

Press release: Welsh Secretary launches Wales-France business forum

The Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns launched the Wales-France business forum at a reception hosted by the British Embassy in Paris. The forum will connect business people across both countries, encouraging Franco-Welsh trade and creating new business development opportunities.

Wales is estimated to be home to 85 French companies employing more than 9,000 people. These include Keolis and Bouygues, who have committed their support to the new forum following recent investments in Wales. Keolis Amey was awarded the contract to run Transport for Wales and Bouygues has invested in a new innovation campus at Cardiff University which will create more than 60 jobs.

France represents the second largest export destination for Welsh goods and services. The Wales-France Business Forum plans to build on those existing links by giving Welsh businesses a wider platform to promote themselves to new customers.

Speaking at the launch reception, the Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns highlights his aspirations for the forum saying:

This forum will provide a home for strengthened Franco-Welsh relations where business representatives from all sectors can network and learn from one another.

As the UK prepares to leave the EU, this deepening relationship between the UK and France is important both economically and politically.

Crucial to the success of this partnership is the support of the UK, French and Welsh governments to create the right conditions to support companies to export and grow overseas.

The forum will host networking events for French and Welsh businesses and entrepreneurs across Wales, ensuring that Wales remains firmly open for business as the UK leaves the European Union.