

APRIL 2026

Industry Newsletter

dublin belfast

economic
corridor



Welcome.

Welcome to the first edition of the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor (DBEC) newsletter.

DBEC is 100 miles—one corridor with unlimited potential. Our long-term vision is for the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor to become a leading economic corridor in Europe. By improving connectivity, supporting indigenous business, and attracting foreign direct investment, we aim to create the right conditions for talent, innovation, and growth to flourish. We want to be renowned as being a significant global player in key growth sectors.

The strength of the Economic Corridor lies in its people and partnerships—industry champions, academic leaders, public bodies, and businesses working together across the region. Their insight and collaboration inform the work of our governance steering groups and Industry Advisory Panels, ensuring the corridor remains responsive to the needs of investors, innovators, and the wider ecosystem.

This newsletter aims to showcase key developments across the corridor and its partners, celebrate collaboration, and share insights that are helping drive growth and opportunity.

We invite you to engage, connect, and be part of shaping the future of DBEC.



CLLR RYAN CARLIN
DBEC CO-CHAIR



CLLR SHARON TOLAN
DBEC CO-CHAIR

Industry Champion

Each quarter, the 'Corridor Champion' series highlights a standout entrepreneur whose work is shaping and being shaped by the DBEC region. In this edition, the spotlight turns to **Shane Reenan**, CEO and co founder of **Retech Offshore**, a company rapidly emerging as a key player in the renewable energy technology sector.



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Corridor at a Glance

DBEC promotes investment in the economic corridor through promoting its infrastructure, connected transport links, established industries, skilled workforce, and the quality of life enjoyed by those who live in the region.

Key facts about the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor

- DBEC is home to one-third of the island's population with a young, skilled workforce; key growth sectors include Professional & Financial Services, ICT, Health & Social Work, and Tourism.
- 39% of the island's active businesses, over a third of new business births, and 42% of agency-supported businesses are located in the DBEC.
- 47% of employment in exporting and innovation-active SMEs and multinationals is in the Corridor.
- Forecasts suggest DBEC could generate 53% of the island's 600,000 new jobs by 2033 and €800m GVA growth by 2030 (€4bn cumulative).

	2.2 MILLION PEOPLE LIVING ACROSS THE CORRIDOR, OVER A THIRD OF THE ISLAND'S POPULATION	WORLD CLASS EDUCATION SYSTEM NURTURING A PIPELINE OF SKILLED TALENT
A SKILLED AND DIVERSE WORKFORCE 34% WORKING-AGE POPULATION IS EDUCATED TO AT LEAST A THIRD-LEVEL QUALIFICATION	6 SEAPORTS, 2 AIRPORTS WELL-CONNECTED TRANSPORT NETWORKS	WORLD CLASS TRANSLINKS CONVENIENT TRAVEL BY TRAIN AND OTHER TRANS LINKS
RICH HISTORY FROM NEWGRANGE TO THE MOURNES AND CARLINGFORD LOUGH, DBEC IS FULL OF CULTURE, HERITAGE	HOSPITALITY THE CORRIDOR TRAVERSES AS THE FOOD BASKET OF THE ISLAND OF IRELAND.	HEALTHCARE THERE ARE SEVERAL HOSPITALS ACROSS THE REGION INCLUDING IN BELFAST, CRAIGAVON, NEWRY, DROGHEDA, CAVAN AND DUBLIN.

Events

Industry Advisory Panel meeting

The second meeting of the newly established Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor (DBEC) Industry Advisory Panel took place at Belfast Harbour Commissioners on Wednesday (25.2.26), marking an important step in shaping the Corridor's priorities and programme for 2026.

A key pillar of DBEC's Partnership strategy, the panel brings together industry leaders to help ensure growth across the Corridor is driven by strong collaboration between business, academia, and government. At this meeting, members agreed on priority actions and programme direction for the year ahead.



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Chengdu International Friendship Cities Cooperation and Development Conference, China, May 2026

The 2026 Chengdu International Friendship Cities Cooperation and Development Conference will be held on 13 – 16 May 2026.

The Conference will focus on promoting international cooperation and exchange between Chengdu and its global sister cities in areas such as trade, investment, technology, education, culture, food and tourism.

Fingal County Council has had a sister city arrangement in place with Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China for over 10 years. A delegation from Fingal, led by Mayor Cllr. Tom O'Leary, will attend the conference to further international relations with China in industry, technology, culture and tourism and to promote Fingal and the DBEC region as a strategic investment location in Europe.

Chengdu, the fourth biggest city in China with a population of over 21 million, is a leading economic, technological and logistics hub in Western China. Chengdu has a strategic focus on becoming the Gateway to Europe and expanding global connections through its international airport and the expansion of its international collaboration



CLLR TOM O'LEARY, MAYOR OF FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL AND A MEMBER OF THE DBEC POLITICAL ADVISORY GROUP, PICTURED WITH THE CHENGDU DELEGATION.

agreements which now number in excess of 240 arrangements with cities across five continents. Chengdu is focusing on the integration of urban areas with green ecological zones in its 'Park City' concept and with a strategy to become a twin city structure with the Longquan Mountain as a green central heart. Chengdu aims to become a leading scientific innovation hub supported by research from universities such as the University of Electronic Science & Technology of China and to develop advanced manufacturing capacity as home to a range of global companies.

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DBEC Councils Showcase at UKREiiF 2026

Belfast City Council, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council and Newry, Mourne & Down District Council will bring the Northern Ireland pillar of the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor to UKREiiF 2026 (19–21 May, Royal Armouries, Leeds). Together, they present a coordinated, investment-ready proposition that highlights the Corridor's scale, talent, infrastructure and cross-border connectivity. Each council showcases its own opportunities for investment while reinforcing DBEC's compelling regional story — positioning the Corridor as one of the UK and Ireland's most strategic and investable destinations.

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DBEC at MIPIM

Representatives from DBEC member organisations recently took part in a panel discussion at the Belfast Pavilion, and showcased the Economic Corridor at the Ireland at MIPIM Pavilion, as part of this year's **MIPIM** (9th-13th March), the annual global property event that connects leaders in the property industry.

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE BELFAST CITY AND REGION PLACE PARTNERSHIP

Collaboration Projects

Collaboration is key to the success of the corridor as a place to invest, live and work. Here is some of the latest news on collaboration across education, infrastructure and business supports within the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor.

DKIT and QUB

DKIT recently celebrated the formal endorsement of a Heads of Agreement with Queen's University Belfast underscoring a joint commitment to cross-border collaboration in teaching and learning, research and innovation, and community engagement.

Read more about this joint commitment to cross-border collaboration:

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MetroLink

MetroLink is a transformative piece of new public transport

It will comprise a high-capacity, high-frequency, modern and efficient metro railway, with 16 new stations running from Swords to Charlemont. The alignment will link Dublin Airport, Irish Rail, DART, Dublin Bus and Luas services and create a fully integrated public transport network for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA). The MetroLink alignment is shown in adjacent map.

As well as linking major transport hubs, MetroLink will connect key destinations including Ballymun, the Mater Hospital, the Rotunda Hospital, Dublin City University (DCU) and Trinity College Dublin (TCD). Much of the 18.8km route will run



underground, an exciting innovation for Irish public transport.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), on behalf of the MetroLink programme, has begun the process of selecting prospective bidders to tender for major civil infrastructure packages

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