

Alongside the publication of the January [Regional Economic Monitor](#) the Observatory produced and published our first deep dive monitor of 2022, [Brexit: One Year On](#), looked at the impact of the UK leaving the European Union a year ago. It identified issues that businesses have faced in the past year, particularly around trade and the labour market, and forthcoming opportunities and challenges in 2022 and beyond. The evidence suggests that Brexit exacerbated challenges for Midland's businesses and individuals.

The Observatory Programme Board, Research Partnership and Intelligence Community met in January to support the development of the upcoming Research Programme. From these workshop sessions, we have identified partners priorities for the next year: **Clusters, levelling up, green skills, digital skills, supply chain growth, and health & productivity.**

International Women's Day (8th March) saw the publication of research commissioned by the MEO on [Women in Leadership report](#), led by the University of Wolverhampton focusing on improving our understanding of the current state of gender diversity in leadership in the Midlands. The research drew on interviews with female employees and leaders from across the Midlands to identify barriers to greater representation of women in leadership in the region.. Women account for only 7.8% of executive directorships in the Midlands' top 350 companies compared to



13.7% in FTSE100 companies. Among the Midlands top 350 companies, 169 (48%) have exclusively male boards. The report findings were discussed at the **March Quarterly Economic Briefing**.

March saw the publication of Midlands Engine research into innovative methods of [Green Finance](#) and the Publication of the March **Midlands Engine Economic Impact Monitor** which included an analysis of the economic impact of the crisis in Ukraine on the Midlands Engine.

Looking Ahead

April 2022

- Publication of research into the growth potential of our Manufacturing base and the publication of a sector **deep dive on the Health and Life Sciences sector in the Midland Engine: Developing and Supporting Manufacturing Capacity.**
- Finalisation of **Observatory Action Plan** which outlines the upcoming priorities till 2025.
- Commissioning of in-depth research into the **green skills** required across the region, including into key sectors such as hydrogen.
- 29th - Publication of **April Midlands Engine Economic Impact Monitor.**
- Publication of research into the potential for the creation of a **Net Zero Carbon Ecosystem** across the Midlands Engine to accelerate the transition to net zero emissions.

May 2022

- **Thematic Scorecards for each Midlands Engine theme** to be produced, allowing for tracking of achievements in these areas
- **Health Inequalities** supporting research for the Midlands Innovation Health Inequalities Commission.
- 27th - Publication of **May Midlands Engine Economic Impact Monitor.**

June 2022

- **17th - Quarterly Economic Briefing** focusing on clusters and investment.
- 30th - Publication of **June Midlands Engine Economic Impact Monitor.**