**Irish tech companies urged to explore growth options in Portugal**

Irish technology and ICT companies looking to grow into new markets should consider growing opportunities in Portugal according to Michael Tunney, Head of Enterprise in Donegal.

Speaking ahead of a planned Ireland-Portugal Trade Mission for the ICT sector in Roganstown Hotel and Country Club in Swords, Co Dublin on 12th and 13th June, he said he believed Irish companies attending would get enormous benefit from opening up to new opportunities.

“We anticipate that the Portuguese and Irish companies will discover a shared view of innovation and collaboration. As a result of this trade mission, we have no doubt they will connect to form long-term partnerships that explore the opportunities locally and regionally within Europe, as well as strengthening their position to operate in the global marketplace.”

The trade mission, the first of its kind, will feature companies specialising in software design and development, software testing, VR and digital storytelling.

It will include presentations from Irish and Portuguese companies in the ICT sector as well as information sessions, brokerage meetings and networking opportunities.

The event is being organised in cooperation with the Ireland Portugal Business Network by IAPMEI and Donegal County Council on behalf of the Local Enterprise Offices in Ireland, the European Enterprise Network partner in Ireland.

Chair of the Ireland-Portugal Business Network, Aoife Healy, said Irish and Portuguese economies have many similarities and culturally the people of both countries share many traits, making it easy for them to work together.

“Ireland, by attracting inward investment from major companies and also for the strong support it gives to indigenous enterprise and innovation,  is seen as a leader in the tech field within Europe.  Portugal, with its many advantages of a youthful, well-educated and mobile workforce is putting serious focus on growing this segment of its economy and has seen a huge growth in start-ups across every area of technology from fintech to VR,” she said.

Adding that Ireland and Portugal have much to offer each other by way of business opportunity and skillsets in this vast field, the Chair of the Ireland-Portugal Business Network, said the Trade Mission in Dublin would open a path for companies to connect and collaborate.

Irish companies working in the ICT and Tech sectors who are interested in exploring growth opportunities in Portugal, are being urged to come along on June 12 and 13.

Expressions of interest for a place are being accepted online at: <https://bit.ly/2WhEtYT>

Any business seeking more details can also contact Eileen Kelly at Local Enterprise Office, Donegal - eileen.kelly@leo.donegalcoco.ie

“There are outstanding connections now between Portugal and Ireland making it easy to do business and we look forward to strong growth in the trading relationship between the two countries,” Mr. Tunney concluded.

**Ends**