

The Global Island

Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World



RIALTAS NA hÉIREANN
GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND

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Foreword



Ireland's last major statement of foreign policy priorities was published almost 20 years ago, in the 1996 White Paper *Challenges and Opportunities Abroad*. In the intervening years, we have witnessed rapid and significant change – shifting patterns of power and influence, conflicts, wars and terrorism, new technologies facilitating instantaneous communication across the world and a growing interdependence between economies, societies and people.

In 2008, Ireland experienced an unprecedented economic collapse. The crash, when it came, brought home very powerfully our vulnerabilities as a small open economy but also our strengths – as a longstanding and fully engaged member of the European Union, a significant factor in the stabilisation of our national finances and in our burgeoning economic recovery.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has played an important role in implementing this Government's plan to turn the Irish economy around. In 2011, the Department was allocated responsibility for Trade, following which the Export Trade Council was established to co-ordinate across all Government Departments and State agencies involved in the promotion and development of trade, tourism and investment. Overseas, Local Market Teams have been established in 27 priority markets; chaired by

our Ambassadors and comprising representatives of our Embassies and State Agencies. Annual Local Market Plans have assisted with our healthy export market, which has grown every year since 2011.

This enhanced focus on trade and economic recovery is part of the broad role of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Today, our security, our prosperity and the wellbeing of our people are connected to the wider world as never before. In the world of 2015, nothing is entirely foreign or wholly domestic.

This means that our foreign policy is more important to us now than at any time in our history.

Through it, we safeguard our peace, security and economic prosperity, and promote reconciliation and cooperation at home. At the core of this foreign policy are the protection of our citizens and the promotion of our values abroad.

Our foreign policy is also a statement about us as a people. We have a proud tradition of principled engagement on issues such as development, UN peacekeeping, disarmament and human rights. This is a central part of our foreign policy. A secure and prosperous Ireland is better placed to make its voice heard in support of our values.

As we approach the centenary of the Easter Rising in 2016, it is timely to take stock of our place in the world and the interests and values we wish to promote through our foreign policy.

This policy review is the product of a review initiated by my predecessor as Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Eamon Gilmore T.D., and has involved consultation across Government, with members of the Oireachtas, with civil society and with members of the public.

Written in clear and accessible language, it offers a progressive and forward-looking vision of Ireland's foreign policy and our place in the world. It lays down the goals and key areas of focus for the Government's global engagement to safeguard a secure and prosperous future for the Irish people, and to make a distinctive and principled contribution to the collective international effort to build a better world.

This is a vision of which Irish people can be proud. I know too, that as a resilient people with our own global story, we have the capability and the confidence to meet these challenges together.



Charles Flanagan T.D.
Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade

Contents

Foreword	1
Embracing a Changing World	4

Our People 12



Our Values 26



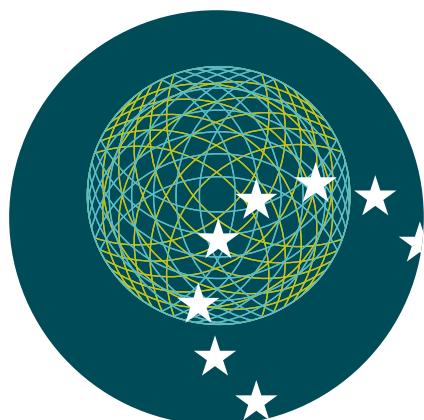
Our Prosperity 44



Reconciliation and Cooperation in Ireland	13	A Secure World	28	Driving Economic Growth	45
Serving our People Abroad	16	A Just World	34	Removing Barriers to Trade, Investment and Mobility	47
Connecting with the Global Irish Family	22	A Fairer World	37	Ensuring a Sustainable and Competitive Tax Regime	49
Sharing our Culture	25	A Sustainable World	42	Deepening Engagement with Priority and High Potential Markets	51
				Making the Most of our Competitive Advantages	58

Our Place in Europe

62



Our Influence

72



Engaging at the Heart of Europe **63**

An Accountable Foreign Policy **74**

Responding to
Critical Challenges **64**

An Open Approach to
Foreign Policy **75**

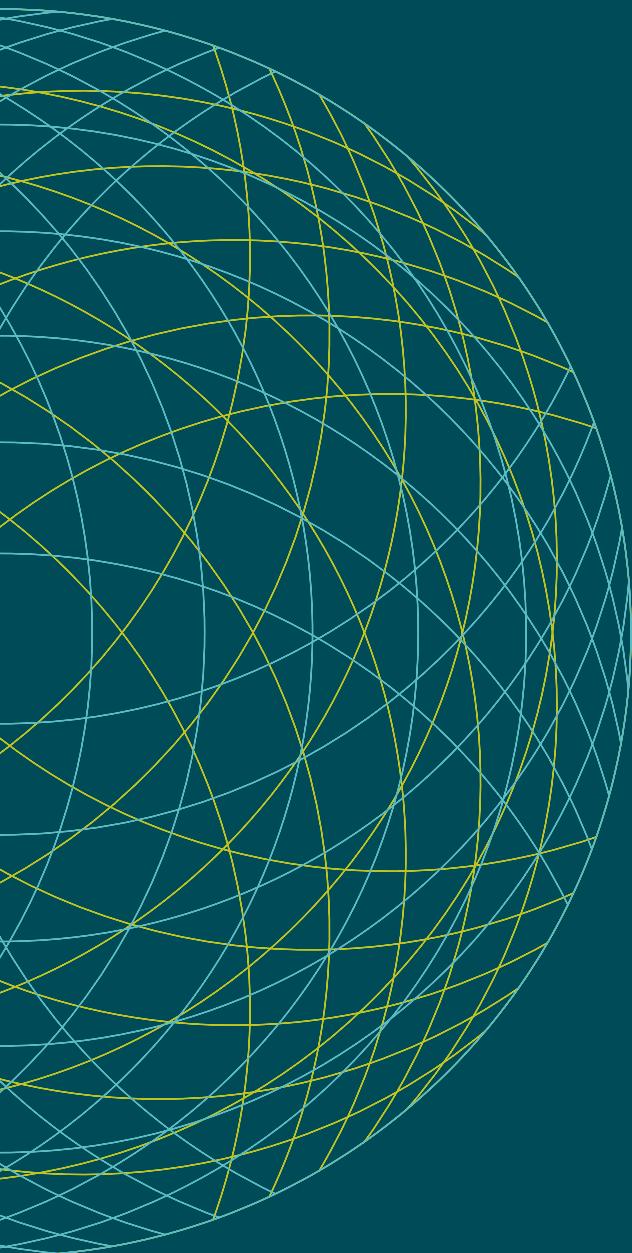
Our EU Priorities **66**

The Department of
Foreign Affairs and Trade **78**

Building Alliances and
Influencing Outcomes **66**

A Strong European Voice
in the World **69**

Embracing a Changing World





The world is no longer foreign

Although an island, Ireland is connected to the global community in ways that would have seemed fanciful only a generation ago. We connect instantaneously with people and events around the globe. Our people and our outlook are global, influencing and influenced by this contact. Our culture shapes and is shaped by these connections. Our economy is interwoven with that of the rest of the world.

Our world is changing faster than we think. This change can be seen in shifting balances of economic and political influence, in a widening range of global challenges that require global

solutions, and in how the world looks and works. As a small country with one of the most globalised economies in the world, we are profoundly influenced by these changes.

While Europe, North America and the western world more generally continue to enjoy prosperity, security and global influence, the rise in prominence of countries in the East and South is transforming the way the global system works. Emerging powers are playing a role of growing importance on the world stage, increasingly active on a wide range of issues.

Regional organisations are also playing an ever more important role. The most integrated, successful and influential of these is the European Union, which has profoundly transformed relations between European states, including

Ireland. It is also an increasingly important global actor in its own right. Our membership of the EU underpins our position and role in the world and how we conduct our foreign policy.

Economic power is shifting. Despite the recent financial crisis, global economic output is projected to double by 2030, with growing demand for food, energy and natural resources. Much of this growth will be in emerging economies in Asia, Africa and Latin America. By 2030, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) projects that China and India together will account for 35% of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), while OECD countries' share will fall by more than 10%.

The world population is growing. The UN estimates it will be almost 8.5 billion by 2030, a rise of 22% since 2010, with most of this growth in emerging economies and developing regions, which are projected to account for 7.1 billion people by 2030. In the same year, it is forecast that countries of the European Union will represent about 6% of the world's population, down from 8.9% in 1990.

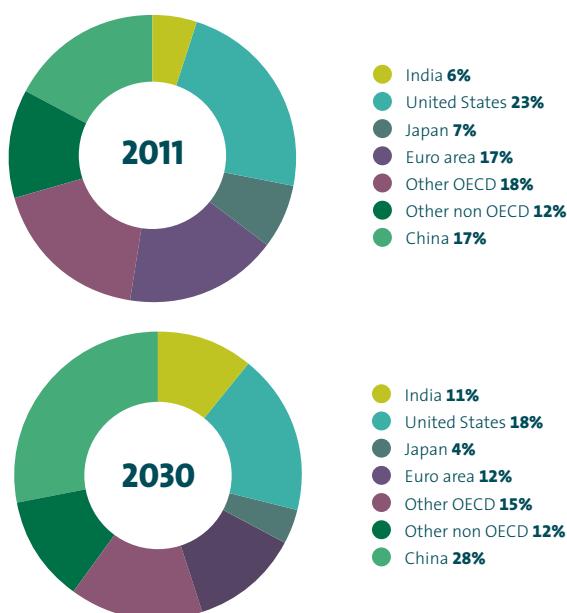
The world is also ageing and becoming more urban. Already, more than half the world's population lives in urban areas and, by 2030, the OECD projects that 60% will do so. The global population aged over sixty years is projected to almost double to 1.4 billion by 2030, with 70% of this group concentrated in developing regions.

The accelerating pace of technological innovation is also reshaping our world. It took seventy-five years for the telephone to reach fifty million users, but only thirty-eight years for radio, thirteen years for television, and just four years for the internet. There are almost three billion internet users today, two-thirds in developing countries. This growth is largely being driven by mobile broadband, which grew over 40% in Africa in the period 2011-2014. Simultaneously, the number of mobile phone subscriptions is approaching the number of people on earth, over half of which are in the Asia-Pacific region alone.

