

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL TRADE AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MEETING

NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT OFFICES, ARMAGH

16 APRIL 2025

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The twenty fourth North South Ministerial Council Trade and Business Development meeting was held in the NSMC Joint Secretariat Offices, Armagh, on 16 April 2025. The meeting was attended by Caoimhe Archibald MLA, Minister for the Economy, Gordon Lyons MLA, Minister for Communities, and Peter Burke TD, Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment. Minister Archibald chaired the meeting.

INTERTRADEIRELAND PROGRESS REPORT

2. The NSMC welcomed the overall achievements of InterTradeIreland since the previous Sectoral meeting in October 2024, including achieving a Business Development Value of £115m /€132m in 2024, well in excess of its target.
3. Ministers acknowledged the valuable support that InterTradeIreland has provided for small and medium-sized companies through its trade and development programmes such as the Acumen Programme, Go2Tender Programme and the advice and support provided through the Trade Hub.
4. The Council recognised the positive impact of the innovation and technology programmes administered by InterTradeIreland, such as the Collaborative Innovation Pathway which has provided support to over 900 SMEs.

5. Ministers noted InterTradelreland's ongoing research work, which includes the recently launched report "The Changing Nature of Trade on the island of Ireland" and the completed research into the business development ecosystem.
6. The NSMC noted that InterTradelreland is leading on the delivery of the *Women's Entrepreneurship* and *Clustering* strands of the Shared Island Enterprise Scheme, with the launch of eight pilot programmes for women entrepreneurs in 2024. Planning is also underway for the Global TCI (The Competitiveness Institute) Cluster Conference in Dublin in October 2025.
7. The Council noted that InterTradelreland hosted a successful Venture Capital Conference in Dublin in March 2025 for almost 900 attendees, which highlighted current sources of equity funding and provided a collaborative environment for innovation.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE MATTERS

8. The Council approved the InterTradelreland 2025 Business Plan and recommended the Budget/Grant provision.
9. The NSMC noted InterTradelreland's Annual Report and Accounts for 2022, which have been certified by the Comptrollers and Auditors General and laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly and both Houses of the Oireachtas, and the Annual Report and Accounts for 2023, which will be laid shortly.

PRESENTATION – COLLABORATION ON WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP ELEMENT OF SHARED ISLAND ENTERPRISE SCHEME

10. Ministers noted the work taken forward by InterTradelreland as it leads on the Women's Entrepreneurship element of the Shared Island Enterprise Scheme.
11. The Council welcomed the presentations from Entrepreneurs who have benefited from the supports provided by the Women's Entrepreneurship pilot programmes.

APPOINTMENT OF BOARD MEMBER TO INTERTRADEIRELAND

12. The NSMC appointed a board member to the Board of the Trade & Business Development Body (InterTradelreland).

PRESENTATION – INTERTRADEIRELAND'S RESEARCH ON OFFSHORE RENEWABLES OPPORTUNITIES

13. Ministers welcomed the presentation by Everoze on Offshore Wind and Hydrogen Opportunities on the island of Ireland, and noted the opportunities available through joint working to deliver mutual benefits in line with the economic and decarbonisation strategies of both jurisdictions.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

14. The Council agreed to hold its next NSMC Trade and Business Development meeting in November 2025.

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Website www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org