



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Research and Information Service Briefing Paper

Paper 000/00

October 2020

NIAR 280-2020

Information on the North-South Ministerial Council and British Irish Council

RaISe

Summary

The agreement reached at the multi-party negotiations in April 1998 (the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement) provided for a North-South Ministerial Council (NSMC) and British-Irish Council (BIC). The agreement between the UK and Irish governments, contained as an Annex to that agreement, committed the two governments to establishing the bodies.

Part 5 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 provided the legislative framework for provisions contained in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, including the NSMC and BIC.

Further agreements between the two governments in March 1999 contained more detail on the structure and functions of the NSMC and BIC.

The North/South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 gave effect to the implementation bodies that operate under the policy direction of the NSMC. The British-Irish Agreement Act 1999 made equivalent provisions for the North/South bodies in the Republic of Ireland.

The St. Andrews Agreement Act inserted new section 52A into the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to make individual ministers and the First and deputy First Ministers more accountable for Ministers' attendance at NSMC meetings.

NSMC

The NSMC meets in different formats – plenary, institutional and sectoral – to discuss and progress areas of mutual cooperation. Six of these areas are the remit of the implementation bodies while a further six are progressed through existing mechanisms.

BIC

The BIC brings together the governments of the UK and Ireland (including Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man) to progress areas of mutual interest. Most of the governments (though not all) take the lead in a work area. The BIC holds bi-annual summit meetings with Heads of Administrations and work sector meetings of Ministers and meetings of officials.

1 Introduction

This briefing paper has been prepared for the Committee for the Executive Office. The committee asked for information on the following:

- the authority under which the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) and British Irish Council (BIC) were established;
- the functions of those bodies;
- membership;
- frequency of meetings; and
- examples of their work/achievements.

2 North South Ministerial Council

Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement

The Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement provided for the establishment of the NSMC.

Strand two of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement states:

Under a new British/Irish Agreement dealing with the totality of relationships, and related legislation at Westminster and in the Oireachtas, a North/South Ministerial Council to be established to bring together those with executive responsibilities in Northern Ireland and the Irish Government, to develop consultation, co-operation and action within the island of Ireland - including through implementation on an all-island and cross-border basis - on matters of mutual interest within the competence of the Administrations, North and South.

It goes on to set out how the NSMC should meet:

3. The Council to meet in different formats:

- (i) in plenary format twice a year, with Northern Ireland representation led by the First Minister and Deputy First Minister and the Irish Government led by the Taoiseach;*
- (ii) in specific sectoral formats on a regular and frequent basis with each side represented by the appropriate Minister;*
- (iii) in an appropriate format to consider institutional or cross-sectoral matters (including in relation to the EU) and to resolve disagreement.*

4. Agendas for all meetings to be settled by prior agreement between the two sides, but it will be open to either to propose any matter for consideration or action.

Paragraph 9 of strand two states that the NSMC will identify at least six subject areas for cooperation and implementation in the following two categories:

- (i) Matters where existing bodies will be the appropriate mechanisms for co-operation in each separate jurisdiction;*
- (ii) Matters where the co-operation will take place through agreed implementation bodies on a cross-border or all-island level.*

Paragraph 10 committed the British and Irish governments to the:

necessary legislative and other enabling preparations to ensure, as an absolute commitment, that these bodies, which have been agreed as a result of the work programme, function at the time of the inception of the British-Irish Agreement and the transfer of powers, with legislative authority for these bodies transferred to the Assembly as soon as possible thereafter. Other arrangements for the agreed co-operation will also commence contemporaneously with the transfer of powers to the Assembly.

Paragraph 11 further states that:

The implementation bodies will have a clear operational remit. They will implement on an all-island and cross-border basis policies agreed in the Council.

Paragraph 13 sets out the inter-dependency between the Northern Ireland Assembly and the NSMC:

It is understood that the North/South Ministerial Council and the Northern Ireland Assembly are mutually inter-dependent, and that one cannot successfully function without the other.

The agreement between the UK and Irish governments, contained as an Annex in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, committed the two governments to establishing the NSMC and its implementation bodies.

Northern Ireland Act 1998 and transfer of functions

Part 5 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 legislated for the NSMC. This included nomination of Ministers and junior Ministers to attend meetings of the NSMC to ensure cross-community participation and a requirement to report back to the Executive and the Assembly following meetings of the NSMC.