Global economic development is lifting millions out of poverty, while increasing prosperity is changing consumption patterns, giving rise to demand for education, travel, food and consumer goods and services. Rising GDP is contributing to a growing global middle class, which is projected to reach 4.9 billion by 2030, up from 1.8 billion in 2009. By 2030, Asia alone is expected to account for 66% of the global middle class. An expanding global economy offers opportunities

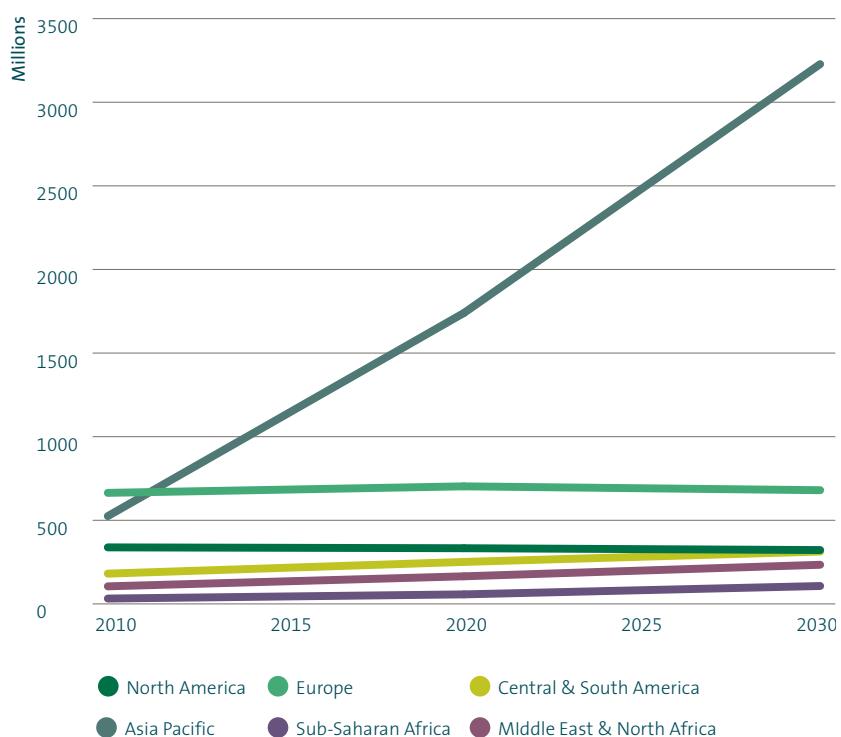
A CHANGING WORLD ECONOMY, 2010-2030

Global GDP is taken as a sum of GDP for 34 OECD countries and 8 non-OECD countries



Source: OECD Economic Policy Paper No.3 Looking to 2060: Long-term global growth prospects, 2012

A GROWING GLOBAL MIDDLE CLASS, 2010-2030



Source: OECD Working Paper No. 285 The Emerging Middle Class in Developing Countries (2010)



for exports of goods and services, but also brings increased competition for markets, jobs and investment.

Despite this progress, the world remains marked by inequality and unacceptable levels of poverty.

It is also becoming more volatile and more uncertain. Managing risks as well as opportunities is an essential task of our foreign policy.

Fragile states and intrastate violence are an increasing source of insecurity, affecting human rights, the rule of law and development. Transnational organised crime and terrorist organisations are able to capitalise on a globalised economy, communications

and digital technology to threaten human security and the stability of critical infrastructure.

As more of the world population comes online, the transformative power of the internet can educate, inform and innovate but it can also be used for criminal or hostile purposes. Addressing issues of internet governance, cyber-security and maintaining an open, free and secure cyberspace are critically important for our future.

Climate change is one of the biggest global challenges of this century. Global warming and related extreme weather events, flooding and rising sea-levels

pose significant challenges across the globe, and for low-lying countries and small island states in particular.

The range, complexity and cross-cutting nature of global challenges demand a coordinated approach at both national and international levels. This requires a functioning system of global governance capable of developing and upholding a rules-based international system.

The structures of international governance: the UN, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and others are being increasingly supplemented by groups of countries cooperating to shape the global agenda, in formats such as the G7/8 and G20. But the consensus which has underpinned and sustained these structures is under pressure. Challenges to the rules-based international order can arise unexpectedly and even in our own neighbourhood, as the crisis in Ukraine has shown.

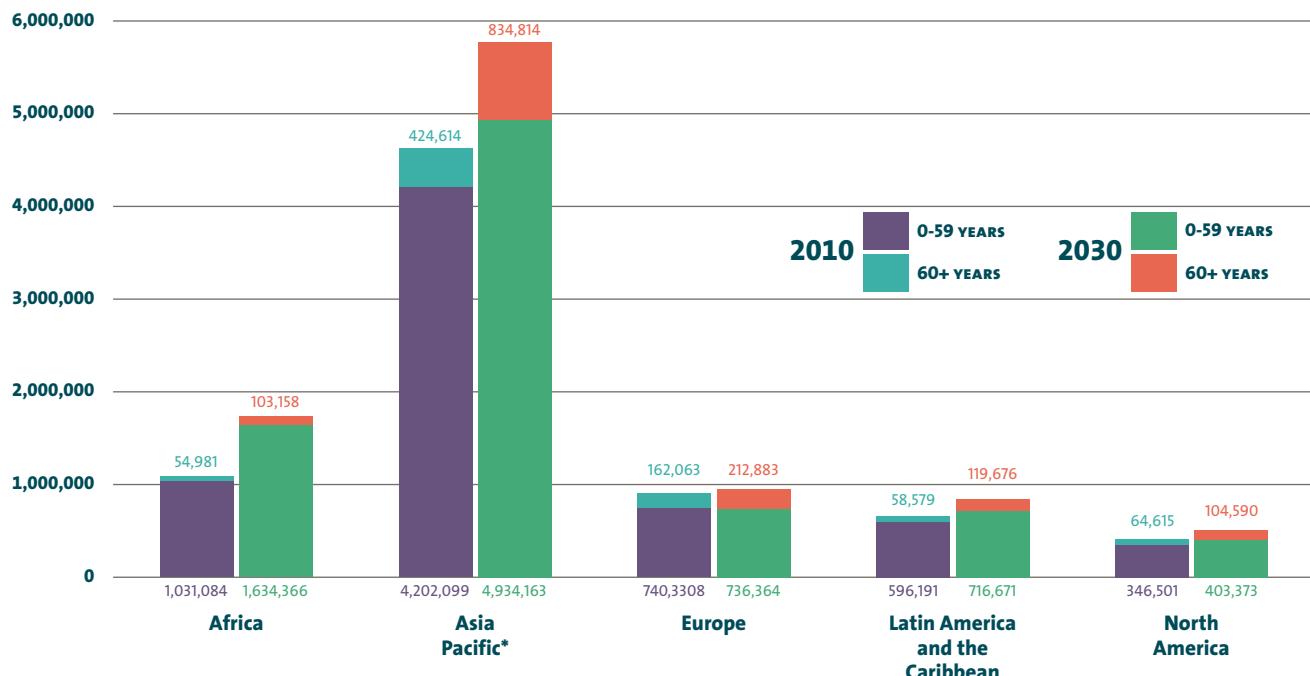
Notwithstanding instability in Europe's neighbourhood, Ireland is fortunate in its geopolitical location, surrounded by friends and partners. But developments farther afield can also quickly and directly impact our shores, as evidenced by the volcanic ash cloud in 2010, the global financial crisis or the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

If we want the best future for our people, we must work constructively with new and existing partners and reflect constantly on how, as a small country, we can best influence developments in our favour.

Ireland's foreign policy is the mechanism through which we do this.

Our relations are conducted through a global network of embassies, consulates and State agency offices in 96 locations managing relations with 178 countries.

AN AGEING WORLD, 2010–2030



Source: UNDESA World Population Prospects: 2012 Revision

Our direct, bilateral relations are only part of a more complex regional and international framework within which we operate. Our place in the world is underpinned by a number of interests, including a strong and effective European Union; a world system based on the rule of law with strong global institutions; and an open, free and rules-based global economy. Promoting these interests is part of our foreign policy.

As a result of the recent economic crisis, greater emphasis has been placed on promoting economic growth and rebuilding Ireland's reputation as part of our international engagement. This has required a whole-of-Government approach driven by the international engagement of all members of Government, and reflected and supported in the work of Ireland's embassies and agencies on the ground. This will continue as Ireland maintains a focus on positioning itself as a sustainable, competitive economy, an

attractive location for investment and tourism and a source of high quality goods and services.

Our influence is amplified and significantly strengthened by our membership of the European Union and our participation in the United Nations.

The European Union is fundamental to Ireland's future. In our four decades of membership, it has assisted social and economic transformation in Ireland and helped us grow and prosper as a people. As we come through a challenging economic and financial crisis, the EU remains central to our long-term economic stability and growth.

The EU, above all through its progressive enlargement, has reshaped our continent and its wider neighbourhood, extending a zone of peace and stability challenged by developments on its borders. By acting

together, we are better able to navigate a fast-changing world, and to promote the interests and values we share with our fellow member states.

We have also used our membership of the United Nations to project our values which, shaped by our history, include a strong commitment to international peace and stability; to human rights, equality and the rule of law; and to solidarity with those suffering from poverty, hunger and disadvantage. We have a distinguished record of service in UN peacekeeping and in exercising leadership responsibilities at the UN, in particular on development, disarmament and non-proliferation issues. And we are one of the best known advocates at the UN for solutions to problems of conflict, injustice and inequality.

Our contribution at the UN is distinctive and highly respected. It has enabled us to exercise greater influence in international relations.

THIS REVIEW CONSIDERS THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IRELAND UNDER FIVE CLOSELY LINKED THEMES:



The first, **Our People**, takes stock of the ongoing work in pursuit of peace and reconciliation on the island of Ireland; the provision of support for Irish citizens travelling, living and working abroad; the growing engagement with the Irish diaspora; and the promotion of Irish culture abroad.



