# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Major Events - European Professional Club Rugby Finals 2025** |
| **DATE**  | **31January 2024** |
| **BY** | **Dawn Bowden, Deputy Minister Arts, Sport and Tourism** |

I would like to inform Members that, following a competitive bid process including 23 stadia across 12 European countries, a collaborative bid between Welsh Government, Cardiff City Council and the Welsh Rugby Union has been successful in attracting the European Professional Cup Rugby (EPCR) Finals Weekend which will be hosted in the Principality Stadium in Cardiff in May 2025.

The Finals Weekend is the pinnacle of professional club rugby across the globe. With participating clubs now spanning Europe and South Africa, EPCR competitions have significantly increased their reach and fanbase. The competitions now include 42 professional teams from seven different nations (Wales, Ireland, Scotland, England, France, Italy and South Africa). The finals are held over two days comprising the Challenge Cup on the Friday evening and the Champions Cup on the Saturday afternoon.

This is fantastic news and today’s announcement is the culmination of work between Events Wales officials and our partners in developing a sufficiently attractive offer for EPCR to bring the Finals to Cardiff. The Principality Stadium hosted the first ever final in 1996 which would mean that the 2025 event would be the 30th anniversary of the first fixture.

Wales now has a well-established global reputation in hosting the highest profile sporting events, and this tournament will be the latest in the long line of international sporting events that do so much to showcase our venues, raise our profile around the world and demonstrate our values as a welcoming nation to all. The venue is also confirmed as the location for selected matches in the 2028 UEFA Football Championships, alongside other UK and Ireland stadiums.

Events of this nature bring a range of benefits to Wales and the Welsh economy and cement our reputation for successfully hosting international sporting events. The predicted economic impact of the EPCR Finals could be in excess of £36m and a year long marketing campaign will see Wales and Cardiff gain an international profile and media impact with the Finals broadcast to over 100 countries globally. The socio-cultural impact will see over 200 volunteers engaged during the weekend with activities planned for community groups and schools during the run-up to the Finals.

We look forward to hosting players, officials and fans in 2025, and yet again showcasing Wales to international audiences as a world-class destination for events and tourism.