A further Agreement reached between the British and Irish governments in March 1999 established the implementation bodies, including their names and functions.¹

The North/South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999² gave effect to the North/South bodies and transferred the requisite powers for their operation. This Order incorporated the March 1999 Agreement between the two governments.

The British-Irish Agreement Act 1999 made equivalent provisions for the North/South bodies in the Republic of Ireland.³

Comprehensive Agreement 2004

The Proposals by the British and Irish Governments for a Comprehensive Agreement (the Comprehensive Agreement) published in 2004⁴ outlined proposed changes to preparation and attendance at NSMC and BIC meetings. Essentially, they sought to make ministers more accountable for attendance and ensuring that NSMC and BIC

¹ Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Ireland establishing implementation bodies done at Dublin on the 8th day of March 1999.

² The North/South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/859/made>

³ The British-Irish Agreement Act 1999: <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1999/act/1/section/1/enacted/en/html#parti>

⁴ Proposals by the British and Irish Governments for a Comprehensive Agreement: https://web.archive.org/web/20060810135416/http://www.nio.gov.uk/proposals_by_the_british_and_irish_governments_for_a_comprehensive_agreement.pdf#search=%22comprehensive%20agreement%22

papers are circulated to all Executive ministers in advance of the NSMC or BIC meeting at which they are to be discussed.

St. Andrews Agreement and subsequent changes

The Comprehensive Agreement of 2004 did not lead to a restoration of devolved government, but the St. Andrews Agreement contained similar proposals.

It also provided for a review of the North South Implementation Bodies and areas of mutual cooperation. This review was progressed by a Review Group appointed by the NSMC with an advisory panel appointed by the Northern Ireland Executive and Irish Government.

Section 12 of the St. Andrews Agreement Act 2006 inserted new section 52A into the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This made a number of amendments in relation to the NSMC and BIC. Figure x highlights the major provisions of section 52A and for ease of reference it includes the provisions relating to the BIC.

Figure 1: key provisions of the St Andrews Agreement Act 2006 relating to the NSMC and BIC

Section 5 of the 2006 Act inserted new section 28A (Ministerial Code) into the NIA 1998:

- The Ministerial Code must also include provision as to the procedures of the Executive Committee with respect to...consideration by the Committee of decision papers that are to be considered by the North-South Ministerial Council or the British-Irish Council.

Section 7 of the 2006 Act amended Schedule 4 of the NIA 1998:

- amendment to the Pledge of Office for Executive Ministers to include a commitment to participate fully in the NSMC and BIC.

Summary of section 52A Northern Ireland Act 1998 as inserted by section 12 of the St Andrews Agreement Act 2006:

- placing a duty on the First and deputy First Ministers to ensure that the Executive Committee and Assembly are made aware of the date and agenda of forthcoming meetings of the NSMC or BIC and of the name of the Ministers or junior Ministers who are to attend the meeting;
- providing that a Minister or junior Minister with responsibility for a matter included on the agenda for a meeting of either the NSMC or BIC is entitled to attend and participate in the meeting, or nominating a Minister or junior Minister to attend in their place;

- a requirement on Ministers or junior Ministers to participate in meetings that they are attending; and
- the Ministerial Code must also include provision as to the procedures of the Executive Committee with respect to consideration by the Committee of decision papers that are to be considered by the NSMC or the BIC.
- The First Minister and the deputy First Minister acting jointly shall make such nominations (or further nominations) of Ministers and junior Ministers (including where appropriate alternative nominations) as they consider necessary to ensure such cross-community participation in either Council as is required by the Belfast Agreement.

North South Implementation Bodies and areas of cooperation

There are six north-south bodies which operate under the policy direction of the NSMC. The bodies are:

