



In this 24 page fourth edition of NI-NL BIZ Steve Murnaghan, Founder of NI-NL, looks back on an extremely busy period in Northern Ireland - Netherlands trade relations....

- welcoming the largest ever Trade Mission from Northern Ireland to the Netherlands
- reporting on a successful New Year's Dinner in Wassenaar
- providing an insight into Minister Arlene Foster's visit to the Netherlands
- showing that NI companies are taking full advantage of sterling
- meeting companies investing energy into waste solutions
- viewing how Northern Ireland is marketed in the Netherlands by Tourism Ireland

Ministers 'Underpin' NI - NL Trade links

Northern Ireland Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment Arlene Foster MLA recently met her Dutch counterpart Minister for Foreign Trade Frank Heemskerk to discuss business and linkages between the two countries.

Following the meeting at Kasteel de Wittenburg, Wassenaar, Minister Foster said: "We had a very productive meeting on how we can work together to improve business linkages and strategic partnerships between Northern Ireland and the Netherlands, to help both economies grow at this time of global economic difficulties."

Minister Heemskerk confirmed the importance of International Trade. "For open economies such as The Netherlands and Northern Ireland it is extremely important to promote foreign trade. This is in essence our strength."

Minister Foster engaged on a busy programme of visits in the Netherlands for three days supporting and promoting enterprise, tourism and investment and addressed 160 guests at the NI-NL New Year's Dinner on the theme 'There has never been a better time to trade with Northern Ireland.'



Minister Frank Heemskerk attaches the new NI-NL partnership pin onto Minister Arlene Foster's lapel.



23rd October 2008

Autumn Business Lunch and Networking



The Bank of Ireland sponsored Northern Ireland - Netherlands Trade and Export Society Autumn Lunch, held in the Assembly Room of Lisburn Museum on 23rd October, was attended by 40 exporters active in the region. [photo 1]

Guest speaker, Tony Bianchi from Brett Martin, highlighted the complex nuances of European trade, explaining the necessity for close supervision of remote operations, and the imperative of constant contact with agents and distributors. [photo 2]

Alderman Edwin Poots, MLA and Deputy Mayor of Lisburn City Council, Michael Kidd Head of Business Banking Bank of Ireland, Councillors Jenny Palmer and Allan Ewart Deputy Chair and Chair of Lisburn City Council's Economic Development Committee thank Tony Bianchi of Brett Martin International BV (second from left) for his wise words. [photo 3]

Bank of Ireland

Background to NI-NL

The Northern Ireland Netherlands Trade and Export Society (NI-NL) was founded in 2006 to encourage and stimulate export trade between Northern Ireland and The Netherlands. NI-NL's Mission is "to proactively assist in developing Partnerships in Trade, Enterprise & Investment between Northern Ireland and The Netherlands"

NI-NL is a forum and platform for companies and professionals active, or who wish to be active, in trade between Northern Ireland and the Netherlands. NI-NL is a not for profit foundation and plays an active role by organising a number of business network events and activities per year and keeping businesses abreast of activity between the 2 regions.



Founding Partners NI-NL



4th February 2009

NI-NL New Year's Dinner

The 2009 Dinner was held in Kasteel de Wittenburg, Wassenaar, coinciding with an Invest NI Trade Mission to the region.



Over 160 executives from Northern Ireland companies and their Dutch partners, representatives from the Northern Ireland and Dutch Governments and invited decision makers were out in force to hear guest speaker Minister Arlene Foster of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment explain that 'De Tijd is nog nooit zo gunstig geweest voor handel met Noord Ierland' (There has never been a better time to Trade with Northern Ireland). Guests from a wide range of sectors including aerospace, shipbuilding, construction materials, commercial vehicles, food and food technology, agricultural products, electronics and ICT were treated to a delicious meal of Northern Ireland produce including fresh Irish Sea scallops and langoustines with Hollandaise sauce and matured tenderloin, prepared by chefs at the Dutch Castle.

Steve Murnaghan, as Founder of NI-NL, looked back to the Society's activities in 2008 and looked forward to successful trading between the two regions in 2009. He welcomed the visiting Invest NI Trade Mission which he said would play a pivotal role in developing the next generation of links with the Netherlands, and thanked Invest NI for hosting the NI-NL New Year's Dinner.

'We hope that companies visiting for the 1st time this week will soon become regulars to the Netherlands and would welcome you to the ranks of NI-NL - you can now proudly wear your NI-NL pins and ties which you have received this evening,' he continued.

Enterprise Minister, Arlene Foster, quoted the advice of one of the most respected Dutch sportsmen turned TV pundit, Johann Cruyff, that every challenge can be turned into an advantage. The Minister was referring to the opportunity for Dutch businesses to source competitively in Euros in Northern Ireland and to develop strategic partnerships.

Minister Foster congratulated Invest Northern Ireland, Lisburn City Council, and Northern Ireland Trade Consultants, the founding partners of NI-NL, on the immensely important business initiative and for their choice of such a splendid setting for the Society's annual dinner, including the similarities with Hillsborough Castle, which hosted the 2008 dinner. "Partnership initiatives by business bodies such as the NI-NL Trade and Export Society are extremely important because they offer extensive networking opportunities that promote friendships and trade contacts."

"The business links, already developed with The Netherlands, have never been stronger, following the success of Invest NI's 'Going Dutch'



programme. The programme assisted Northern Ireland companies to build mutually beneficial business relationships with companies in the Netherlands, resulting in increased exports and trade links. It is now one of Invest NI's most successful trade initiatives."

Addressing the current global economic downturn Minister Foster continued: "Tough markets happen but good companies that focus on customer driven innovation can get stronger in bad times and succeed in international markets, emerging stronger and more competitive in the longer term."

"I look forward to continued trade success between Northern Ireland and the Netherlands and I want to encourage and support a great many more of our companies to explore business in open markets such as The Netherlands, building mutually beneficial business relationships."

Minister Foster hoped to have an opportunity to welcome guests to Northern Ireland to build on the contacts being developed during the Trade Mission and at the NI-NL New Year's Dinner.

Roderick van Schreven Director-General for Foreign Economic Relations at the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs replied also in sporting terms advising companies to skipper their vessels and to ride the economic tides by focusing on innovation and international trade. In a short 'keep it in the pocket' speech Vice Minister Van Schreven also impressed on the audience the importance of staying on the ball - as the famous Netherlands no. 14 Cruyff would also have done.



Roderick van Schreven Director-General for Foreign Economic Relations at the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs

NI-NL New Year's Dinner

A photographic report of the NI-NL New Year's Dinner can be found on the following pages.



John Meenan, Managing Director of FSL Electronics welcomes longterm business partner Mark de Wit MD of Anatec to the NI-NL New Year's Dinner.



High fliers - Ron Kleine of Stork Aerospace catches up with supplier Robert Huddelston, Managing Director of John Huddleston Engineering.



Tractomatic MD Patrick Mc Cann reminds Klaas Sjoerd de Bruin of Protempo how the NI-NL Society has grown since the 1st NI-NL Dinner they both attended in in 2006.



Michael Hingston, Export Sales Manager of Powershield Doors, Lisburn, meets with lock specialist Gert Lubbersen of ASSA Abloy Nederland.