The third, **Our Prosperity**, considers the global economic background to the ongoing efforts in support of recovery, growth and job creation, in particular through trade, tourism, education, investment and the enhancement of Ireland's reputation.



The fifth and final theme, **Our Influence**, considers how Ireland can best leverage the resources available to secure the maximum benefit for the Irish people from Ireland's international engagement.



The second, **Our Values**, sets out Ireland's support for a fairer, more just, more secure and more sustainable world through our development programme, human rights policies, peacekeeping, disarmament and security policies and growing engagement with emerging global issues including climate change. It also considers the role of the European Union and United Nations in amplifying Ireland's voice and extending its influence.



The fourth theme, **Our Place in Europe**, considers the fundamental importance for Ireland in all of the foregoing areas of our membership of the EU and how the Government engages across the broad agenda of EU decision-making to safeguard and promote the interests of Ireland and to shape the EU and its global engagement.

All Government Departments are external actors, reflecting the growing extent to which domestic and external policy making are connected. This is particularly so in an EU context, but also at the UN and other global and regional institutions, and in bilateral relations with other countries.

80

Diplomatic &
Consular Offices

Connecting Ireland with the World:

The Government's Global Network

● Location of Diplomatic or Consular Office ● Locations with a State Agency office

Africa
Abuja
Addis Ababa
Dar es Salaam
Freetown
Johannesburg
Kampala
Lilongwe
Lusaka
Maputo
Nairobi
Pretoria

Asia Pacific
Bangalore
Bangkok
Beijing
Canberra
Hanoi
Hong Kong
Jakarta
Kuala Lumpur
Mumbai
New Delhi
Perth
Seoul
Shanghai
Shenzhen
Singapore
Sydney
Tokyo

Europe
Amsterdam
Ankara
Athens
Berlin
Berne
Bratislava
Brussels
European Union, Brussels
Partnership for Peace, Brussels
Bucharest
Budapest
Copenhagen
Dusseldorf
Edinburgh
Frankfurt
United Nations, Geneva
Glasgow
The Hague
Helsinki
The Holy See
Istanbul
Lisbon
Ljubljana
London
Luxembourg
Madrid
Milan
Moscow
Nicosia
Oslo

Paris
OECD, Paris
Prague
Riga
Rome
Sofia
Stockholm
Council of Europe, Strasbourg
Tallinn
Valletta
Vienna
OSCE, Vienna
Vilnius
Warsaw
Zagreb

Middle East and North Africa
Abu Dhabi
Cairo
Doha
Dubai
Ramallah
Riyadh
Tel Aviv

The Americas
Atlanta
Austin
Boston
Brasilia
Buenos Aires
Chicago
Mexico
New York
United Nations, New York
North California
Ottawa
San Francisco
South California
Sao Paulo
Toronto
Washington

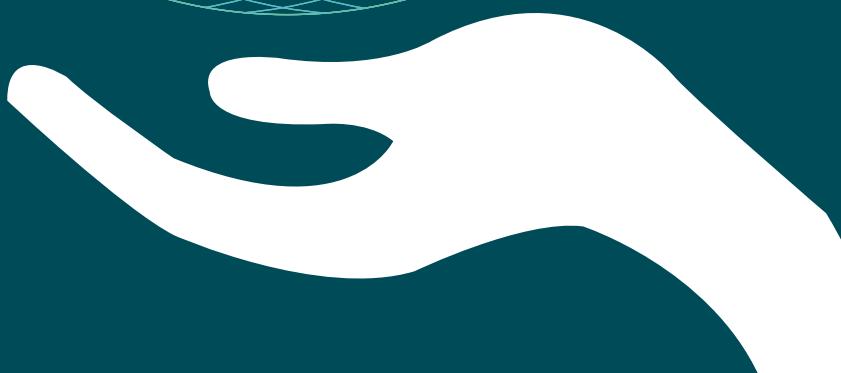
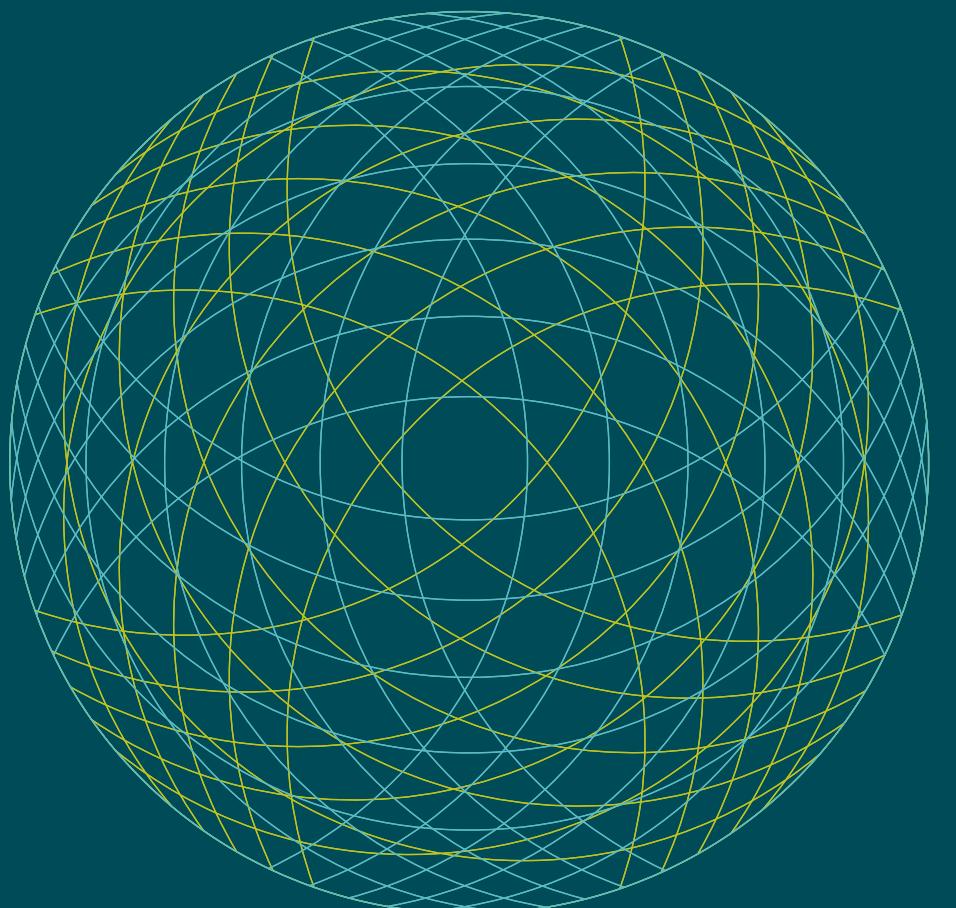




State Agency
offices in
42
locations



Our People



Article 2 of the Constitution defines the Irish nation by reference to its people, and records the special affinity of the Irish nation with people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage

Partnership, Reconciliation and Cooperation in Ireland

Our peace process has transformed the lives of people throughout the island of Ireland for the better.

The Good Friday Agreement and succeeding Agreements have opened up new possibilities and opportunities for people, North and South, exerting a positive influence on our society, our economy and our international reputation. Other parts of the world experiencing conflict look to Ireland for ideas and inspiration.

While huge progress has been made, a recent and authoritative assessment of the peace process made for sobering reading; “Northern Ireland remains a very deeply divided society” where a “fault line runs through education, housing and many other aspects of daily life”. There are therefore no grounds for complacency and work to achieve true reconciliation and to unlock the social and economic potential that would flow from that will remain a priority objective of the Government.

The Stormont House Agreement of 23 December 2014, with reconciliation and economic renewal as its twin



President Higgins with Queen Elizabeth, First Minister Peter Robinson, Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness and Secretary of State Villiers during the State Visit to Britain in April 2014.
Photo: Fennell Photography

objectives, provides an opportunity for a new beginning for partnership government in Northern Ireland. The Agreement itself covers a broad range of political, social and economic issues.

It sets out a plan for financial and budgetary reform. It proposes a way forward on flags, identity, culture and tradition through the establishment of a commission. It envisages the devolution of responsibility for parades to the Northern Ireland Assembly. It establishes a programme of institutional reform at Stormont and progresses a number of outstanding aspects of prior Agreements. Very significantly, it establishes a new comprehensive framework for dealing with the corrosive legacy of the Past.

Our focus in the period ahead will be the effective and expeditious implementation of the Stormont House Agreement. Implementation of the Agreement is likely to be as challenging as its negotiation. In this regard, British and Irish Government engagement in the review and monitoring process will be vital.

The Government’s commitment to partnership and reconciliation will continue to be advanced at a political level and also through direct engagement at community level across Northern Ireland.

Through its Reconciliation Fund, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade provides annual funding of €2.7 million to some 150 community, voluntary and civil society organisations. A new strategy for the Fund was published in June 2014 and will be reviewed within three years.

Marking significant events in the history of our island on an inclusive and respectful basis can contribute to fostering reconciliation and greater understanding. In commemorating the Decade of Centenaries, opportunities will arise to explore the shared and divided histories of these islands in a mutually sympathetic way. The centenary of the Easter Rising in 2016 will be the centre-piece of the Government’s commemorative programme. It will have a particular significance for North South and Irish-British relations.

It will be important to engage the political leaders of the future who will have to carry this work forward. The North South Inter-Parliamentary Association, established in 2012, promotes cooperation between members of the Houses of the Oireachtas and the Northern Ireland Assembly and will be a very important framework for this work.

* Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report No.3, March 2014, by Dr. Paul Nolan, published by the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council



Members of the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly meeting in Dublin in March 2014

The continuing support and engagement of the US administration, the European Union and other partners, as well as the Irish diaspora for the ongoing process of reconciliation has been, and will remain, critically important. US involvement at the highest level remains a fundamental support for the political institutions in Northern Ireland, while the EU Peace Programme provides an important underpinning of the long-term work of reconciliation.

The Government enjoys a close and comprehensive political relationship with the **Northern Ireland Executive**. North South relations have been placed increasingly on a sound and forward-looking basis, with a shared interest in cooperating to support economic growth, bringing real, tangible mutual benefits to people across the island.

