

Plenary JC 30 November 2001

North/South Ministerial Council

Joint Communiqué

Plenary Meeting - 30 November 2001

At the third Plenary Meeting on 30 November 2001, the Council reviewed the programme of co-operation which it oversees and noted the satisfactory progress made in implementing the work programme set out at the first Plenary meeting of the NSMC in December 1999.

The main decisions taken by the Council at this Plenary meeting included:

1. Agreeing a schedule of future NSMC meetings including the first meeting of the NSMC in Institutional Format before the end of December 2001.
2. Agreeing that the Steering Group manage the consultation exercise on the Study on Obstacles to Cross-Border Mobility on the island of Ireland. The Council agreed that the two administrations would allow interested organisations, including Government Departments and individuals the opportunity to present their views on the recommendations and their implementation before it offered a view on the conclusions of the report produced by the consultants.
3. Agreeing an opinion on the budgets for the North/South Bodies for the period 2002-2004. The NSMC envisages that the total to be spent by the six Bodies in 2002 will be some Stg.£54.37m/€2.07m. The respective contributions to this amount will be Stg.£40.01m/€67.74m from the Irish Government and Stg.£14.37m/€4.33m from the Northern Ireland Administration. The details of the budgets for the Bodies will be considered further as part of the processes for planning public expenditure in both jurisdictions.
4. The Council received a report on enhancing competitiveness in the two economies which was commissioned by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, working in conjunction with InterTradeIreland, the Trade and Business Development Body. The Council noted the content and findings of the report and that the conclusions covered a broad spectrum of work across a range of administrative functions. The Council requested that the relevant Government Departments and Agencies pursue the competitiveness agenda, to mutual economic benefit, in the areas for which they have responsibility.