Minister Arlene Foster MLA and Tracy Meharg of Invest NI welcome Lynn Neill MD of Fugro-BKS and Owen Goodman Chief Operating Officer Geospatial Services at Fugro to the NI-NL Dinner.



James Mackrill, Manager Benelux Region at Enterprise Ireland discusses shop fitting opportunities in the Netherlands with Mark Hughes, MD of McNicholl Hughes, based in Dunmurry.



Geert-Jan de Kok arrives at the the reception with supplier Johnathan Hanna of McCauley Trailers.



Tim Kells of Rich Sauces has strong ties with content customer Roberto Obregger of Hansel Salades en Sauzen.



Simon van Dalsem of Van Dalsem Design BV, guest of John Mackle, Managing Director of Mackle Petfoods.



Christopher Hackett of Classic Marble discusses the recent launch of award winning Classi Seal with Dutch partner René de Beer.



No introductions needed between Brett Martin's Tony Bianchi and Carson McMullan Honorary Consul of the Netherlands and MD of All Route Shipping.



Councillor Allan Ewart Chairman of Lisburn City Council Economic Development Committee explains Lisburn's tourism offering to Monica Nerney Manager Northern Europe at Tourism Ireland.



Harold Paagman and Jeroen Bergman of Pieralisi BV check out the guest list.



Andre Sterk MD of Sterk Trading tells Lena McElroy of McElroy Fish Exports about the one that got away!



John Mc Cann, Managing Director of Willowbrook Foods (centre), enjoys long standing Dutch relations.



Dick Vermeulen of Windbrokers, Michael Copeland, MD of P.F.Copeland Limited and Don Murphy of VMX Architects.



NI-NL Partnership - Sandra Kelly of Invest NI and Angelique Hamersma of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs pool their event management experience to ensure a warm welcome for guests.



Michel Peperkamp of The Dutch Agency for International Business and Cooperation (EVD), Ralph den Uijl, British Embassy, Michiel van Deursen Director of the Netherlands British Chamber of Commerce and Alan Gilmore of IICD, The Hague, network prior to the dinner.



David Mc Veigh of Harland & Wolff looks forward to dinner with guests from Merwede Shipyard and Oceanco.



Peter Hinds of Belfast Aircraft Stress Engineers, Ron Kleine of Stork Fokker Aerospace's Procurement team, Robert Huddleston of JHE and Annie de Veer of EVD meet at dinner.



Christine Boyle of Lawell Asphalt Company chats at dinner with guest Niek Leguit of Ooms Avenhorn Groep.



Caroline van der Plas of Meat & Meal, Mark Maguire of Invest Northern Ireland, Ronnie Bosma of Shannon Meats, Henny van Zijl of Jumbo Supermarkten and Adrian Loughran of C & J Meats discuss the successful launch of Shannon Matured.



H.E. British Ambassador Mr Lyn Parker, Jan-Cees Santema of VDL Bus and Sam McLaren of Wright Group enjoy each other's company.



'Foodies' Hans-Roel Riphagen of Foyle Food Group with former chef and Hanos National Account Manager Loek Beemster, Tim Kells of Rich Sauces and Spar International CEO Dr. Gordon Campbell meet at dinner.



A cluster of Hotel and Catering Industry suppliers Remco Dreijer, MD Groenveld Vlees, Jean-Paul Bianchi, Intros Hotel Supplies and Liesbeth Visser of BHVC.



Lynn Neill discusses the recent tie up of Fugro and BKS with Strategic Alliance expert Bart Verhulst of Cedis International, Going Dutch Programme Manager Elaine Curran of Invest Northern Ireland and Owen Goodman of Fugro.



Menu

The menu for the NI-NL New Year's Dinner was carefully created with input from Northern Ireland suppliers and was exquisitely prepared by the Castle's team of chefs, who commented on the freshness and quality of the produce.

Many of the suppliers had invited guests along to the New Year's Dinner which included fresh scallops from Rooney Fish with Hollandaise sauce from Rich Sauces, ripened Shannon Beef from C & J Meats which was launched officially during the Trade Mission week, chocolates from Co Couture, a boutique chocolatier from Belfast, and a taste of Bushmills whiskey to end the evening.



Saute of Irish Sea king scallops and langoustines, Sauce Hollandaise



Ensemble of Shannon matured tenderloin, whiskey sauce with champ, caramelised carrot & parsnip



Assortment of Irish desserts followed by Coffee served with Co Couture Irish Whiskey Truffles & Bushmills miniature



NI-NL New Year's Dinner, a overwhelming success

‘Good event, good attendance and well organised.’

‘The setting was perfect to promote NI and the food was some of the best I have tasted.’

‘Delicious food.’

‘All being well, next year should allow us to introduce our customers to the dinner.’

‘First class event with good networking opportunities.’

‘Good opportunity to enhance relations with existing customer.’

‘Extremely well organised - very professional, met with some influential people and a new potential customer.’

‘Well organised and gave a good impression to our agents and potential clients in Holland.’

Guests commented positively on the location, the warmth of welcome by the hosts, the convivial atmosphere, the quality of the meal, and most importantly the willingness and input from Northern Ireland and Dutch public and private sector organisations to engage and develop trade links together.

Lisburn's Outlook to the Netherlands Pays Dividends

A number of Lisburn companies which had previously participated on the City Council's successful European Outlook Programme attended the NI-NL dinner together with their Dutch partners and Councillor Allan Ewart, Chairman of Lisburn City Council's Economic Development Committee.



Councillor Allan Ewart commented, 'The Council is delighted to be an integral part of this international business network which celebrates the many successful local business partnerships which have been established in the Dutch market, as well as highlighting how important the Netherlands has become as a trading partner to businesses located within the City of Lisburn. To date the Council has enabled over 40 local companies to access

the Dutch market and plans to launch its eighth trade development programme to the Netherlands within the next few months.'

He added: 'It was great to see Lisburn companies Linton Solutions, Tractomatic and Powershield, all previous participants on the Council's Netherlands Trade Development programme at the event with their Dutch partners, testament to the long term

business partnerships which have now been established.' Councillor Ewart also confirmed that Lisburn City Council plans further Trade Development Programmes for Lisburn based companies in the coming three years to the Netherlands.

Further details can be obtained from the Economic Development Unit on Tel 028 9250 9484.

Largest-ever European Trade Mission from NI - to the Netherlands



From 2nd - 6th February 2009 the largest ever multi-sectoral Trade Mission of Northern Ireland companies (36) visited the Netherlands under the guidance of Minister Arlene Foster, Invest Northern Ireland and NITC. The Trade Mission and activities during the week played a pivotal role in developing a new generation of links and partnerships with the Netherlands.

The multi-sectoral trade mission involved a wide range of sectors and specialisms.

NI companies engaged in over 90 individual scheduled meetings throughout the Netherlands in a 48 hour period from Suwald in the North to Someren in the South and from Amsterdam in the West to Almelo in the East.