Cooperation has focused on putting in place policies to promote growth in exports and foreign investment; working together on upgrading services; creating jobs and improving young people's skills. There is also agreement to optimise the use of public money through the most effective delivery of services to the public. There is cooperation in an EU context on a wide range of issues and an official from the Northern Ireland

Executive is seconded to Ireland's Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels.

Regular meetings of the North South Ministerial Council promote cooperation in a range of areas. In six of the agreed North South sectors, co-operation is taken forward by Implementation Bodies operating on an all-island basis, while in other areas of cooperation, common policies and approaches are agreed in the Council. In the tourism sector, the island of Ireland is promoted abroad by Tourism Ireland. As we look forward, there must be a growing emphasis on working in partnership with the Northern Ireland Executive to benefit from international opportunities to boost competitiveness and to attract jobs and visitors to Ireland.

There are for instance opportunities to develop trade links with emerging markets on an all-island basis. By working together we can scale-up to target more effectively opportunities for our exports, for our education sector and for our tourism industry. Ireland's embassy network is assisting trade missions and companies from both parts of the island. The first joint trade mission involving companies from Ireland, North and South, and from Britain visited Singapore in

February 2014, accompanied by ministers from Dublin, Belfast and London. We will build on the success of this visit, involving the development agencies in both parts of the island, to pursue opportunities in other emerging markets and will work together to support efforts to bring the Rugby World Cup to Ireland in 2023.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade advances work on these issues, including through its offices within the British Irish Intergovernmental Secretariat in Belfast and through the North South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat in Armagh. In July 2014, Seán Sherlock TD was the first Minister of State appointed with responsibility for North South Cooperation.

The **Irish-British relationship** has been both a catalyst for positive change in Northern Ireland and a beneficiary of that change. The State Visit by President Michael D. Higgins to the United Kingdom in 2014, and the State Visit to Ireland by Queen Elizabeth in 2011, demonstrated that relations have never been better.

The Irish in Britain contribute to the strength and vitality of relations. Up to one-in-four people in Britain has Irish heritage. There is virtually no aspect of British civic or political life that has not been enriched by contributions from the Irish community. There are 50,000 Irish-born directors of British companies, for example, and a network of Irish societies link this vibrant community to Ireland.

A Joint Statement by Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, and Prime Minister, David Cameron, in 2012 set out a framework for cooperation between Ireland and the UK. An annual summit reviews progress and oversees cooperation in a wide range of areas, supported by a unique structure of meetings of administrative heads of Irish and British Government Departments.



Island of Ireland Peace Park, Belgium, where 69,974 killed, wounded or missing Irish WWI soldiers are remembered



Minister Séan Sherlock delivering a TEDx talk in Belfast

Close relations with the devolved administrations, ensure that Irish interests are advanced and links fostered with Scotland and Wales while the British-Irish Council with its Secretariat in Edinburgh supports wider regional cooperation in a growing range of areas.

Despite these positive developments, there are issues which will unfold in the coming years which, at minimum, will change the way business is carried out with our nearest neighbour, and which could have a significant impact on Ireland.

Discussions on enhanced devolution for Scotland and on political changes across the UK will have implications for the devolved administration in Northern Ireland. As debate gets under way, we will need to maintain contact with the British government and with all administrations. Our objective is to ensure that, whatever the outcome of this process, our relations with all parts of the UK continue to flourish.

The possibility of a change in Britain's relationship with the EU has strategic consequences for Ireland, which are addressed further in the chapter



Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade, Charlie Flanagan TD, pictured at Stormont with Northern Ireland First Minister, Peter Robinson, and Deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness

Our Place in Europe, but it also has wide-ranging implications for our continuing political relations within Northern Ireland, North South cooperation and political and economic relations between Ireland and Britain.

Managing these issues and their impact will be a major priority in the coming years.



My Job:

Margaret Stanley

Deputy Joint Secretary, North South Ministerial Council, Armagh

I work closely with both Irish and Northern Irish civil servants to ensure the smooth running of the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC), Armagh, established as a part of the Good Friday Agreement. It works on matters of mutual interest on an all-island and cross-border basis.

Our focus is on areas that can assist economic recovery, job creation, the best use of public funds and the most effective delivery of services for citizens across the island. As a separate part of my work, I engage in outreach amongst the business, community and non-governmental sectors in Northern Ireland with the aim of promoting cooperation for mutual benefit.

Serving our People Abroad

Consular Assistance

Irish people are travelling more frequently, for shorter periods, to more diverse locations with over six million visits abroad in 2013. This is a three-fold increase over two decades and the number will continue to rise. With more people travelling for business or leisure to less secure parts of the world, there is growing demand for advice and assistance.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade dealt with tens of thousands of requests for assistance in 2014, this included over 1,650 serious consular emergencies and cases of Irish people injured, hospitalised or dying abroad.

In an uncertain and often unstable global environment, complex emergencies can affect Irish citizens in several places at one time, requiring a very high level of preparedness and flexibility. For example, in 2011 Ireland mounted simultaneous consular responses to the Christchurch earthquake in New Zealand, the earthquake and tsunami in Japan and evacuated around 400 Irish citizens from Libya.

A stand-by Consular Crisis Centre in Dublin can be staffed and activated in an emergency. Flexible arrangements with EU partners can assist in attending to consular needs in a more responsive and coordinated manner, for example working closely with a number of EU partners on the 2011 Libya evacuation, with the Dutch in Syria and with the British in West Africa in response to the Ebola crisis.



My Job

Brendan Maloney

Duty Officer, Dublin

In addition to my current role in the Office of the Secretary General, I also participate in the Departmental Duty Officer rota which deals with emergencies abroad that arise overnight or at the weekend. Most are requests for consular assistance, with calls from all over the world.

Each situation is different. As the first point of contact, I may be required to deal with a medical emergency abroad (accidents, injury, illness, or death), cases where Irish citizens are arrested or detained abroad (or who are victims of crime, stolen passports, etc), reports of missing persons and child abduction cases. Successful management of a case involves swift, effective liaison with the relevant Irish embassy, consulate or honorary consul and with the appropriate authorities in Ireland, such as An Garda Síochána.

A new and more complex consular landscape is emerging, seen in the growth in international parental child abduction, increasing numbers of dual-citizens beyond the traditional diaspora countries, and new challenges such as cases involving forced marriage.

SERVING OUR PEOPLE ABROAD

- The peace process has transformed the lives of people throughout the island of Ireland;
- Supporting the provisions of the Good Friday Agreement is a priority;
- We are committed to promoting an all-island approach across all areas of government;
- Cooperation in support of reconciliation, prosperity and a shared perspective on Northern Ireland is at the heart of the Irish-British relationship;
- The Reconciliation Fund provides annual funding for community, voluntary and civil society organisations.

- We made 6.3 million visits abroad in 2013, up 300% in 20 years;
- 631,000 passports were issued in 2013, 14% to Irish citizens living abroad;
- Travel advice is regularly updated on Department and embassy websites and twitter feeds;
- With more people travelling the number of requests for emergency assistance to our embassies and consulates has risen;
- Our embassies deal with over 800,000 consular, passport and visa queries annually.

Promoting Partnership,
Reconciliation and
Cooperation

Serving our People
Abroad

Connecting with the
Global Irish Family

Sharing our Culture

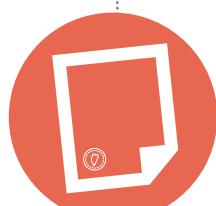
- An estimated 70 million people claim Irish descent;
- Working with the Irish diaspora is a priority for Government;
- The overseas Irish are a diverse group with diverse needs and interests;
- The Emigrant Support Programme has provided €114.6 million to Irish community projects worldwide since 2004;
- Projects include support for new immigrants, isolated people and business networks;
- The diverse population of our island offers new opportunities to strengthen our outreach.

- Our culture is a bridge between our island, the global Irish family and the world;
- Almost two thirds of tourists visit because of our history and culture;
- We work with Culture Ireland to promote Irish culture and artists;
- St Patrick's Day is a unique opportunity to showcase Ireland;
- We are working to support interest in the Irish language around the world.

CONSULAR SERVICES

800,000

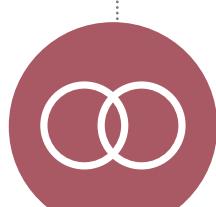
consular, passport and visa queries
handled annually by embassies
and consulates



Over

60,000

documents authenticated in 2014



Over

3,000

letters of freedom to Irish citizens
getting married or entering into civil
partnerships abroad in 2014



Assistance provided to

1,650

Irish citizens following serious consular
emergencies abroad in 2014

**My Job****Sharifah Shahabudin**

*Consular assistance and visas,
Embassy Kuala Lumpur*

I work on the embassy consular assistance desk, helping Irish people in difficulty in Malaysia and Thailand. The large number of Irish visitors to Thailand especially means that this embassy is one of our busiest consular posts. I assist people and families when Irish citizens die abroad, become seriously ill or injured, are arrested or imprisoned, or encounter other difficulties. This involves liaising with families and friends, the consular assistance unit in Dublin, and the authorities here.

I am also visa officer. We processed around 1,450 visa applications in 2013 which requires attention to detail, as well as liaising with applicants, embassy staff, and the Irish National Immigration Service. People visiting Ireland from abroad, especially for tourism, bring considerable revenue to Ireland so it is important to provide a professional and efficient visa service.



The Emigrant Flame, Wexford



Group of senior Irish emigrants visiting Ireland

Emigrant Support

A key priority is immigration reform in the United States, which has been and will continue to be a focus for Government. It will be important to maximise the benefit to undocumented Irish of the measures announced by President Barack Obama in November 2014. Further legislative action in the US Congress will be needed so as to ensure an eventual resolution for all undocumented Irish in the US as well as provision of a legal path for future Irish immigration. This would help ensure people-to-people ties between Ireland and the US continue to be renewed into future generations.

Many new emigrants, including those who have left Ireland since 2008, are going beyond traditional centres of emigration. Western Australia and Western Canada in particular have seen increased numbers.

The Government is working to address access issues and ensure that Irish people who wish to pursue opportunities abroad can do so, for example, utilising the J1 programme with the United States and working holiday visa agreements with Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand and the

Republic of Korea, which contribute to bilateral relations while offering short term work rights to young Irish citizens.

