to become more competitive, deprived neighbourhoods, often in the inner city, continue to lag behind. Yet these areas, often located at the core of our towns, present clear competitive advantages and a still largely untapped commercial potential.

Barriers to enterprise persist, particularly in relation to the availability of finance, appropriate and accessible business support and a lack of social networks and local capacity. Enterprise promotion, aimed at overcoming these barriers, has played an effective role in supporting the contribution of deprived areas to the development of the wider city – but there is still a considerable gap in identifying and sharing best practice and developing local tools to support new initiatives. The European Learning Network has been set up to help fill this gap.



# The Learning Network's **objectives**



The network will facilitate international benchmarking and the exchange of best practice and learning between economic development practitioners. It aims to identify interventions whose success has lessons for other cities. Its objectives are:

- to identify the most effective mechanisms for encouraging and supporting enterprise and innovation in deprived urban areas, focusing on business support, investment and skills & knowledge interventions
- to develop common methodologies for evaluating the effectiveness of interventions
- to provide a forum for senior economic development practitioners from European cities to identify and share best practice
- to enhance the impact of economic development interventions in deprived urban areas, including those supported by the EU Structural Funds, through more effective project development, implementation and management by local authorities and other agencies
- to tackle deprivation through encouraging enterprise and innovation
- to help shape new programme interventions and develop capacity to work with transnational partners in the context of European enlargement and developing cohesion policy

# A thematic approach to **shared challenges**



The Learning Network will focus on three themes:

## Theme 1

### **The enterprise gap and entrepreneurship**

Entrepreneurship drives innovation, competitiveness, job creation and growth. It moves innovative ideas forward into successful ventures and can unlock the potential of people in disadvantaged areas to create jobs for themselves. In deprived urban areas, entrepreneurship is largely concerned with the development of micro and small businesses and in terms of employment creation it is increasingly new and small businesses, rather than large ones, that are the main providers of new jobs. For the Learning Network, entrepreneurship is understood as the process of identifying and seizing new business opportunities.

## Theme 2

### **Innovation**

Innovation – the successful exploitation of new ideas to support business growth - is at the heart of city competitiveness and is key to realising the potential of deprived city areas. In the context of the Learning Network, innovation will be viewed from a local perspective, focusing on new approaches and attitudes to enterprise in deprived urban neighbourhoods and supporting the capacity to understand and respond to market needs and develop new ideas.

## Theme 3

### **Social enterprise**

Social enterprises have been defined as businesses with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners. In the context of the Learning Network it is these social objectives rather than their legal status which defines social enterprises; and the network will focus on the potential for social enterprises to link local communities to market opportunities.

## **A practical response**

In considering these themes the Learning Network will facilitate the systematic exchange of best practice between cities in the EU with a range of practical tools for economic development practitioners, including:

- a portfolio of best practice to encourage and support the role of enterprise in tackling deprivation
- a series of practical toolkits and how-to guides available to all economic development practitioners
- a sustainable and transferable model for reviewing best practice across the EU

## **Getting involved**

While the five cities constitute the core network, there are many opportunities for other European cities to be involved:

- the launch conference in London, November 2004
- workshops in Brussels and Prague in April 2005 and February 2006, organised specifically to involve other cities
- an interactive website
- quarterly newsletters
- publications including reports, policy bulletins, toolkits, how-to guides and research papers
- the final conference in December 2006
- to register for LNET information please e-mail [LNET@gle.co.uk](mailto:LNET@gle.co.uk) or go to [www.thelearningnetwork.net](http://www.thelearningnetwork.net)

# European Learning Network partners

**Greater London Enterprise (GLE)** is lead partner for the Learning Network. GLE is a well established publicly-owned company with offices in London and Brussels. GLE's services include research and policy development, funding strategies and bid development, programme and project management and evaluation. For more information about GLE please contact Madeleine Williams [madeleine.w@gle.co.uk](mailto:madeleine.w@gle.co.uk)



Greater London Enterprise

**London Development Agency (LDA):** The London Development Agency is the Mayor of London's agency for business and jobs and helps to build a thriving economy for London's people, businesses and communities. The LDA is dedicated to improving sustainability, health and equality of opportunity for all Londoners. For more information about the LDA please contact Jennefer Holmes [JenneferHolmes@lda.gov.uk](mailto:JenneferHolmes@lda.gov.uk)



**Technology Centre of the Czech Republic:** The Technology Centre is the consortium of research institutes of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. The Technology Centre is based in Prague and has strong experience in Regional Innovation Strategy, transnational technology transfer and business incubators as well as in EU programmes and networks. For more information about the Technology Centre please contact Daniela Vachova [vachova@tc.cas.cz](mailto:vachova@tc.cas.cz)



**TuTech Innovation GmbH :** As Hamburg's prime institution for innovation and economic growth, TuTech actively supports links between business and academic research, and reaches out from the Hamburg-Harburg Technical University to provide a competent and comprehensive advice service for businesses, colleges and research institutes. For more information about Tutech please contact Walter Leal [leal@tutech.de](mailto:leal@tutech.de) or Julia Gottwald [Gottwald@tutech.de](mailto:Gottwald@tutech.de)



**North Milan Development Agency (ASNM):** ASNM is a limited company with a not-for-profit mission founded to face the challenges of urban re-conversion, development and industrial restructuring. ASNM has a strong track record in innovation and technology transfer, strategic planning, and support for the non-profit sector. For more information about the ASNM please contact Elisabetta Caregnato [Caregnato@asnm.com](mailto:Caregnato@asnm.com)



**Province of Milan:** The Province of Milan is a local government authority which represents 188 borough councils (including the city of Milan) within the Region of Lombardy. The Province of Milan governs the largest metropolitan area in Italy and has a long expertise in EU programme management and a wide know-how in urban regeneration and development. For more information about the Province of Milan please contact Myriam Camarero [economialavoro@provincia.milano.it](mailto:economialavoro@provincia.milano.it)



**City of Amsterdam:** Amsterdam's Economic Development Department stimulates economic activities by strengthening the economic structure and a competitive investment environment. All companies must feel welcome and at home in Amsterdam, with space for investment opportunities for starting and growing businesses available whether they operate on a national or international scale. The Economic Development Department focuses not only on existing firms, but also on attracting new businesses to sustain employment for the city, contributing to increased employment, but also to a sustainable urban environment. [Oskam@ez.amsterdam.nl](mailto:Oskam@ez.amsterdam.nl)





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This Prospectus reflects the views of the  
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**Greater London Enterprise**