Some 'headlines' from the mission include Northern Ireland companies -

- inspecting gearboxes on the top of Dutch wind turbines
- investigating stress in the aerospace industry with Stork Aerospace
- showing Dutch chefs how to make 'Hollandaise' Sauce (!)
- launching ripened Ulster Beef under the Shannon Mature label to Dutch HoReCa
- introducing pioneering pre-cooked shellfish to top restaurants and hotels
- meeting with HoReCa butchers to discuss the market for 'Ulster Beef'
- meeting with leading Dutch pathologists in the Academische Ziekenhuizen to discuss revolutionary online and e- learning tools
- meeting counterparts in Holland to look at best practice in retail interiors
- investigating whether Dutch dogs enjoy Irish Stew

- getting inside the Dutch prison service
- investigating new Dutch housing technology in animal welfare
- showcasing technology for processing Dutch pig slurry
- sourcing Dutch environmental and water technology solutions
- investigating the market for Omega Oils into Dutch drugstores
- opening the doors to Dutch clean rooms
- getting 'on the big screen' at the Integrated Systems Europe Audio Visual show in the Rai
- viewing leading Dutch Food Processing Technology in Utrecht.

Trade Mission participants, their business partners, guests and dignitaries gathered at Kasteel de Wittenburg, Wassenaar, to crown an excellent week in Northern Ireland - Netherlands Trade relations.

On the final day of the Trade Mission Minister Foster stated "Companies taking part in the mission will be returning to Northern Ireland with a clear message that there are significant business opportunities in The Netherlands for those prepared to invest time or other resources on building partnerships in this important European marketplace."



Fostering Strong Links With The Netherlands

Northern Ireland Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment Arlene Foster engaged on a busy three day programme of visits in the Netherlands in February supporting and promoting Enterprise, Tourism and Investment.

NI-NL gained an insight into the dynamics of a ministerial visit abroad. The Minister's visit, her 1st in an official capacity to the Netherlands, was viewed positively by those from the public and private sector who she met.

Minister Backs Northern Ireland Beef In The Netherlands



Enterprise Minister Arlene Foster launched a new quality beef brand from Northern Ireland during her visit to the Netherlands.

The Minister took part in the launch of the 'Shannon Matured Beef' brand by C&J Meats of Kilmore, Co Armagh and its Dutch partner, Shannon Meats, in Zoetermeer. Beef sold under this label has been traditionally matured on the bone for a minimum of 11 days to provide a rich flavour and is available to the hotel and restaurant trade (HoReCa) in the Netherlands, through partner Shannon Meats.

The Minister said: "The launch of the new brand is an important strategic initiative by C&J Meats, an ambitious and progressive Northern Ireland company that is committed to significant growth in Europe and further afield. The company is maximising the market potential of its beef in the Netherlands by applying branding techniques to differentiate its products as being of premium quality."

Colm Pyers, C&J Meats' Joint Managing Director, said: "The Netherlands is now one of our most important markets. It is a very discerning marketplace where consumers expect quality products and now regard Northern Ireland beef as amongst the best and most richly flavoured in Europe."



Foster Encourages Europeans To Visit Northern Ireland

A favourable exchange rate and easy air access makes Northern Ireland an attractive destination for European visitors. That was the message from the Tourism Minister, Arlene Foster when she spoke to tourism operators in the Netherlands recently.

Speaking at an event, organised by Tourism Ireland, the Minister said: "The Netherlands is an important tourism market for Northern Ireland with already established travel and trade links. We want to encourage those Dutch tourists who enjoy year-round trips abroad, particularly short-breaks and activity holidays, to come to Northern Ireland. We have a choice of city breaks and activities including walking, golfing, fishing and visitors can explore some of our history and culture."

Arlene Foster highlighted the importance of business tourism and said: "There is also a great deal of interest in Northern Ireland as a business tourism destination and Tourism Ireland, through its strong presence in the Netherlands, will continue to promote Northern Ireland as offering excellent conference and business facilities."



Monica Nerney, Manager Northern Europe, Tourism Ireland, Jasper Spruit, Director of Aviation Marketing, Amsterdam Airport Schiphol, Minister Arlene Foster MLA and John Walsh, Marketing Manager Netherlands, Tourism Ireland.

"In 2007, 22,000 visitors travelled from the Netherlands to Northern Ireland, that was an increase of 14% compared to 2006. This is a good foundation upon which to build even greater visitor numbers".

Looking to the year ahead the Minister said: "In 2009, Tourism Ireland plans to increase its investment in online media, highlight the great value of travelling to Northern Ireland resulting from the current Euro/Sterling exchange rate and promote Northern Ireland as a diverse holiday/short-break destination with easy air access." In conclusion the Minister said: "While these are challenging economic times, there is no doubt that millions of people right across the world and in The Netherlands will still want to take holidays. I want to encourage the Dutch and other Europeans to take those holidays in Northern Ireland where they will have a truly memorable, reviving and enjoyable experience."

£11 million deal for Wrightbus signed during Dutch trade mission

Wrightbus of Ballymena signed a partnership deal with Dutch company VDL Groep to supply London bus operator, Arriva, with 57 buses. Minister Arlene Foster announced the £11million deal, at VDL Groep's operation in Eindhoven during her visit.

VDL Groep is an international company focused on the development, production and sales of semi-manufactured and finished products. VDL employs 7,500 people and has 75 subsidiaries in 14 countries. VDL bus and coach division includes coaches, chassis modules, public transport buses, mini & midi buses and second-hand buses.

Following a tour of the VDL Groep factory, the Minister said: "This is immensely encouraging news for one of Northern Ireland's most successful, and still, locally-owned companies, particularly at this time of global economic downturn."

"The achievements of Wrightbus show that companies can achieve growth by diversifying markets, focusing on new product development and by forming strategic partnerships that enable them quickly to access business opportunities as they develop abroad."

Wrightbus continues to win substantial business because it is focused on key customers in its target markets." The Wright Group is the United Kingdom's leading independent supplier of accessible buses for public transportation systems throughout the country. Founded in 1946, and still a family-owned and managed company, the Group has pioneered low floor buses in the UK, and has earned a reputation for producing vehicles which are stylish, durable, high in quality and packed with innovative features.

Mark Nodder, Group Managing Director of the Wright Group, said: "This significant contract for new buses in London shows what can be achieved when companies with complementary capabilities work closely together."

"Our Dutch partners VDL have joined us in several projects during the past 10 years, and the partnership has grown from strength to strength."



Further investment in Northern Ireland by Dutch Bluechip

As well as supporting local companies to build trade relationships in The Netherlands, Minister Arlene Foster took time to visit Dutch companies with operations in Northern Ireland.

On her return from her visit to Eindhoven, Minister Foster announced a major investment, by Philips Healthcare Informatics, which will deliver over £1 million annually in additional wages and salaries. Philips Healthcare Informatics has had a presence in Northern Ireland since it acquired Belfast software company, Tomcat Clinical Systems, in April 2008. The new investment will create 30 new graduate level jobs bringing employment to 49.

Philips Healthcare Informatics' core product is its Cardiovascular Information System (CVIS), a computerised system that manages a hospital's clinical and administrative records for heart patients. Used by a significant number of large hospitals, including St Thomas' Hospital and Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children in London, the system has long been the market leader in the UK and Ireland, and is now being sold in international markets.



Announcing the investment the Minister said: "This expansion project demonstrates the confidence that this blue-chip multinational group has in its Belfast operation and in the local skills base. ICT is a key growth sector for Northern Ireland and the availability of highly skilled IT professionals here has attracted many high profile companies that continue to reinvest."