An improved arrangement for the Working Holiday Visa programme with Canada has seen over 10,000 young Irish granted permission to work there in 2014.

The embassy network has been expanded and augmented in the US, Asia and Australia and will need to be kept under review in light of consular needs. This is supported by a network of over 100 Honorary Consuls worldwide who provide a range of services in locations where we do not have an embassy or consulate. This network has been recently renewed and expanded, for example, to help address the needs of Irish citizens in Western Australia and Canada. Our Honorary Consuls provide an excellent service, at minimum cost to the taxpayer. The network has tremendous potential which will need to be progressively developed.

As our economy grows, many of our younger emigrants will wish to return home. We need to provide economic opportunities for them and we need to encourage them to bring their talents and experience back to contribute to Irish life.

As a generation of emigrants reach the end of their working lives, it will be increasingly important to respond to their needs - particularly those of more advanced age - through welfare and social network support and assistance in accessing social services in the host country. More than €114 million has been provided through the **Emigrant Support Programme** to Irish community projects worldwide since 2004. This programme has been sustained through the financial crisis and its reach extended to support a more diverse and widely dispersed emigrant community. Most of this has gone to support the most vulnerable emigrants and this must remain the case.

Funding support will need to be continuously reviewed to ensure it meets these changing needs. Funding is being expanded to groups providing services to Irish people recently arrived in destinations such as Australia and Canada. Assistance is being directed to younger Irish people suffering from emotional, mental health and drug and alcohol misuse issues. New networks are being supported, for example the Ireland Network groups in many US cities, while stronger ties are being created through business networks and education exchanges.

Passport Services

As the number of people travelling has increased, so has demand for passports. The **Passport Service** delivered 629,446 passports in 2014. The total number of passports issued has increased by 10% over the last five years while staff reductions of 10% have also taken place.

This process has been accompanied by significant gains in customer service. The passport renewal process has been simplified with an online passport renewal reminder service (www.dfa.ie). Waiting times have been reduced and queues virtually eliminated. A facility is available to track the application status with weekly updates on performance against targets. New arrangements have been put in place to assist those required to travel because of an emergency.



The Cork Passport Office



An award-winning new passport booklet was introduced in 2013, combining the latest security technology with imagery representing our culture, history and people



PASSPORTS

629,446
passports issued in 2014



UP 28%
since 2000



60,000
more passports issued
in 2014 than 2009



50%
issued April – July



2012 & 2013
busiest years in history of
Passport Service



14%
of passports issued abroad
86%
of passports issued in Ireland



increase in number of
passports issued with
10%
less staff



6%
lower costs
since 2009

The Irish passport has a high reputation worldwide, ranked in the top ten of passports whose citizens are least-affected by visa restrictions. An award-winning new passport booklet was introduced in 2013, incorporating security features which offer advanced protections against fraud. These features contribute to the safety of citizens when travelling and the ease with which they pass through immigration controls abroad.

However, a programme of ongoing investment and continued process improvement is required to combat increasingly sophisticated threats to the service and to mitigate risks of passport fraud. Tackling this challenge will require sustained effort and investment over the coming years, backed by ongoing efficiency gains.

The next phase of improvements should focus on enhancing the protections in the passport process while balancing this with the need to improve customer service to citizens, reducing the administrative burden for applicants and responding to a growing volume of telephone queries.

In keeping with the Government commitment to e-services for citizens, a growing range of consular, passport and citizenship services should be provided online. All applications for Foreign Birth Registration and letters of freedom, which some countries require when Irish citizens are marrying abroad, are now submitted online. An online register has been introduced for all documents officially authenticated (apostilled), bringing authentication processes into line with best practice.

In short, we will need to be more flexible in how we design and deliver support and assistance to Irish people travelling, living and working abroad and returning to live and work in Ireland.

@PassportIrl



Minister Deenihan with members of the Irish American Community at the Famine Memorial in Philadelphia © Tom Keenan

Connecting with the Global Irish Family

The global Irish family is a resource of incomparable benefit. The Irish abroad contribute to all aspects of Irish life, from culture and society, to the sports field and the board room. The influence they provide in the countries where they live extends Ireland's reach, adding a unique dimension to our relations with those countries.

Engagement with the Irish abroad is a two-way process that reflects the diverse interests and needs of the Irish overseas, opening up the lines of communication and connectivity for the mutual benefit of Ireland and the Irish abroad. Looking in, it is about enriching Ireland, socially,

culturally and intellectually, as well as economically. Looking out, it is about mobilising the remarkable influence of the Irish nation, which is a legacy of more than 200 years of emigration.

The Global Irish Network, initiated in 2009, has provided a forum for discussion of imaginative and influential new initiatives to deepen links across the diaspora.



Team Japan at the Asian Gaelic Games, Kuala Lumpur, 2014.



Recipients of the Presidential Distinguished Service Award 2013

President Michael D. Higgins, building on the work of President McAleese and President Robinson, has assumed a leading role in reaching out to emigrant communities and deepening connections at the highest level.

The introduction of the Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad recognises outstanding achievement by Irish people overseas. A Certificate of Irish Heritage now provides official recognition of the descendants of previous generations of Irish emigrants.

Jimmy Deenihan TD was appointed Ireland's first dedicated Minister for Diaspora Affairs in 2014 in a commitment to further deepening Government engagement with our diaspora.

Irish communities – at home and abroad – are taking the lead in building their own networks across the

diaspora, facilitated by initiatives such as The Gathering in 2013 and Ireland Reaching Out.

How the Government interacts with the Irish abroad and the structures available to manage this important relationship must continue to evolve to match the needs of this ever-changing diaspora.

An estimated
70
million people
worldwide claim
Irish descent, half of
whom are in the
United States



My Job

Ralph Victory

*Press and Immigration Officer,
Embassy Washington*

U.S. immigration reform to include relief for undocumented Irish migrants and improved channels for future legal migration between Ireland and America are major Government priorities and have been a primary focus of my job since my arrival in Washington D.C. in 2011. I have engaged in extensive networking and relationship-building with key Congressional and Administration officials and worked closely with the wider Irish-American community, particularly in support of high-level outreach by the Taoiseach, Tánaiste, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade and Oireachtas delegations and by the Ambassador.

Immigration reform is a challenging topic but it's been great to work towards helping the undocumented and enhancing future Ireland-US ties through improved immigration arrangements.



Ireland's 2013 EU Presidency launch at Dublin Castle

The public consultation on Ireland's diaspora policy will help guide the further development of policy. This has revealed diverse responses, but two clear themes have emerged. First, the Irish abroad wish to have their voices heard at home. Second, they wish to remain connected with Ireland, and they see a role for the Government in this.

The Constitutional Convention has recommended extending voting rights in Presidential elections to citizens who are resident outside of the State. This recommendation is currently being examined.

Advances in technology make it more possible and more necessary than ever to facilitate and maintain close ongoing connections from afar. This potential has yet to be fully harnessed.

The commemorations programme offers an immediate opportunity to collaborate and to mark the role that

the Irish abroad played in the struggle for independence and in the process of national reconciliation, with events planned in several centres.

More should also be done to develop the connections between the diaspora and local communities in Ireland, building on the success of The Gathering.

Ongoing efforts are needed to encourage the third and fourth-generation Irish to retain a sense of their heritage.

Our new citizens are a bridge between Ireland and their countries of origin. Many are opting to become citizens of Ireland, bringing their talents, energy and experience to bear in the life of our nation.

The growing number of people who have spent time living, studying and working in Ireland and then returned

home also represent a valuable link between Ireland and their home countries.

Increasing globalisation challenges us to rethink what constitutes the Global Irish Family. In addition to emigrants and their descendants, there are those who are not Irish by birth or ancestry but who have found an affinity with Ireland, whether through time spent here for work or study, through tourism or through contact with the Irish abroad or through the attraction of Irish culture.

Engagement with these affinity networks should be deepened.

Sharing our Culture

Some of the strongest affinities are those created through culture and sport.

The arts, culture and creative sectors in Ireland are a dynamic and growing pillar of our economy, employing around 170,000 people. Irish culture is a global commons, recognised and followed by people who may have no other connection to Ireland. Our music; our literature; tours by Irish theatre and dance companies; film, television and animation produced or set in Ireland; our international festivals; and the achievements of our sportswomen and men; all introduce Ireland to a global audience, beginning conversations and relationships that can enhance our profile and image, cement friendships and support jobs, trade, tourism and investment.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade works closely with Culture Ireland in promoting Irish arts worldwide, supporting Irish artists and companies to present their work abroad, while our schools, colleges and universities also play an important role in our cultural engagement overseas.

We are known for our sporting enthusiasm as a nation, and our fans are as celebrated and welcomed abroad as our accomplishments on the pitch, track and field. Gaelic games are reaching an international audience, and over 400 GAA clubs abroad are raising awareness of Ireland and building relationships across the globe through initiatives such as the Asian Gaelic Games. The GAA also provides a valuable social and support network for many Irish people living and working abroad.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade provides support to Irish Studies programmes at universities worldwide, while the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is supporting the development of Irish language courses in third-level institutions overseas. Irish Studies, Celtic Studies and Irish language programmes are being provided at third-level institutions in North America, Europe and further afield. Through Global Gaeilge, Foras na Gaeilge and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade support those with an interest in the Irish language around the world.

Ireland has well recognised strengths and an international reputation for design and creativity, for example in the fields of fashion, media and

gaming. In the immediate future, the embassy network will work closely with Culture Ireland and the Design and Crafts Council to bring events such as Yeats 2015 and the Year of Irish Design 2015 to the attention of audiences worldwide. Ireland's embassies and consulates are also helping to develop and support a vibrant international dimension to the Decade of Commemorations, including a festival of Irish culture at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC in 2016 entitled "*Proclaiming Ireland*".

Through cultural diplomacy, the relationship we have built with our diaspora communities and the partnerships we have forged around the globe can only be strengthened.



Case Study Chinese New Year, Beijing

Ireland was 'Country of Honour' at Beijing's Chaoyang International Spring Carnival in February 2013. A highlight of Beijing's Chinese New Year celebrations, the festival was attended by 380,000 people.

