



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE **British-Irish Council Summit in Wales**

DATE **16 January 2026**

BY **First Minister, Eluned Morgan MS**

I was pleased to welcome political leaders to Wales for the 44th meeting of the British-Irish Council on 4 and 5 December which was held in the Vale of Glamorgan. The theme of this summit was ‘A Creative Future: Unlocking the Potential of the Creative Industries Across These Islands’. Given the theme of the summit, I was joined at the summit by the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning and the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership. A joint Communiqué was issued after the meeting, which is available [here](#).

This summit provided the opportunity to showcase Wales’s world class innovation and production within the creative industries sectors, including representation from screen (Bad Wolf Productions; and Ruth Jones), music (Nancy Williams and Harry Nolan-Hampson; Quartet Draig) digital (Rarebit Studios; Rocket Science; Wales Interactive) and publishing (Professor Mererid Hopwood).

I chaired the summit plenary session which focused in particular on the screen sector. The discussion provided an opportunity to share experiences across the governments represented, recognising the creative industries as vital to economic growth, cultural identity, and international influence while acknowledging challenges such as funding, skills development, employment uncertainty, digital transformation and the impact of artificial intelligence.

The Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership outlined recent progress in Wales, highlighting the achievements of Creative Wales, our dedicated government agency for the creative industries. Since its launch in 2020, Creative Wales has provided bespoke production funding and delivered significant economic returns – over £419 million from an investment of £33 million. More than 27,000 people and over 300 companies have benefited from the first round of the Creative Wales Skills Fund. The Minister also highlighted our efforts to promote diversity through partnerships and apprenticeship schemes and stressed our commitment to collaboration to overcome shared barriers and unlock growth. In addition, he emphasised the importance of fair access to UK-wide funding, reform of the UK screen tax regime, and a regulatory framework to ensure the sustainability of public service broadcasting. In commenting on the rapid shift in media consumption

patterns, the Minister noted that Wales is leading in internet-connected TV adoption and daily video viewing.

The plenary session also provided an opportunity to reflect on latest political developments across the governments represented and also globally. In opening the discussion, I noted progress in the Middle East since the previous meeting while recognising that much work remains to secure a stable and lasting peace in Palestine. However, I expressed concern about the ongoing suffering of the people of Ukraine and the increasing hostility from Russia towards Europe. I supported progress on EU/UK trade talks, which are particularly important for Wales given our high proportion of exports to the EU, and noted concerns about the impact of US tariffs, which affect Wales more than other parts of the UK due to our export profile. The discussion gave me a further opportunity to welcome announcements in the recent UK Government Budget, including support for people on low incomes, the lifting of the two-child benefit cap, and increases in the minimum and living wage, all of which will benefit thousands of people across Wales. On top of this I noted the recent UK Government announcement that Wales will host the first small modular nuclear reactors and two AI growth zones.

In addition to the formal plenary discussion the summit enabled a range of bilateral discussions across the governments represented. The next BIC Summit will be hosted by the Government of Guernsey in summer 2026.