Stephen Gunning, General Manager of Philips Healthcare Informatics in Belfast, said: "We have achieved sales growth of around 30% a year over the last five years and anticipate further substantial growth in the next few years as we export our products to new international markets through the extensive Philips distribution channels." "Despite being a small operation within the Royal Philips Electronics Group, we have much to offer in terms of R&D expertise and the development of niche IT products. This investment recognises the significant potential of the Belfast operation to further develop its contribution to the Group's overall success."

Lowloaders to the Lowlands

County Antrim Company Secure Export Success in the Netherlands

Having previously established key relationships in this market, McCauley Trailers used the recent trip to sign an exclusive distributor for its agricultural trailer range. Following the successful trade mission, the company has announced that Geert Jan De Kok BV has been given exclusive rights to distribute on behalf of the company. Geert Jan De Kok has dealer operations across the Netherlands and will play a key role in expanding sales to its neighbouring market Belgium, to which it has also been given distribution rights.

McCauley Trailers Ltd is best known for the manufacture of agricultural trailers but in recent years has been increasingly expanding into the commercial sector with the growing popularity of its sister commercial brand MAC trailers. The company has detailed understanding of the design and manufacture of durable products built up over 55 years of manufacturing, and has tailored its range to market requirements in the Lowlands. This export deal will see McCauley Trailers supply additional trailers to the Netherlands, estimating £750,000 of sales from this market during 2009.

Commenting on the contract, Jonathan Hanna, Operations Manager says, “We used the recent Invest NI trade mission to



Jonathan Hanna and Mark Lynch of Mc Cauley Trailers Ltd, introduce Geert-Jan de Kok and Eddy van de Wal to Minister Foster, Vice Minister Schreven and Tracy Meharg of Invest NI at the recent NI-NL dinner.



implement our distribution strategy. Having viewed Europe as a potential growth market for some time now, we are establishing a permanent sales presence in these markets to capitalise on the demand for our products. This contract symbolises the first step for McCauley Trailers as we aim to aggressively build our export market within the next 12 months.”

Going Dutch to Boost Exports

15 companies from the West and North West of Northern Ireland recently registered for the launch of an Export initiative at Invest NI’s Omagh office.

Going Dutch is one of Invest Northern Ireland’s foremost trade programmes - designed for companies interested in exploring and winning first-time export business in one of Europe’s most easily accessible markets. The six companies selected for the 1st cohort of the 2009 programme shall engage on a structured 14 week programme including training workshops, one-to-one mentoring, a tailored market report, and a three day managed visit to the Netherlands in June 2009.

A key feature is the training and in-market support provided by Northern Ireland Trade Consultants who are based in Amsterdam. The benefits of this include market research tailored to a company’s requirements, lead generation, help in setting up meetings with potential customers, guidance on market entry strategy and support from a Dutch speaker for marketing materials and during company meetings.

According to Elaine Curran of Invest NI “Going Dutch improves a company’s knowledge, confidence and overall capability to conduct business in overseas export markets. To date over 30 Northern Ireland companies have already availed of the programme to enter the Dutch market.”



Mary Gormley Manager of Invest NI’s Omagh office is pictured with Steve Murnaghan of Northern Ireland Trade Consultants and a number of companies who attended the launch.

Raymond O’Hagan, a participant of Going Dutch in 2006, explained at the launch how the programme had provided CK International with the structure, tools and appetite to develop overseas markets. Today CK International, manufacturer of vertical and horizontal balers, operates an international dealer network in eight European countries.

NI-NL shall follow the Going Dutch participants’ progress in the Netherlands over the next six months - reporting back in the Autumn BIZ publication. Two further groups of six companies shall be offered a similar opportunity later this year. If you are an Invest Northern Ireland company, ready to develop new exports outside GB and the Republic of Ireland for the first time and have the resources, time and commitment to participate on the Going Dutch programme, **Contact Elaine Curran at Invest Northern Ireland for further information: Elaine.curran@investni.com or telephone 028 90 698041.**

Ulster Beef - Alstublieft !

Sales representatives from Northern Ireland’s largest beef and lamb companies have held a series of high level business pitches in the Netherlands set up by Invest NI as part of its focus on helping the red meat industry in Northern Ireland to grow exports.

Local Northern Ireland companies have a history of supplying meat to the top retailers in the Netherlands over the years but the intensive sales drive, which took place from in February, focused on the top 3 Dutch out of home catering and foodservice organisations with combined sales in excess of € 3 billion. Companies taking part in the sales drive included ABP, Newry; Dunbia, Dungannon; Foyle Food Group, Londonderry; and Linden Foods, Dungannon who visited HoReCa cash and carries and met senior buyers from Dutch companies supplying a range of beef, lamb and pork products to hotels, restaurants and canteens, as well as the institutional sector across the Netherlands.

Invest NI pinpointed and lined up key buyers in the Netherlands through Amsterdam based Northern Ireland Trade Consultants. An invitation has been extended to the buyers to visit Northern Ireland to experience the industry from the farm to the fork with their own eyes and taste buds. The incoming buyers shall be given the opportunity to view conditions and traceability systems on farms, to visit slaughter and processing facilities of the highest European standard and to taste the product as it should be served in some of Northern Ireland’s best restaurants.

Invest Northern Ireland Client Manager Mark Maguire, who along with the companies presented to the buyers, stated “The Red Meat Industry in Northern Ireland is a very important industry for the region, with turnover of £700million and employing nearly 3000 people. The industry representatives were delighted to have the opportunity to meet with the food service buyers in Holland and to visit their facilities in February.

The companies involved report that there is real and significant business to be done and we are looking forward to having the opportunity to illustrate the quality of the Northern Ireland Red Meat supply chain and the professionalism of our processing industry to the Dutch buyers when they have an opportunity to visit Northern Ireland in the coming months”

Through this initiative Invest NI aims to increase awareness of the outstanding quality and variety of Northern Ireland beef and lamb in one of the most important European markets and land more local red meat on the tables of better establishments in the Netherlands. Hopefully not too long before waiters in Dutch restaurants will be saying ‘Ulster Beef - Alstublieft’ - as they put the plate in front of you.



Stork Aerospace Harness Bombardier Deal

Historically the Netherlands and Northern Ireland Aerospace industries have relied on each other over the years with the engineering prowess of both countries being widely recognised in the global aerospace industry.

Until the demise of Fokker Aerospace in 1996, triggering one of the biggest mass redundancies ever seen in the Netherlands, Short Brothers Belfast (from 1989 owned by Bombardier) supplied aircraft wings to the Dutch prime.

Today the roles are reversed with Bombardier Aerospace (the prime) awarding a wiring contract for C Series aircraft to Fokker Elmo. Within the CSeries aircraft program Fokker Elmo will be responsible for the design and production of the entire wiring and interconnection System. The associated design and production work is expected to represent a value of approximately \$300 million, spread over a 15 to 20 year period.

Fokker Elmo is a Stork Aerospace operating company and internationally recognized as a prime specialist in electrical interconnection systems for aircraft and aircraft engines. Fokker Elmo owns facilities in The Netherlands, China, USA and Turkey.

Stork Aerospace, which acquired a number of Fokker divisions that manufactured parts and carried out maintenance and repair work, large numbers of Fokker personnel and aerospace know-how, is today a leading 1st tier supplier in the aerospace sector developing and producing advanced structures and electrical systems and integrated maintenance services.