Organised by the embassy in Beijing, the festival was a prime opportunity to boost Ireland's profile in the Chinese capital, featuring four Irish cultural performances a day, and strong Irish branding. The embassy secured significant TV, print and online media coverage of Ireland.



Irish music group Anúna touring Scandinavia

Our Values





Irish peacekeepers at a community event in Tibnin, Lebanon. Photo: Pasqual Gorri / UN Photo

Article 29 of the Constitution sets out the principles that guide Ireland's conduct of its international relations: the ideals of peace and friendly cooperation amongst nations, founded on international justice and morality; adherence to the principle of the pacific settlement of international disputes by international arbitration or judicial determination; and the principles of international law as our rule of conduct in our relations with other states.

Our foreign policy is deeply anchored in the values set out in our Constitution. These are reflected also in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the principles which underpin the European Union.

These values are under pressure. New actors have emerged with competing visions of society. Global institutions are struggling to respond to conflicts and humanitarian crises in Libya, Syria, the Middle East and Ukraine; to the stresses of an interdependent global economy; and to poverty and underdevelopment. There is as yet no consensus on how to deal with some new and emerging threats such as cyber-security while the non-proliferation regime is also under pressure.

Supporting greater peace, security and development is also in our interest as a small country with an open economy in an ever more interconnected and uncertain world.

Our ability to shape the world according to our values is defined by our membership of the European Union, our participation in the United Nations, and our partnerships with like minded countries and other actors.

The **United Nations** has been a cornerstone of our global engagement since 1955. The principles and values enshrined in the UN Charter are those we have always striven to promote and protect and we engage across the breadth of UN activities in pursuit of our goals. We have been a strong supporter of the multilateral system of collective security represented by the UN and of the primary role of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Ireland has been one of the strongest and most consistent supporters of the three pillars of the UN's work: peace and security, development and human rights, having served three times as a non-permanent member of the Security Council and provided strong and principled leadership on issues such as disarmament, human rights, development and the search for peace in the Middle East.

Our Signature Foreign Policies



Combating Poverty and Hunger



Advancing Human Rights



Promoting Disarmament



Committed to UN Peacekeeping



Sharing our experience of peace and reconciliation on the island of Ireland



UN General Assembly

A Secure World

As the institution with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the **UN Security Council** must be equipped to respond more effectively to the changing array of security threats as they emerge, in a way that commands respect and broad consensus and recognises the new realities that confront us.

Ireland has taken a lead role in efforts to improve the working methods of the Council, favouring a more representative Council that more closely reflects regional balances, population and economic weight, while preserving the right of smaller UN members to serve at frequent intervals.

We are respected at the United Nations as an active, constructive and independent-minded member. As part of our commitment to providing

leadership, we will seek election to the Security Council again for the period 2021-22.

In line with this approach, Ireland has taken seriously its obligations under the UN Charter to make available to the Security Council armed forces, assistance and facilities in order to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.

For over five decades, Irish men and women have participated continuously and with great distinction in **UN peacekeeping missions** in Europe, Asia, Africa, Central America and the Middle East. Since our first deployment in 1958, eighty-six members of the Defence Forces have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving on peacekeeping missions.

Our participation in peacekeeping has evolved pragmatically in response to changes in the international security environment and must continue to do so. The majority of our peacekeepers are deployed on missions in the Middle

East. The Departments of Defence and Foreign Affairs and Trade work closely to ensure our approach to international peace and security remains effective and responsive to the evolving international security environment.

In recent years, one of the most significant changes in UN efforts to maintain international peace and security has been the mandating of regional organisations such as the EU, the African Union and NATO, by the UN, to manage operations on its behalf and under its authority. The UN Secretary General has called on the EU and other organisations to play a greater role in meeting the growing demand for peacekeeping.

Ireland advocates a strong EU contribution to UN peacekeeping. The EU's **Common Security and Defence Policy** (CSDP) provides the operational capacity to undertake crisis management operations outside the EU, in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter. The CSDP is oriented towards the external challenges of

peacekeeping, conflict prevention and strengthening international security, and does not address territorial defence. The Lisbon Treaty maintained a commitment that the development of EU policy in this area would not affect or prejudice Ireland's traditional policy of military neutrality. **Our policy of military neutrality remains a core element of Irish foreign policy.**

The EU has deployed over thirty civilian and military operations since its first police mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2002, most of them authorised or endorsed by the UN, as the EU can deploy more rapidly and provide resources not available to the UN. These missions have included military bridging operations in Chad and the Central African Republic, and training missions in Mali and Somalia. Faced with growing demands for EU support, the range of tasks undertaken by CSDP missions has broadened to include disarmament, humanitarian and rescue activities, military advice and assistance, conflict prevention, as well as peace-making and post-conflict stabilisation.

Participation by the Defence Forces in such missions, in accordance with our relevant legislation, is highly valued and will remain a key part of Ireland's foreign policy. Ireland's participation in the Partnership for Peace and cooperation with, the European Defence Agency, support the development of Defence Forces capabilities and improve interoperability, which are essential to our effective participation in peacekeeping operations.

Two thirds of the EU's peace support operations have been civilian in nature, undertaking work such as police support and reform, monitoring of ceasefires, as well as training in rule of law, security sector reform, maritime capacity building and border assistance. Ireland deploys members

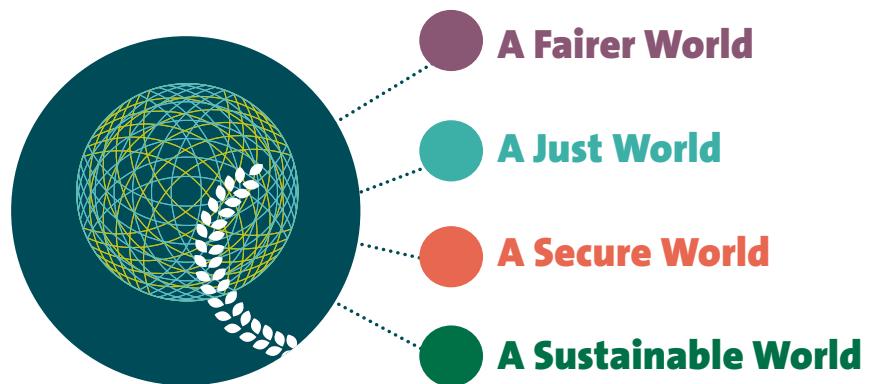


Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Charlie Flanagan TD, pictured with UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, at the UN in New York

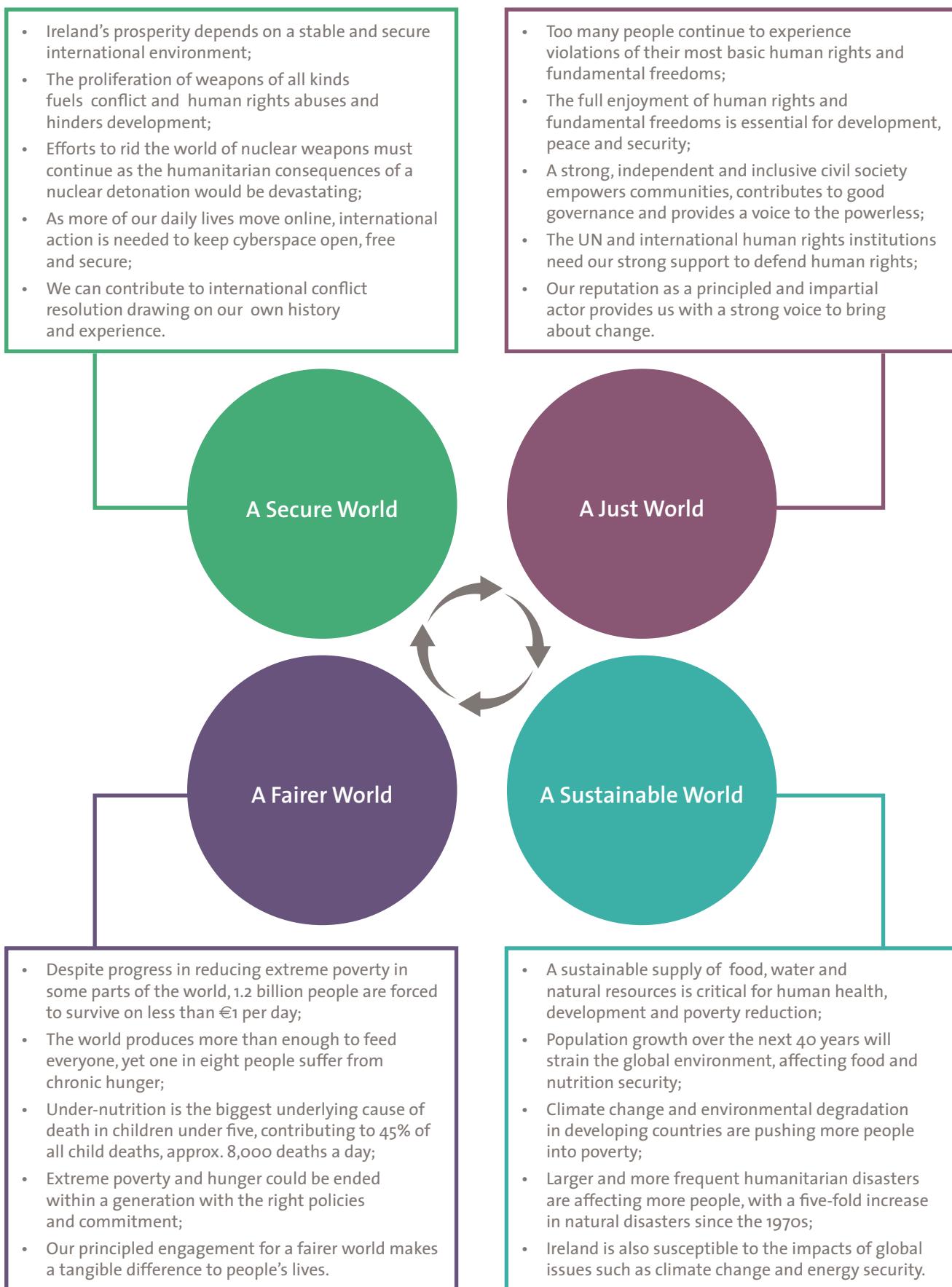
of An Garda Síochána and civilian experts to these missions and has helped ensure that human rights, International Humanitarian Law and gender awareness training are part of the preparation and operation of CSDP missions.