Figure 2: Implementation bodies and summary of their functions

Body	Function
Waterways Ireland	<p>Waterways Ireland's primary function is the management, maintenance, development and restoration of the inland navigable waterway system throughout the island, principally for recreational purposes. Waterways Ireland is responsible for the following navigation systems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Shannon-Erne Waterway The Erne System The Grand Canal The Barrow Navigation System The Lower Bann Navigation System The Royal Canal The Shannon Navigation System <p>Waterways Ireland is also charged with taking forward further studies and appraisals in relation to the possible restoration of the Ulster Canal.</p>
Food Safety Promotion Board	<p>Principally charged with tasks involving food safety awareness - through public campaigns, conferences, training and advising professionals and the general public. It is also involved in supporting North South scientific co-operation, and links between institutions working in the field of food safety - laboratories, statutory food safety enforcement agencies, international and domestic research bodies. Its remit also includes the promotion of specialised laboratory services, North and South.</p>
Trade and Business Development Body (InterTrade Ireland)	<p>Focus on promoting North South trade and business co-operation by building enterprise capability, competitiveness and developing networks. InterTradeIreland aims to add value to the work being carried out by the existing trade and business development agencies.</p>

	<p>InterTradeIreland also has objectives to enhance enterprise competitiveness in a North/South context in areas such as skills availability, telecoms, information technology and electronic commerce by encouraging information sharing, joint marketing initiatives, joint research and development and other ventures as well as maximising the potential of e-business across the island.</p>
Special European Union Programmes Body	<p>The principal responsibility of the SEUPB is as Managing Authority for various EU Programmes. The managerial functions of the SEUPB hold provide for administration, grant-making and oversight roles in relation to the Community Initiatives under the European Structural Funds. Currently, the SEUPB is responsible for the implementation of the EU's Peace IV and INTERREG VA Programmes, and also has a signposting role to promote involvement in the INTERREG VB Transnational and INTERREG VC Interregional Programmes.</p> <p>Further functions of the SEUPB provide for research and evaluation of programmes as well as the monitoring and the promotion of the Common Chapter in the National Development Plan for Ireland and the Northern Ireland Structural Funds Plan.</p>
The Language Body	<p>The Body consists of two largely autonomous agencies, Foras na Gaeilge and Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch.</p> <p>Foras na Gaeilge has the objective of promoting the Irish Language on an all-island basis. As well as taking over the functions of Bord na Gaeilge, a wide range of functions were given to the Agency to add to its effectiveness in the promotion of Irish, for example, in the area of education, dictionaries and terminology. It also took over the functions of An Gúm in relation to publications.</p> <p>The legislative remit of the Ulster-Scots Agency is "the promotion of greater awareness and the use of Ullans and of Ulster-Scots cultural issues, both within Northern Ireland and throughout the island".</p> <p>The Agency has established its main office in Belfast and has a subsidiary office in Donegal.</p> <p>The Agency, in partnership with the University of Ulster, has established the Institute of Ulster-Scots studies at the Magee Campus. The Agency undertakes the development of strategies for linguistic and educational programs and research.</p>
Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission	<p>The Body consists of two agencies, the Loughs Agency and the Lights Agency.</p> <p>The Loughs Agency has responsibility for the promotion and development of Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough for commercial and recreational purposes in respect of marine, fishery and aquaculture matters. It was intended that the Lights Agency, when established, would replace the Commissioners of Irish Lights as the General Lighthouse Authority for Ireland. However, given the complexities that have arisen in terms of pursuing such a transfer of functions, the matter is under review at present.</p>

There are also six areas of cooperation agreed by the NSMC but implemented through existing mechanisms in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The areas are:

1. **Environment:** Environment protection, pollution, water quality management and waste management in a cross-border content
2. **Health:** Accident and emergency planning, co-operation on high technology equipment, cancer research and health promotion

3. **Tourism (including Tourism Ireland):** The promotion of the island of Ireland overseas as a tourist destination via the establishment of a new company, known as Tourism Ireland
4. **Transport:** Co-operation on a strategic transport planning in road and rail infrastructure and public transport services and road and rail safety
5. **Agriculture:** Common Agricultural Policy issues, animal and plant health policy and research rural development
6. **Education:** Education for children with special needs, educational under-achievement, teacher qualifications and school, youth and teacher exchanges.

There are many sub-categories underneath the 12 main areas of cooperation, with a mapping exercise between the European Commission and the UK Government showing a possible 142 areas of North-South cooperation that could be impacted by Brexit.⁵⁶

Meetings of the NSMC

The NSMC meets in one of the following three formats:

- **Plenary:** involves the Northern Ireland Executive led by the First Minister and deputy First Minister and the Irish Government led by the Taoiseach. The task of the Plenary is to take an overview of co-operation on the island and of the North South institutions.