The CSeries is a family of narrow body, twin-engined, medium range jet airliners specifically designed by Bombardier for the 100- to 149- seat market. The aircraft will offer superior operating economics, operational flexibility and reduced environmental impact. The new Bombardier aircraft family is targeted for an entry to service in 2013.

Bombardier's Belfast operation is developing and producing the advanced composite wings for the CSeries aircraft. The CSeries is good news for the Northern Ireland economy as a whole by creating employment, as well as bringing with it significant opportunities to those local companies providing goods and services within the supply chain.

The majority of the Fokker Elmo design and development effort will take place on-site at Bombardier in Montreal, manufacturing of development and flight test wiring systems will be performed at Fokker Elmo Netherlands, while the serial production is scheduled to take place in China.

President of Fokker Elmo, Mr. Jan Lagasse stated: "We are excited about entering this new era of co-operation between Bombardier and Fokker Elmo, we feel privileged to be a part of the CSeries aircraft team and to be able to contribute to its success. Work has already started and the enthusiasm of the team members is enormous."



Below an extract from the published article in Newsletter Business supplement (March 10th 2009).

Trade links with the Netherlands Grow Strategically

The Belfast Newsletter caught up recently with the Amsterdam based Managing Director of Northern Ireland Trade Consultants and Founder of NI-NL Steve Murnaghan and asked the reasons behind the excellent ongoing relationships with the Dutch

According to Murnaghan "Due to a concerted strategic approach to trade development in the Netherlands by individual companies and support mechanisms put in place by economic development bodies over the last years trade links between the 2 regions have never been stronger".

- The reasons are clear;
- The main industrial sectors in both countries are very diverse but share similarities. Northern Ireland companies enjoy long standing mutually beneficial trade relations and partnerships with the Netherlands especially in sectors such as aerospace, food and food technology, engineering, machine building, agricultural technologies, environmental solutions, textiles, IT solutions, and tradeable services.
 - The no-nonsense business mentalities share many similarities and are one of the ingredients in the recipe of sustainable and successful trade relations.
 - Currently the pound sterling represents excellent value against the Euro meaning that quality goods manufactured in NI are more competitive than ever in 2009.
 - A number of strategic annually recurring export promotional activities are in place. These include Invest NI's Going Dutch programme, Lisburn's European Outlook programme and the recent Trade Mission which develop new partnerships and clients for local companies in the Netherlands. These are 'full on' proactive matchmaking activities which provide companies with unique trading and partnership opportunities.
 - New contacts and relationships are then supported by The Northern Ireland Netherlands Trade and Export Society (NI-NL), a not for profit foundation which plays an active role by organising a number of business networking events and activities per year and keeping businesses abreast of activity between the 2 regions. Through the NI-NL events programme opportunities are being created for like-minded companies in both Northern Ireland and the Netherlands to network.
 - NI-NL BIZ magazine - which you are currently reading - is published twice a year and circulated to 1300 businesses in NI and NL.
 - Excellent Ministerial contacts have been developed over the last 2 years between NI and NL.



NI-NL Progress 2006 - 2009



Attendance at NI-NL events has grown significantly from the start in 2006/7 with 125 company representatives to 305 in 2008/9. "In this day and age it is important not to forget to develop and nurture relationships with partner companies - this is what we are seeing with NI-NL," states Murnaghan, who founded NI-NL based on the Dutch model of Export Clubs.

In population and global economy terms Northern Ireland is quite small so we have to 'punch above our weight' to gain international recognition in trade and export circles. Murnaghan believes that the strategic model which has been developed over the last number of years between Northern Ireland and the Netherlands could and should be used by Northern Ireland to develop trade links across the world. The requirements for success are quite clear – a strong knowledge of both economies, a partnership approach between both public and private sector organisations and a 'driver' with excellent language skills based in the export country in question to guide the process.

Putting Energy into Waste Partnerships

‘Waste Not Want Not’ is a maxim everyone knows. It can be traced back to 1772 and continues ‘The less we waste, the less we lack in the future’ – never a truer word was spoken.

The Netherlands is a leader in Europe for its pioneering approach to environmental policy and waste management - achieving the highest levels of recycling in Europe.

Only 20 kg, or 3%, of the average 630 kg municipal waste generated per capita in the Netherlands is used for landfill. One of the main reasons is that land in the Netherlands is at premium and that there are alternative methods of dealing with waste - 38% is incinerated, 32% is recycled and 28% is composted – making the Dutch the compost champions of Europe.

The Dutch were one of Europe’s first nations to be faced with the environmental challenges of combining the natural environment with

the demands of modern life and industry. The result has been the development of a world-class Dutch environmental technologies industry.

Through international activities undertaken by the Dutch Trade Association for Environmental Technologies (VLM), the Dutch Agency for International Business and Cooperation (EVD), together with members of the Netherlands Waste Management Partnership opportunities between NI and NL are certainly not going to waste.

In this Spring 2009 edition NI-NL BIZ looks at some successful bilateral relationships developed over the years between companies in the Netherlands and Northern Ireland in the environmental, waste and recycling sectors.



Waste to food

Following the success in 2006 of the construction of an in-vessel composting plant in Keady, County Armagh, GICOM continues to build more composting capacity for NWP - a well-established, family run Northern Ireland company with over seventeen years experience in recycling activities.

Since 1984 GICOM, from Biddinghuizen, the Netherlands, has been designing and installing composting facilities throughout Europe, for all sorts of organic waste streams.

Recently GICOM started their first deliveries for a new NWP plant based at Glenside, in the Lisburn Council area.

According to Luc Klunder of GICOM, a regular visitor to the province “It’s only been in recent years that the Northern Ireland market for this kind of waste to food is developing.”

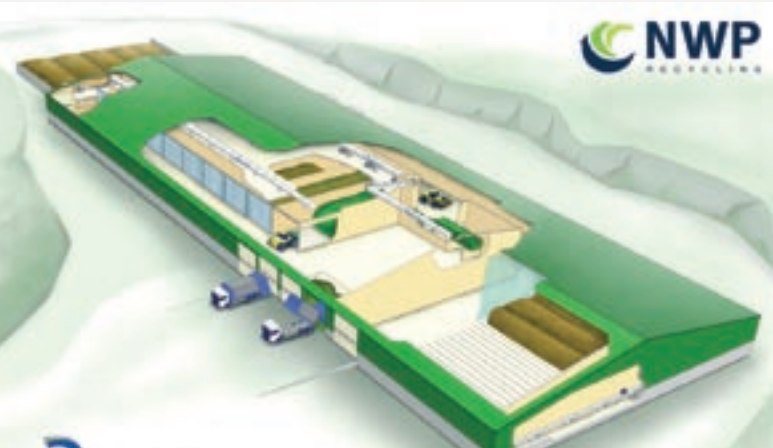
Rising landfill costs along with a higher environmental awareness are key drivers for this growth in the Northern Irish market. The input of the new plant will be bio-waste from the Greater Belfast region. This waste will be transferred in the modern, fully indoor plant into hygienic compost that can be applied in agriculture and horticulture, and so doing creating higher soil fertility, buffering

carbon dioxide, keeping phosphates and other minerals in the ecological system and providing a more sustainable and cheaper alternative to landfill.