Ireland regards EU-UN cooperation in the area of crisis management as an important tool in strengthening effective multilateralism, by allowing both organisations to work together to respond more effectively in times of crisis.

Promoting Ireland's Values



PROMOTING IRELAND'S VALUES ABROAD



Responding to a Changing Security Environment

We are confronted by an array of challenges to international peace and security that have little precedent in recent decades, either in range or seriousness.

There are over 110,000 UN **peacekeepers** today, a nine-fold increase since 1999, operating in increasingly difficult and unpredictable environments. Conflicts between state and non-state actors, such as in Syria, are impacting negatively on UN missions and on the ability of UN peacekeeping forces to undertake their mandate.

Ireland will remain a committed contributor to UN and UN-mandated **peacekeeping operations** and will contribute to developing UN policies and structures to more effectively deliver its peace and security agenda, including the UN Review of Peace Operations in 2015.

We will draw on our own peacekeeping experience to provide training for a number of African partner countries

to strengthen their capacity to make a strong and sustainable contribution to UN peacekeeping missions.

We will advocate for implementation of the Security Council's Women, Peace and Security agenda, in particular the participation of women in peace-building, and efforts to counter gender-based violence.

From our work at the UN in the 1950s that led to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 1968, to our more recent work at the forefront of developments recognising the humanitarian impact of the misuse of conventional weapons, we have played a leading role in efforts to promote **disarmament, non-proliferation and the regulation of new weapons**.

The effort to achieve a world free from the threat of nuclear weapons has been a significant goal of our foreign policy. We played a key role in adopting the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. The Convention on Cluster Munitions was adopted at a diplomatic conference chaired by Ireland in Dublin in 2008.

We were among the first countries to sign and ratify the Arms Trade Treaty in 2013.

The **international arms control regime** is under pressure. Arms spending is increasing rapidly in some regions, most notably in Asia, while many countries remain outside agreements setting global norms on landmines, cluster munitions and other weapons. The use of chemical weapons in Syria highlights the danger that non-state actors could gain control of these weapons. India, Pakistan and Israel have not signed the NPT and are widely known to have nuclear capability. The DPRK has openly sought to develop weapons.

We will continue our leadership role on disarmament. Renewed efforts are needed to protect and strengthen the NPT and pursue its goal of **nuclear disarmament**. We are working with like-minded countries to develop dialogue on the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear detonation as a means to focus greater attention on this issue. Ireland supports efforts spearheaded by the EU to reach a negotiated settlement on Iran's nuclear ambitions that will ensure nuclear weapons are not developed.



Minister Frank Aiken signing the NPT Treaty in Moscow, July 1968. UCD

More will be required to promote the universalisation of conventions dealing with chemical and biological weapons and to support implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Arms Trade Treaty. We will work to strengthen the humanitarian norms applying to weapons in general and engage in the debate on the next generation of weapons, lethal autonomous weapons.

 @DisarmamentIRL

Major Regional Issues

A number of regional conflicts have the potential to cause global insecurity. Chief among these is the series of conflicts in the **Middle East**.

We have consistently supported a negotiated two-State solution as the only just and sustainable basis for resolving the **Israeli-Palestinian conflict**. Any solution must respect the rights of all parties. The EU can play an important role in efforts to resolve this conflict, including by addressing threats to the viability of the two-State solution such as the continuous expansion of illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. We have long called for an end to the unjust and counter-productive blockade of Gaza and its population and provide humanitarian assistance for Palestinian refugees including in Gaza. We are also supporting Palestinian state-building efforts.

We are working in three ways to pursue these objectives: through influencing policy and decisions in the EU, the UN and other international fora; through our own direct engagement with parties in the region by Ministers and by our diplomatic representatives; and through our support for humanitarian relief and action. This is channelled principally through the key UN agencies and leading Irish charities, and



Minister Liam Cosgrave leads Ireland's first delegation to the UN General Assembly in New York, September 1956. National Archives

also includes support for Israeli and Palestinian NGOs working on justice and human rights issues on the ground.

The conflict in **Syria** is impacting on the wider region, giving rise to the largest humanitarian emergency in decades and, together with continuing instability in Iraq, has fuelled the growth of extremist fundamentalist movements, such as ISIS. We are providing urgent humanitarian assistance for those affected by the Syrian conflict.

Closer to home, a new regional challenge for Europe and for Ireland is the re-emergence of tensions with **Russia** following the illegal annexation of Crimea. Ireland's approach to this is explained in the chapter, *Our Place in Europe*.

Ireland has a unique experience of **building and sustaining peace and promoting reconciliation** on this island. Capturing and sharing our experience will help us protect and nurture peace in Ireland and allow us to share that experience with peace builders elsewhere, where this might prove helpful. Each conflict and each peace process is unique, but all share

the challenge that sustaining peace and reconciliation requires a long-term commitment.

We organised a high level conference to share this experience during our OSCE Chairmanship in 2012. We provided practical assistance to Moldovan and Transdnisterian negotiators and civil society. We have shared our experience of the North South Ministerial Council with officials in the Republic of Korea and supported similar work in the Western Balkans, Afghanistan and the Middle East. Conflict resolution and mediation was an important focus during our EU Presidency in 2013.

It will be important to build on this work. The Irish peace process remains one of a relatively small number of positive models for others. Its capacity to inspire and guide others should not be underestimated.

Ireland has benefitted greatly from **globalisation**, but its effects have also left Ireland vulnerable in new ways. The growth in global travel increases the risk of the rapid spread of threats to public health whether through new flu strains or Ebola.



International Symposium on Leadership, Peace, and Sustainable Livelihoods in the DRC and Region, NUI Galway, 2014

Greater interconnectedness has increased the threat from **International Terrorism**. There has been an unprecedented flow of fighters to conflict zones while facilitation networks aid travel and channel funds. Although the threat to Ireland from international terrorism is considered low, we cannot be considered to be immune. We are working with our EU partners and at the UN, Council of Europe and the OECD to develop measures to combat this threat. At home, An Garda Siochána's community engagement programme and Ethnic Liaison Officers aim to prevent young people being radicalised or alienated from society as a whole.

Serious and organised crime is a global threat which no country can hope to tackle alone. We are working within the EU and with international partners to facilitate the detection, prevention, investigation and prosecution of persons involved in criminal activity including those engaged in serious and organised crime.

Global and regional instability facilitates the scourge of **trafficking of human beings**. We have put in place strong legislative, administrative and operational measures, including a multi-agency approach, to combat and prevent human trafficking. We are party to UN and Council of Europe instruments to combat this threat and have fully transposed the EU Directive on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims.

The growth in internet use has seen a parallel growth in cyber attacks and cybercrime which pose a risk to individuals, companies and our infrastructure. Ireland's position as a growing hub for the global digital economy means that **keeping cyberspace open, free and secure** is a national interest. A multi-stakeholder approach involving governments, the ICT industry and civil society is needed to address the complex political and economic, technical and security, legal, and human rights issues involved. Best practice on behaviour in cyberspace is being shaped in several

contexts and we should be active in all - EU, UN, OSCE, Council of Europe, and Partnership for Peace.

There can be no distinction between online and offline rights. The internet has enabled people everywhere to exercise their human rights in new ways, including the rights to freedom of expression, and of peaceful assembly and association. It has also created new challenges, including the right to privacy. Some governments are using the internet to limit the freedoms of their citizens.

Ireland's engagement led to the first international norms on cyberspace, adopted by the OSCE in 2013. Progress was achieved on cyber-security, data protection and web accessibility during our EU Presidency. We are a founder member of the Freedom Online Coalition and worked for EU Guidelines on Freedom of Expression Online and Offline in 2014. Publication of Ireland's National Cyber-security Strategy will be an important milestone at national level.

A Just World

The promotion and protection of human rights has found expression in Ireland's active adherence to core international and European human rights treaties, strong support for strengthening the regional and multilateral human rights framework and support for the establishment of the International Criminal Court.

Ireland is proud of its record in the promotion of human rights globally.

We were honoured by the appointment of former President Mary Robinson as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights from 1997-2002 and have provided financial and political support for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Ireland pressed hard for the establishment of the **UN Human Rights Council** (HRC) and played an active role in subsequent reviews to strengthen its effectiveness. Our election to the HRC in 2012 was recognition of our strong reputation as an advocate for human rights globally.

We participate in the scrutiny of UN members' human rights records through the **Universal Periodic Review** process. Ireland was reviewed in 2011, and submitted a voluntary mid-term report in 2014 on the implementation of recommendations made by UN members.

We have been an advocate for reform of the UN human rights **treaty monitoring bodies**, which examine and hold States to account under key human rights conventions including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; as well as conventions dealing with issues including torture,



President Higgins meets Aung San Suu Kyi at Áras an Uachtaráin in June 2012

discrimination against women, racial discrimination, rights of the child, and rights of persons with disabilities.

Ireland has encouraged other countries to establish and strengthen National Human Rights Institutions, which play a key role in improving compliance with human rights standards.

The newly-established Irish Human Rights Commission and its founding legislation break new ground in terms of the structural independence of the Commission from Government and the strength of its mandate.

We contribute to the **EU's human rights work**, through EU human rights dialogues with non-EU countries and EU human rights country strategies. We initiated discussion on how to better protect fundamental rights and the rule of law within the Union itself.

We address human rights issues in our relations with other countries at the most senior levels of government, bilaterally and through the EU, choosing the most effective means to do so. Our embassy network raises

issues on the ground. Our international development programme has led to an increased focus on human rights and accountability in our partner countries.

The **changing global environment poses new challenges and threats** to human rights, which are under considerable pressure today.

