



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

MEETING

# Ireland-Wales Forum meeting: 14 October 2022

Joint communiqué of a meeting of the Ireland-Wales Forum.

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The Government of Ireland welcomed a visit from the First Minister of Wales, Mark Drakeford MS, the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths MS, and the Minister for Economy, Vaughan Gething MS to Dublin and Cork on 13-14 October 2022 for the 2nd Ireland Wales Forum. The first Ireland-Wales Forum was held on 22 October 2021 in Cardiff.

The Government of Ireland was represented by Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence, Simon Coveney T.D., Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Michael McGrath T.D., Minister for Trade Promotion, Dara Calleary T.D. and Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys T.D.

An undertaking to convene an annual Ireland-Wales Forum was announced in the Ireland-Wales Shared Statement and Joint Action Plan 2021-25 published in March 2021. The aim of the forum is to engage political, economic and broader stakeholders to develop relationships, exchange policy perspectives, share learning and build co-operation in areas for which the Welsh Government has devolved responsibility and to strengthen the wider Ireland-Wales relationship.

Building on the successful inaugural forum in Cardiff last year, this year's Ministerial forum was held in Cork and discussed the following:

## **Recent political developments and bilateral relations**

The Minister for Foreign Affairs and First Minister discussed current political developments, including challenges related to the cost-of-living, energy and climate change. They reflected the shared ambitions for the Ireland-Wales bilateral relationship and noted the positive progress over the past year in implementing the Shared Statement. In particular, they welcomed the number of high-level political meetings, including between the Taoiseach and First Minister, the strong cooperation at the British Irish Council, the range of important cultural

initiatives and shared learning on language policy, and the secondment of a Welsh Government official at the Department of Foreign Affairs to build shared learning about diaspora matters.

Minister McGrath and Minister Gething spoke of the wide range of projects and collaborative networks that had been built up through the Ireland-Wales programme.

## **Trade cooperation and economic development**

Minister Calleary and Minister Gething discussed the current challenges for businesses across both countries. In particular, they discussed areas for trade cooperation and approaches to regional enterprise development with a view to increasing cooperation between Ireland and Wales. They also met with a range of regional economic development stakeholders based locally in Cork.

## **Renewable energy developments and opportunities**

Minister Coveney and Minister Griffiths discussed ongoing energy sector challenges associated with the Russian invasion of Ukraine, including escalating energy prices and supply chain constraints, and the opportunities presented by increased co-operation between Ireland and Wales on the deployment of renewable energy. In particular, the ministers discussed future co-operation opportunities in the area of offshore wind and the development of offshore grids, including further electricity interconnection between Ireland and Wales.

## Broader programme and future meetings

In addition to the Ministerial Forum, the Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr. Deirdre Forde, welcomed the Welsh First Minister and his delegation to Cork City Hall. The broader programme included engagements with the British Irish Chamber of Commerce, the Port of Dublin, the National Museum of Ireland, University College Cork, MaREI, the SFI Research Centre for Energy, Climate and Marine research and innovation, and members of the Cork Chamber of Commerce.

It was agreed the next meeting of the Ireland-Wales Forum would take place in Wales in late 2023.

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