“From waste, food is made again. Just like since the beginning of the earth” says Klunder, sales manager at GICOM. “Just a bit quicker, and more efficient, but still the natural way of treating organic wastes.”

The NWP plant in Lisburn is another step towards more sustainable treatment of our residues. The plant will start accepting waste in spring 2009, but it will take until autumn before it is at full capacity.

NI-NL BIZ has received a drawing of how the Glenside project will look when it’s finished.



Toxic Waste Treatment

ATM, A Shanks Group plc company, based in Moerdijk, near Rotterdam, one of the largest processors of (toxic) wastes in Europe, is also active in Northern Ireland

ATM is THE waste treatment company for treatment of contaminated soil, packed and bulk organic residues, wastewater and (oil) sludges. ATM, with its own port facilities, operates 3 different plants, which are coupled together in order to obtain maximum synergy.

- Wastewater and sludges are treated in a sludge treatment facility with 3 phase (oil/water/sediment) decanters and a microbiological reactor (MBR)
- The pyrolysis installation (Pyro) provides a highly innovative facility to process both solid and paste-like organic waste materials.
- The Thermal Purification Installation (TRI) is designed to treat contaminated soil, rubble and asphalt

John van den Berg, Sales Manager for UK and Ireland, has recently developed new channels into Northern Ireland through participation in 2 EVD Trade Shows together with VLM in Dublin. “Although ATM had been active in the Irish market for over 13 years we are continuously looking at ways to build on our market share,” explains Van den Berg. “One of the unknown provinces for ATM, until recently, was Northern Ireland, but through participation at IRWM we met with a number of professional companies interested in our toxic waste processing facility.”

Following a number of further meetings and visits by the Northern Ireland partners to the Moerdijk facility, today ATM processes approximately 1000 tonnes of various kind of toxic packed waste. These residues are mainly generated by the pharmaceuticals and chemical industries in Northern Ireland and shipped into ATM through their local partners. “We have noted that the Northern Ireland market is growing much faster in comparison to Ireland or the UK” continues Van den Berg. “Although the financial situation is hitting Northern Ireland hard, like everywhere else, it is certainly a market that we see growing for ATM in the near future. This is because ATM’s innovative facilities provide recovery based solutions on all types of (toxic) waste residues.”



Technology to blow you away

With more than 60 years experience, Nihot Recycling Technology B.V. is a proven market leader in the supply of specialist air separation technologies for the environmental and recycling industries. In waste processing, controlled air is a perfect separation medium, both in terms of process technology and business solutions.

Controlled air is one of Nihot’s core technologies. It is versatile, offers greater flexibility than mechanical separation technologies and it guarantees high separation efficiency. By using air, materials can be separated based on both material density and shape. Nihot, has optimised air technology for waste separation.

Nihot air technology can be incorporated into new system layouts and retrofitted into existing systems to upgrade the separation of various waste qualities such as municipal solid waste, construction & demolition waste, commercial and industrial waste, wood, compost, dry recyclables, ferrous and non ferrous scrap.

Nihot Recycling Technology supplies Waste Management companies, system integrators and consulting engineering companies with tailored solutions. Nihot Recycling Technology is highly regarded in Ireland and has key reference sites including Greenstar, Panda Waste, Thornton’s, Oxigen, Greyhound and Binman.

Cees Duijn, Managing Director of Nihot and board member of the Netherlands Waste Management Partnership, recently led private and public sector representatives from Northern Ireland on a tour of the Van Gansewinkel waste processing and recycling facility in the Amsterdam docks. The Van Gansewinkel Group is the market leader in integrated waste management services and reliable environmental solutions in the Netherlands. They are specialists in collecting, transferring, recycling and processing all types of waste and provide solutions on a daily basis to customers’ wide ranging waste issues.

Visitors were said to have been blown away by the Nihot technology they saw in operation at the plant !

According to Cees Duijn, “In the coming years there will be a strong demand in Northern Ireland to install state of the art waste sorting and recycling technologies, based on the demand to divert at least 35% of the waste from landfill by 2015. Nihot sees potential in the Northern Irish market and in fact is already involved in talking to local authorities, consulting engineers and waste management companies, to offer comprehensive solutions to answer to this challenge.”



The Irish Matchmaker*

At the recent New Year’s Dinner, NI and NL companies involved in environment, waste and water were out in force. Steve Murnaghan managed to get an update from two of those involved.



Pieralisi Benelux BV, situated in Bleiswijk, is another VLM member which has started to develop sales in Ireland through having been matched with the right partner on an EVD Trade Mission in March 2008.

Pieralisi previously had agents ‘on their books’ in Ireland for a number of years but no sales were forthcoming for a considerable period of time.

Jeroen Bergman, Sales Manager of Pieralisi explains how the process began. “We were brought together with Linton Solutions of Lisburn, Northern Ireland, on the Dutch Pavilion at IRWM in Dublin, through research and matchmaking by NITC.”

“After IRWM things developed quickly resulting in various potential leads being generated, sales visits and participation at the Balmoral show in Belfast to re-launch the product in May 2008.”

“By July we were talking seriously about a partnership” confirms Nigel Johnston, General Manager of Linton Solutions. “We felt that the Linton Carier Separator was

a complementary product for decanter centrifuges as produced by Pieralisi and that we would have a client base for the Dutch technology.”

A County Dublin based client of Linton Solutions had installed a Carier primary separator about 8 years previously to screen out coarse peelings and suspended solids from their fruit and vegetable waste water. This system has been very successful over the years and was still working well, but, due to tighter local government restrictions on waste discharge and expansion of the factory Superdawn Fresh Vegetables needed to reduce the BOD and COD content of their waste water including the removal of starch.

To increase the efficiency of the biological treatment Superdawn procured a Pieralisi decanter centrifuge at the end of 2008. Today Superdawn operates a Linton Carier Separator and Pieralisi decanter centrifuge which achieves a COD reduction of 50 to 60% and now removes suspended solids (mainly starch). Further COD reduction is obtained by the biological treatment

system. The system has been up and running satisfactorily for Superdawn (and the local authorities) for over 4 months.

The Superdawn decanter project, valued around €100,000 is the first tangible result of the Linton – Pieralisi partnership since the first contact was established during the Trade Mission in 2008.

*The Irish Matchmaker was a recent Dutch TV programme filmed in Ireland, with the assistance of Tourism Ireland, matching Dutch ladies seeking a friendship (and possibly more) with an Irishman.

A perfect match seems to have been made and NI-NL BIZ has learned that further congratulations are due...firstly Nigel Johnston recently became a father for the 1st time and secondly the partnership between Pieralisi and Linton Solutions is also bearing fruit - in March 2009 a Pieralisi Baby decanter centrifuge was presented to visitors on the joint trade stand at IWWE in Dublin!!

Money for old...paper

Huhtamaki Paper Recycling B.V. has built a comprehensive recovered paper collection network that allows it to collect, process and recycle all grades of recovered paper for their depots in Drachten, Franeker, Marum and Staphorst in the Netherlands and in Lisburn, Northern Ireland.



Lisburn City Council councillors and officers welcome Jacob Kats, CEO Huhtamaki Paper Recycling Europe B.V., a regular visitor from the Netherlands on a recent visit to the Lisburn plant.