The NSMC has met 24 times in Plenary format.⁷ A list of the meetings to date is reproduced below.

⁵ The Guardian, *Hard Brexit would hit 142 Irish cross-border agreements*, 27th November 2017:

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/nov/27/hard-brexit-would-hit-142-irish-cross-border-agreements>

⁶ See also: Parliamentary Studies Association, blog article, *The travails of the North South Ministerial Council*, 10th April 2018:

<https://www.psa.ac.uk/psa/news/travails-north/south-ministerial-council>

⁷ Plenary meetings of the NSMC: <https://www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org/plenary-meetings-0>

Twenty Fourth Plenary meeting – Dublin 31 July 2020
Twenty Third Plenary meeting - Armagh 18 November 2016
Twenty Second Plenary Meeting - Dublin 4 July 2016
Twenty First Plenary Meeting - Armagh 11 December 2015
Twentieth Plenary Meeting - Dublin 5 June 2015
Nineteenth Plenary Meeting - Armagh 5 December 2014
[Eighteenth Plenary Meeting - Dublin, 3 October 2014](#)
Seventeenth Plenary Meeting - Armagh, 8 November 2013
Sixteenth Plenary Meeting - Dublin, 5 July 2013
Fifteenth Plenary Meeting - Armagh, 2 November 2012
Fourteenth Plenary Meeting - Dublin, 15 June 2012
Thirteenth Plenary Meeting - Armagh, 18 November 2011
Twelfth Plenary Meeting - Dublin, 10 June 2011
Eleventh Plenary Meeting - Armagh, 21 January 2011
Tenth Plenary Meeting - Dublin, 5 July 2010
Ninth Plenary Meeting - Limavady, 14 December 2009
Eighth Plenary Meeting - Dublin, 6 July 2009
Seventh Plenary Meeting - University of Ulster at Magee, 23 January 2009
Sixth Plenary Meeting - Dundalk, 7 February 2008
Fifth Plenary Meeting – Armagh, 17 July 2007
Fourth Plenary Meeting – Armagh, 28 June 2002
Third Plenary Meeting – Dublin, 30 November 2001

- **Sectoral:** NSMC meets in Sectoral Format to oversee co-operation in the agreed 12 Areas or Sectors. At these Sectoral meetings of the NSMC, the Irish Government is represented by the Minister or the Minister of State responsible for that Sector, and the Northern Ireland Executive is represented by two Ministers nominated by the First Minister and deputy First Minister on a cross-community basis, one normally being the Minister with responsibility for that Sector within the Executive.

Sectoral meetings are the most frequent type of meeting, with over 100 meetings to date.⁸

- **Institutional:** The Northern Ireland Executive is represented by the First Minister and deputy First Minister and the Irish Government is represented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade. In this format, the NSMC considers institutional and cross-sectoral issues, including in relation to the EU, and endeavours to resolve disagreements and difficulties in the operations of the NSMC.

⁸ Sectoral meetings of the NSMC: <https://www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org/content/sectoral-meetings>

The NSMC has met 11 times in Institutional format and a list of the meetings to date is reproduced below.⁹

Eleventh institutional Meeting Armagh 11 March 2020
 Tenth Institutional Meeting Belfast 25 February 2015
 Ninth Institutional Meeting Dublin 10 January 2014
 Eighth Institutional Meeting, Stormont Castle, Belfast 29 April 2013
 Seventh Institutional Meeting, Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Dublin - 27 April 2012
 Sixth Institutional Meeting, Stormont Castle - 3 October 2011
 Fifth Institutional Meeting, Stormont Castle - 11 November 2009
 Fourth Institutional Meeting, Dublin - 28 April 2009
 Third Institutional Meeting, Stormont Castle - 17 December 2007
 Second Institutional Meeting, Dundalk - 30 October 2007
 First Institutional Meeting, Parliament Buildings, Belfast - 17 December 2001

After each meeting of the NSMC in any format, a Joint Communiqué¹⁰ is issued to inform the public about what was discussed and agreed at the meeting.

Funding

The Minister of Finance, in response to an Assembly question in June 2020, set out the funding structure of the North/South implementation bodies:

Schedule 1, Annex 2, Part 7 Paragraph 2 of the North/South Cooperation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 (The Order) sets out the Financial Arrangements for the North South (N/S) Implementation Bodies.