From left to right - Adrian Jones, Huhtamaki Paper Recycling UK, Lisburn, Jacob Kats, Paul McCormick, Assistant Director Environmental Services, Lisburn City Council, Councillors Allan Ewart and Jenny Palmer, Petr Domin, General Manager Huhtamaki Packaging UK, Darren Greer Huhtamaki Paper Recycling UK, Lisburn.

Huhtamaki (Lisburn) Limited handles in excess of 600 tons of paper per week which is graded, baled and transported. Furthermore they import high quality grades from the U.S.A. and export recovered paper from Europe into the Far East (e.g. India, Indonesia and China).

Parent company, Huhtamaki is a global consumer and specialty packaging company with a good position in smooth and rough molded fiber products, release films, flexible packaging, foodservice paper cups and other products based on paper forming technology. In 1999, Finnish based Huhtamaki acquired the Dutch packaging giant Van Leer. Today, Huhtamaki employs some 14,600 employees in 65 manufacturing units and several sales offices in 35 countries worldwide.

Due to an increase in environmental awareness, the demand is growing for recovered paper products. Accompanying the growing use of recovered paper products as well as the increase of diversification of quality demand and the refinement in product grade categories, Huhtamaki Paper Recycling B.V. has the knowledge and international network of sources and paper mills.

The Lisburn site is not Huhtamaki’s only location in Northern Ireland. A further location is Dollingstown just outside Lurgan which is the only paper pulping mill in Ireland where recovered paper is converted into packaging.

Pooling skills at the 2 plants, Huhtamaki offers a confidential shredding service where the whole process is monitored by CCTV, from the secure documents arriving in, through to the shredding and baling of the paper. It is then pulped and converted back into paper to guarantee complete destruction of sensitive material.

Huhtamaki Paper Recycling have gained much knowledge and expertise from their Dutch partner sites according to Darren Greer, Operations Manager of the Lisburn site. “The Dutch are already leaps and bounds ahead of other EU countries as far as recycling is concerned” he confirms to NI-NL.

Huhtamaki Paper Recycling Lisburn have a few exciting projects on the horizon which will hopefully include local schools and Lisburn City Council in a drive to remove all paper waste out of land fill bins and recycle these at the Dollingstown plant .

“Segregation at source schemes are already running in Holland for years with great success,” Darren adds.



Full Steam Ahead at All-Route Shipping

NI-NL BIZ provides a snap-shot of All-Route Shipping (NI) Ltd - A longstanding freight forwarding company offering one of the broadest range of services to importers and exporters in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland is blessed with a selection of freight forwarders who have well established track records servicing exporters and importers not only with basic forwarding requirements but also with many other industry related value added services. Exporters and importers who entrust their consignments to a freight forwarder would be well advised to put some effort into investigating the pedigree of the chosen company who is to provide the service which could make or break their reputation.

I was reminded recently of a client who, having carefully researched and appointed an excellent new trading partner for their machinery in the Netherlands, learnt that the machine had been dropped on its side in transit! And that by telephone from the partner with the vehicle still parked outside! Remember you only have 1 chance to make a good 1st impression and the transporter you choose is an extension of the quality of total service you provide !!

One often sees new venture appearing on the scene in a blaze of glory. These ventures are often at risk of disappearing as quickly as they appeared in the first place.

No such risk however with All-Route Shipping who started in May 1975 with 2 employees and have gradually developed to a work force of 25 direct employees and countless subcontractors who have helped make them what they are today - "A freight forwarding company offering one of the broadest range of services to importers and exporters in Northern Ireland."

Investment

One of the best decisions All-Route Shipping made back in the early 1980's was to move its operations from a city centre location to one within the Belfast Harbour Estate. Today with a further development completed in October 2007 they occupy over 2 acres on the West Bank Road with 4500 sq metres of offices and warehousing.

The new warehousing and office suites (which have been totally refurbished to a very impressive standard) have enabled All-Route Shipping to greatly increase the amount of freight it handles within the port of Belfast. Investment has not just been confined to bricks and mortar as they have recently taken delivery of a 16 tonne Hyster fork truck and have installed high bay storage racking in a 1000m² area of one of their warehouse units.

Apart from their normal freight forwarding and cargo handling they have developed several other niche market activities such as a weekly liner service to the Isle of Man and the export packing of factory machinery and household and personal effects.

W.E. Williams (NI) is a business All Route acquired in 1995 which looks after their ships' agency business and port logistics at Belfast, Warrenpoint and Londonderry. It also looks after handling, storage and distribution of timber products and project forwarding. One of their main principals Scotline continues to provide Ireland with an unrivalled service covering the importation of timber and general cargo products from Scandinavia and the Baltic States and the export of bulk cargoes. They have also introduced a monthly Liner Service from Bremen to Belfast and Warrenpoint which has proved to be a very popular choice with importers in the construction industry.

'Gateway to Europe'

All Route Shipping now have up to 4 trailers weekly to and from the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, France and Spain. All parts of Europe and other areas of Eastern Europe and Scandinavia are covered through their depot in Venlo, The Netherlands.

As with many freight forwarders it is All Route's import department that has seen the greatest increase in growth over the past few years mainly due to the massive increase in consumer goods and raw materials being sourced in Asia. Through their investment in electronic connections to H.M. Revenue and Customs they offer fast and efficient customs clearance and distribution services throughout Ireland.

With Carson Mc Mullan at the helm, All Route Shipping (NI) Ltd are still making sure and steady progress within the freight forwarding sector in Ireland - 33 years on from their incorporation.

And long may it continue.



Up and Coming NI-NL Events



Thursday 13th August 2009

Tall, Elegant, Dutch and heading for Belfast!

The Royal Netherlands Navy sail training ship, Urania, will arrive in Belfast this summer on the final leg of The Tall Ships Atlantic Challenge.

The Tall Ships Atlantic Challenge 2009 is a spectacular odyssey around the North Atlantic Ocean of more than 7,000 nautical miles, starting in April and concluding in August, and following the traditional route taken by sailing ships of a by-gone age.

The Royal Netherlands Navy has owned a sail training ship, Urania, since 1830. The current Urania is the sixth and was built in 2004, rigged as a ketch and offers accommodation for a crew of seventeen. Host ports are in mainland Spain, the Canary Islands, Bermuda, the US, Canada and ending in Northern Ireland which will host the series' grand finale celebrations from 13th - 16th August.

Northern Ireland is preparing a fabulous welcome for the fleet and trainee crews.

Exporters to the Netherlands will be invited to an exclusive All Route Shipping and NI-NL Drinks reception on board the Urania, on the evening of Thursday 13th August 2009.

Given his strong links to worldwide shipping routes and his role as Honorary Consul to the Netherlands, Carson McMullan, Managing Director of All Route Shipping, looks forward to welcoming NI-NL on board.



Belfast International Airport

Investing to Keep Northern Ireland on the Move

Five years has witnessed a seismic change in the range of international air routes on offer from Belfast International Airport (BFS). In Spring 2004 the only non-stop international scheduled route available was the long-established connection between Northern Ireland and Amsterdam, which had been inaugurated by KLM as far back as 1980 and taken over by easyJet in 2001.

Nowadays Northern Ireland travellers and visitors to the region can avail of over 30 such links, with air routes on offer to the Netherlands, France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Czech Republic, USA and Canada – all offered for the convenience of everyone direct from Belfast International Airport.

The substantial airline support package and associated infrastructure investment is exclusively funded by ACDL, the airport's Barcelona-based owners, who have consistently committed to a large-scale programme of network enhancement and capital development in support of building the regional economy, since assuming ownership of Northern Ireland's 24/7 gateway in late 2004. Indeed, even now, through latterly more challenging economic conditions, investment continues apace in the £multi-million construction of upgraded airfield and passenger facilities at BFS, with the aim of delivering sustainable linkages and infrastructure for the long-term benefit of the entire region.



Business Lounge at Belfast International Airport



Uel Hoey (Business Development Director) demonstrates the pulling power of Belfast International Airport.

To this end BFS plans are well advanced to build upon the recently established base of international route development in order to secure further critical tourism and business-focussed destinations in key markets such as northern Europe and North America, as well as targeting additional global hub access which is currently largely restricted from Belfast to connections over London Heathrow.

These endeavours have benefited from the timely and unique bonus of substantial movement in comparative UK/Ireland taxation regimes and £/€ exchange rates, which have supported the latter-day phenomenon of drawing people north of the land border from the Republic of Ireland to avail of flights to and from BFS, as well as making Northern Ireland a very attractive entry point for visitors to the entire island of Ireland.

In the midst of all these plans and developments the long-established business and consumer links between Belfast and Amsterdam maintain a central importance and form the basis of a partnership which BFS plans to play their full role in enhancing in years to come.



On a recent visit to Northern Ireland, NI-NL Founder, Steve Murnaghan, came across a sign for Ballyclog - surely discovered by a Dutchman!! Ballyclog is a parish in Co.Tyrone



Luxury Break in Belfast

Avid readers of NI-NL BIZ will remember that in the last edition the winner of a luxury break to Belfast, Evelyne Tax of Spar International was announced. During the winter months Evelyne and partner Zack visited Northern Ireland and were kind enough to forward their feedback on the short break – and their thanks of course.

Evelyne writes...

“Despite of the windy, rainy weather, which the “Belfastonians” tell us is normal, Zack and I were very lucky to be treated to a luxury weekend in Belfast! It consisted of a tour by VIP taxi through the historical parts of the city with Michael, our driver, who told us all about the history of Northern Ireland and showed us some of the sites, still

visible of Belfast’s recent history. The second day after a late breakfast, we had a walk around the centre ourselves, combined with a few hours of shopping at the new Victoria Shopping Centre.

The two nights’ accommodation were in two special hotels with different characters: the Ten Square Boutique Hotel & Galgorm Resort & Spa. The first one right in the centre of the city, next to Belfast’s Eye - we took a ride as you can see - with great friendly staff & the Galgorm Resort, with a special treat at the Spa, a wonderful dinner and an evening swim under the stars. It was our first visit to this special and welcoming city, but hopefully not our last !”



Ireland - ‘Surprisingly All Round’

Publishers FC Klap in Hilversum have launched an inspirational and informative Dutch language glossy magazine aptly entitled ‘Ierland verrassend veelzijdig’ or translated ‘Ireland surprisingly all round !’ It is aimed at those interested in culture, recreation, lifestyle, walking, fishing, golf, angling, hurling, running, biking, diving, history, festivals, literature, castles, myths, art, music, museums, Citytrips, wellness, hotels, B&B, design, culinary delights, shopping, living and anything else one can think of related to enjoying the versatility of the island of Ireland.

The third publication now graces the shelves of 3500 outlets in the Netherlands. More information is available (in Dutch) on www.ierlandverrassendveelzijdig.nl



1.5 Million People See Northern Ireland on Dutch TV

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Popular TV show 'Who is the Mole?' filmed in Northern Ireland



Northern Ireland was chosen as the location for this immensely popular Dutch reality TV show aired in January and February 2009. The programme 'Wie is de Mol? (Who Is the Mole?)' involves competitors working together to complete various physical and mental challenges, in order to win a cash prize. One of the players however is 'the mole', a double agent hired by the producers to sabotage the efforts of the rest of the group. The players must track vast amounts of minutiae about the person they suspect of being 'the mole' and the quiz at the end of each episode tests their knowledge of the mole; the person with the lowest score is then eliminated from the game.

With the assistance of Tourism Ireland and the NITB, the show's producers scouted Northern Ireland last summer and filming took place on location in Belfast, Londonderry and on the Causeway Coast. The series involved four 50-minute episodes highlighting the magnificent scenery of Northern Ireland and featured a number of iconic visitor attractions including the Titanic Quarter, the Belfast Wheel and St George's Market in Belfast, The Playhouse in Londonderry, the Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge, Dunluce Castle and the Giant's Causeway.

John Walsh, Tourism Ireland's Manager in The Netherlands, said: "This was a wonderful opportunity for us to showcase Northern Ireland to the Dutch market. The publicity value of a programme like 'Who is the Mole?' is incalculable. It is one of the most popular TV programmes in The

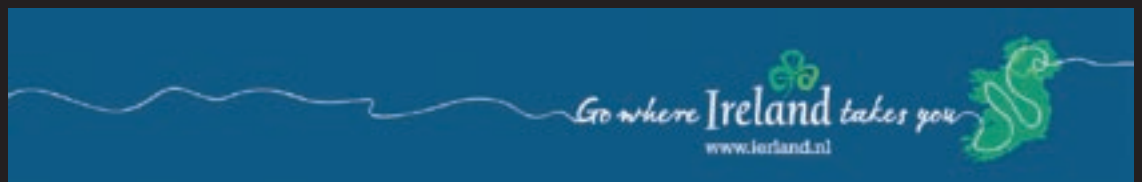
Netherlands and showcases Northern Ireland to millions of potential holidaymakers."

Tourism Ireland has planned an extensive promotional programme for 2009, highlighting Northern Ireland as a fantastic holiday destination. "We have been working hard to develop opportunities around 'Who is the Mole?' both online and off-line – for example, an online game featuring Finn McCool." You can play the Finn Mc Cool game on www.noordierlandontdekken.nl and win a fantastic trip for two people to visit Northern Ireland in style!

Northern Ireland lends itself brilliantly to groups for meeting and incentive purposes with a myriad of outdoor activity opportunities and many specialised meeting and incentive destinations such as Galgorm Estate (www.galgorm.com) and Clandeboy Lodge Hotel (www.clandeboyelodge.com) which are both located within easy reach of Belfast's airports. There are also several very dynamic activity companies in the region who can turn an 'extra day into an unforgettable experience'.

Visit Outdoor NI's website (www.outdoorni.com) and www.luxurybelfast.com for some inspiration!

For more information or advice on meetings and incentive possibilities in Belfast and Northern Ireland, please contact: jkeogh@tourismireland.com or visit www.discovernorthernireland.com.



Please notify NI NL by email on info@ni-nl.org if:

- the contact details on the envelope are not correct
- you would prefer not to receive NI-NL BIZ in the future
- you would like a business contact in NI or NL to receive BIZ
- you have any articles or news stories of interest to NI-NL BIZ readers

Correspondence address

NI NL - Northern Ireland Netherlands Trade and Export Society
Rubensstraat 85
1077 ML Amsterdam
The Netherlands

If you have any relevant business news stories for publication on the NI-NL website or BIZ newsletter - please forward to info@ni-nl.org