Specifically, paragraph 2.1 states “The Northern South Ministerial Council (NSMC) will, with the approval of the Finance Ministers make recommendations as to the amounts of such grants.”

In addition Part II of The Order, for each Body, states that the relevant department “may make grants to the Body Such grants shall be of such amounts and be made on such terms and conditions as that departments may, with the approval of the Department of Finance (DOF), determine”.¹¹

The latest funding amounts for the bodies is listed at Appendix 1.

⁹ Institutional meetings of the NSMC: <https://www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org/institutional-meetings-0>

¹⁰ NSMC publications: <https://www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org/publications>

¹¹ NIA AQW 5223/17-22:

[http://aims.niassembly.gov.uk/questions/searchresults.aspx?&qf=0&asb=0&tbm=0&anb=0&abp=0&sp=1&qfv=1&asbv=0&tbmv=1&anbv=0&abpv=0&spv=6&ss=h/uvxCmTaFY=&per=2&fd=&td=&pm=1&asbt=All%20Members&anbt=All%20Ministers&abpt=All%20Parties&spt=17-22%20\(2017%20-%20Present\)](http://aims.niassembly.gov.uk/questions/searchresults.aspx?&qf=0&asb=0&tbm=0&anb=0&abp=0&sp=1&qfv=1&asbv=0&tbmv=1&anbv=0&abpv=0&spv=6&ss=h/uvxCmTaFY=&per=2&fd=&td=&pm=1&asbt=All%20Members&anbt=All%20Ministers&abpt=All%20Parties&spt=17-22%20(2017%20-%20Present))

Staffing

The NSMC is supported by a standing joint Secretariat, staffed by members of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Irish Civil Service. According to the 2016 Annual Report of the NSMC, which is the latest available:

Staff costs are met by TEO and DFAT. All other costs associated with the Joint Secretariat and the NSMC are shared between the two administrations. The cost of running the Joint Secretariat in 2016 amounted to Stg £1,464,011.08.¹²

Achievements

Defining what may be an achievement or success is necessarily a subjective task. The research examined recent annual reports of the NSMC to identify notable events over the course of the preceding year. The following information has been reproduced from those reports.

- **2016 annual report:** The new Radiotherapy Unit at Altnagelvin Area Hospital opened on 28 November and when fully operational will have the capacity to treat just over 1500 new patients, with up to 385 of these patients from Donegal, Sligo and Leitrim.

The Irish Government and the Executive reaffirmed their commitment to work closely together to deliver a world class proposal for hosting the 2023 Rugby World Cup tournament.

Tourism Ireland helped deliver an exceptional year for Tourism, North and South. Figures for overseas visitors to Ireland in 2016 show that numbers were up 10% when compared with 2015. For Northern Ireland, overseas visitors show an increase of 8% when compared to the same period in 2015.¹³

- **2015 annual report:** Council welcomed the progress with the construction of the new Radiotherapy Unit at Altnagelvin.

Council welcomed the refurbishment of the Belfast to Dublin Enterprise Service and the improvements to the Boyne Viaduct. Funded by the EU INTERREG Programme, the work represents a significant investment in the transport corridor between Dublin and Belfast.

Council also welcomed the commencement of work on the 2.5km stretch of the Ulster Canal between Lough Erne and the International Scout Centre at Castle Sanderson on the Cavan-Fermanagh border...Once completed in 2017, the

¹² Annual Report of the NSMC, 2016:

https://www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org/sites/northsouthministerialcouncil.org/files/publications/Annual%20Report%202016_0.pdf

¹³ As above.

improvement to this stretch of the canal will be a welcome boost to the economy in the Cavan-Fermanagh border area.¹⁴

3 British Irish Council

Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement

The genesis of the BIC lies in strand three of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, which provided for:

- 1. A British-Irish Council (BIC) [to] be established under a new British Irish Agreement to promote the harmonious and mutually beneficial development of the totality of relationships among the peoples of these islands.*
- 2. Membership of the BIC will comprise representatives of the British and Irish Governments, devolved institutions in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, when established, and, if appropriate, elsewhere in the United Kingdom, together with representatives of the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.*
- 3. The BIC will meet in different formats: at summit level, twice per year; in specific sectoral formats on a regular basis, with each side represented by the appropriate Minister; in an appropriate format to consider cross sectoral matters.*

The Agreement anticipated that:

The BIC will exchange information, discuss, consult and use best endeavours to reach agreement on co-operation on matters of mutual interest within the competence of the relevant Administrations. Suitable issues for early discussion in the BIC could include transport links, agricultural issues, environmental issues, cultural issues, health issues, education issues and approaches to EU issues.

The agreement between the UK and Irish governments, contained as an annex in the Belfast Agreement, committed the two governments to establishing BIC.

Northern Ireland Act 1998 and St. Andrew's Agreement

The legislative framework governing the BIC was set out in Part 5 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (similar to the NSMC).

¹⁴Annual report of the NSMC, 2015: <https://www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org/publications/annual-report-2015>

The Agreement reached between the British and Irish Governments in March 1999¹⁵ established the Council and provided that it would operate under the terms of the multi-party agreement (the Belfast Agreement).

The St. Andrew's Agreement and subsequent legislation amended the 1998 Act by inserting new section 52A which related to the BIC and NSMC (see figure 1).

Structure of the BIC

The member administrations are responsible for taking the lead on work areas, as shown in figure 3:

Figure 3: Member administrations and work areas

Member administration	Work area
Northern Ireland	Collaborative Spatial Planning Housing Transport
Wales	Early Years Indigenous, Minority and Lesser-Used Languages Social inclusion (co-chaired with the Scottish Government)
Scotland	Energy (co-chaired with the UK Government) Social Inclusion (co-chaired with the Welsh Government)
United Kingdom	Energy (co-chaired with the Scottish Government) Environment
Republic of Ireland	Misuse of Substances
Isle of Man	Digital Inclusion
Jersey	Creative Industries
Guernsey	N/A

Meetings can be held in two different formats: “bi-annual summit meetings with Heads of Administrations and work sector meetings of Ministers and meetings of officials.”¹⁶ There have been 33 summit meetings to date. As with the NSMC, communiquees are issued after each summit and ministerial meeting.

Outputs

The BIC publishes reports on areas of work. Examples from the period 2017-2020 include:

¹⁵ Agreement Between the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland establishing a British-Irish Council:

<https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/alldfawebstitemedia/treatyseries/uploads/documents/treaties/docs/200026.pdf>

¹⁶ British Irish Council: <https://www.britishirishcouncil.org/about-council>

- Adult learning of IML languages and links with community, workplace and society
- BIC Early Years Policy Report 2019
- Making the Transition to a Smarter Energy System
- Caring For Our Carers Report
- Misuse of Substances - Drugs Strategies and Policy Developments
- BIC Digital Inclusion - Developing Digital Skills
- Economic Impact of IML Languages
- IML Languages and Technology¹⁷

Staffing

The BIC is staffed by a permanent secretariat, established in 2012, based in Edinburgh. The 2019 Annual Report of the BIC states:

*The Secretariat running costs for the financial year April 2019 to March 2020 were £115,945.49. These costs are shared between the eight Member Administrations using an agreed set formula. With the exception of the Secretariat office manager, costs for individual staff are met by their parent administration as they are on loan to the Secretariat. Funding for Summits and Ministerial meetings is met by the host Member Administration.*¹⁸

¹⁷ Information accessed via the website of the BIC: <https://www.britishirishcouncil.org/publications>

¹⁸ Annual Report of the British Irish Council, 2019-20:

<https://www.britishirishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/attachments/Annual%20Report%202019.pdf>

Appendix 1 – latest funding figures for the North-South implementation bodies

Body	Latest funding (£)	
	<i>Republic of Ireland</i>	<i>Northern Ireland</i>
Waterways Ireland	Department Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht 22,872,000	Department for Infrastructure 4,537,000
Food Safety Promotion Board	Department of Health 4,712,417	Department of Health 2,010,828
Trade and Business Development Body (InterTrade Ireland)	Department for Business, Enterprise and Innovation 6,944,069	Department for Economy 2,862,929
Special European Union Programmes Body ¹⁹	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (2017) 893,000	Department of Finance 1,007,000
The Language Body	Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht (2017) 10,116,072	Department for Communities 3,194,057
Loughs Agency (an agency of the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission)	Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment 2,249,688	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs 2,299,688

¹⁹ Other minor ring fenced funding is provided.