Human rights violations are undermining development. Gross abuses of human rights are being perpetrated in Iraq and Syria and elsewhere. Religious and ethnic minorities are being targeted in many countries. The rights of women and girls are under threat, from denial of the right to education, to forced marriage and female genital mutilation. Laws and practice too often discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Some new actors challenge the legitimacy of human rights, seeking to create conditionality between individual responsibility and state obligations, or to override human rights obligations by reference to traditional or cultural values.

These challenges require us to **reaffirm our commitment to the universality, indivisibility and interrelatedness of all human rights**, to accountability for human rights violations and abuses, and to the protection of those who are most vulnerable and marginalised.

Ireland has played a leading role in promoting and protecting those who face persecution for defending the rights of others – **Human Rights Defenders**. We secured adoption of EU Guidelines on this issue in 2004, raise individual cases with countries concerned and provide support in multilateral fora. Our support extends to those who work on any aspect of human rights, including newer issues such as corporate abuses, environment and climate change. We provide strong support to the Irish-based NGO Front Line Defenders, who perform critical work to protect and support human rights defenders worldwide.

The role of **civil society** is being reduced and repressed in many countries by legal, administrative and other restrictions. We took the lead on a HRC resolution in 2013 which addressed this issue for the first time as a human rights concern, calling on states to create and maintain, in law and practice, a safe and enabling environment for civil society. We have since taken the lead in requesting the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to draw up recommendations for the creation and maintenance of a safe and enabling environment for civil society, and we will maintain focus on this issue.

6.3 million children under the age of five die each year, largely of preventable and treatable causes. **Child mortality** patterns reveal significant and persisting inequalities between and within countries; driven by poverty, and by social exclusion, discrimination, gender norms and neglect of basic human rights. Ireland has taken the



UN Human Rights Council, Geneva. Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré / UN Photo

lead in developing a human rights approach to this crucial issue. Ireland ratified the 3rd Optional Protocol to the Convention on the **Rights of the Child** in 2014. As a result, Irish children can access the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, which hears complaints in relation to violations of their rights.

Ireland is committed to advancing **gender equality**, and played a key role in the establishment of UN Women, the UN body to promote gender equality. We will stand for election to the UN Commission on the Status of Women for the term 2018-2022.

We are committed to promoting the rights of **lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) individuals**, who continue to suffer disproportionate levels of violence and face systemic discrimination in many countries. We strongly supported efforts to address this issue at the HRC in 2014 and in 2011, when the first UN resolution on sexual orientation and gender identity was adopted, and during our EU Presidency in 2013, when EU guidelines on the rights of LGBTI individuals were adopted.

We are committed to promoting **freedom of thought, conscience, and religion**, as well as the rights of persons belonging to religious minorities, and played a key role in the adoption of EU guidelines on freedom of religion or belief in 2013.

The **right to education** is a fundamental human right which must be protected, given the role of quality education in promoting gender equality and assisting marginalised persons and groups.

Business is exerting an ever greater power and influence over the implementation of human rights. The *UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* adopted in 2011 create a framework in which governments have the principal duty to protect rights, companies have a responsibility to respect rights, and both must work to provide a remedy when violations occur. We will undertake a consultation process in 2015 to feed into a national plan on **Business and Human Rights**.



Congressman John Lewis with Nettie Washington Douglass and Ann Quinlan, descendants of Daniel O'Connell and Frederick Douglass, pictured after delivering the fourth Iveagh House Commemorative Lecture in April 2014.

As part of our commitment to ensuring **accountability for human rights abuses**, Ireland supported the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, and is a major funder of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. The **International Criminal Court** provides a means to bring to account perpetrators of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community. We call on countries to comply with their obligations to cooperate fully with the Court and to become parties to its founding statute. We will promote the independence of the Court while enhancing its working methods and are working to ensure Ireland can ratify by the end of 2015 amendments to its founding statute adopted in 2010.

We will continue to promote respect for and adherence to **International Humanitarian Law** in all circumstances.

We are committed to the **Council of Europe's** role as the reference point for human rights, democracy and rule of law across Europe, and the role of the **European Convention on Human**

Rights and its associated Court. We will ensure that judgments in relation to Ireland are implemented fully and in a timely manner at home.

The Government is committed to an open and constructive dialogue with Irish **civil society** on human rights issues. This is maintained through the NGO Standing Committee on Human Rights (which has been reviewed to provide a more representative membership) and the annual NGO Forum on Human Rights. These structures complement ongoing informal exchange and relationships between civil society and the Department, in particular its Human Rights Unit.

To improve the **coherence of the promotion and protection of human rights** in our foreign policy, an Inter-Departmental Committee on Human Rights will be established, chaired by a Minister of State. This will also assist progress towards the ratification by Ireland of key international human rights treaties and timely reporting to UN human rights bodies.



My Job

Patricia O'Brien

Permanent Representative to the UN, Geneva

I lead Ireland's mission to the UN at Geneva and the UN Specialised Agencies and other International Organisations such as the World Trade Organisation. Geneva is home to two-thirds of the activities of the UN system. We are involved across all fields of this work, including human rights, humanitarian action and refugee assistance, development, disarmament, health, labour, intellectual property, and science and technology.

Recent key priorities include Ireland's responsibilities as a member of the Human Rights Council, Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament, Co-ordinator of the New Agenda Coalition on nuclear disarmament, implementation of the Cluster Munitions Convention, and efforts to bring a successful conclusion to the Doha Round of trade negotiations, as well as the outcome of the 9th Ministerial Conference of the WTO.

A Fairer World

Ireland has a longstanding commitment to working for the eradication of poverty and hunger in the world. A truly just and secure world cannot be achieved without development, while its absence is a contributing factor to insecurity and human rights abuses. Our commitment is also born of our own experience of hunger. We are working across our foreign policy to address the challenges of poverty and inequality and to create a fairer world.

A fairer world cannot be achieved without peace and security, without justice and human rights and without sustainable policies and actions on the environment, natural resources and the global economy. These challenges are interconnected and require solutions that are also interconnected. What is required is for all members of the international community to take on our collective responsibility for our shared future.

Over recent decades, international aid has driven significant progress in reducing the symptoms and the causes of global poverty. Extreme poverty in the world has been halved; deaths of children under five in sub-Saharan Africa have been reduced by 39% between 1990 and 2011. Primary school enrolment in sub-Saharan Africa rose from 60% in 2000 to 77% in 2011. There has been huge progress in tackling preventable disease.

We have made a contribution to achieving these results. Our aid programme, Irish Aid, is based on building and sustaining strong partnerships to address the complex factors behind poverty, hunger and inequality.

We have established a long term strategic relationship with a total of nine Key partner countries in sub-Saharan Africa, and Vietnam in Asia.

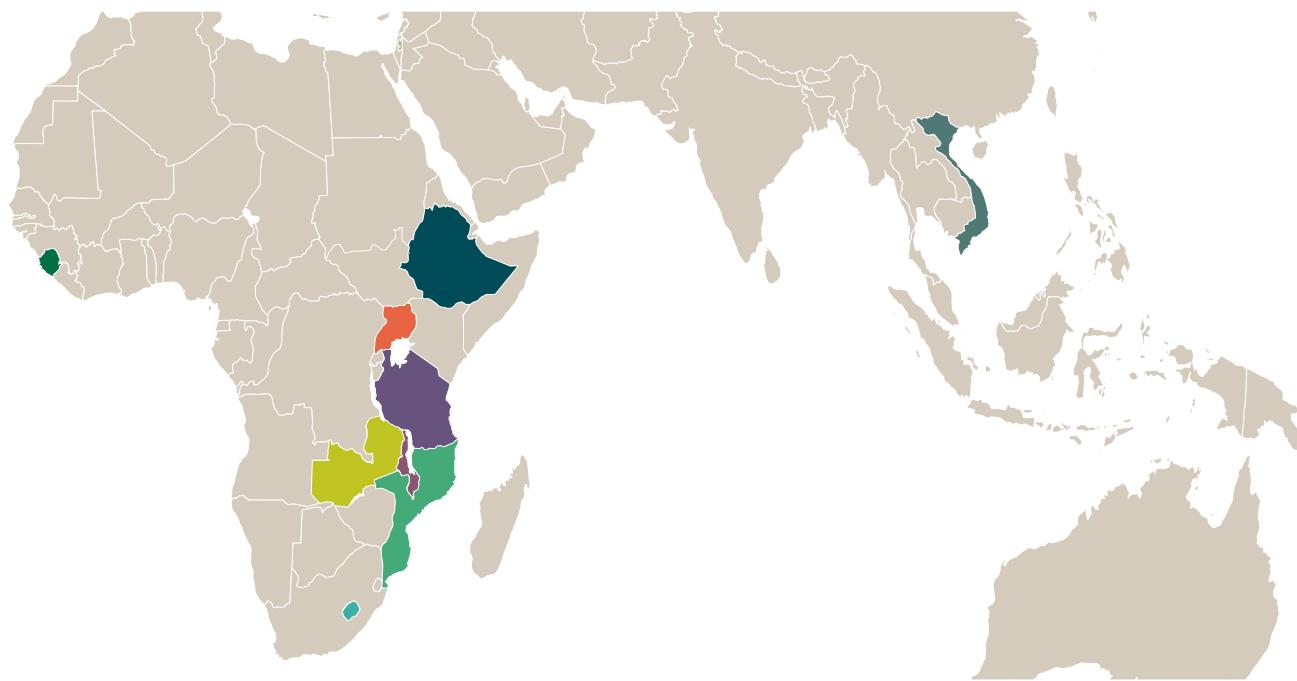


Irish Aid stocks being dispatched from Brindisi. Photo: UNHRD



Losta Manyamba and Margaret (one year old) at a Community-based Therapeutic Care check up in Malawi. Photo: Daniel Rowan/Irish Aid

MAKING A DIFFERENCE AT COUNTRY LEVEL: IRELAND AND ITS KEY PARTNER COUNTRIES



Ireland

Human Development Index: 11th of 187 countries
 Population: 4.63 million
 Average Annual Income (GNI) per capita: \$33,414
 Life Expectancy: 80.7 yrs

Sierra Leone

Human Development Index: 183rd of 187 countries
 Population: 6.09 million
 Average Annual Income (GNI) per capita: \$1,815
 Life Expectancy: 45.6 yrs

Lesotho

Human Development Index: 162nd of 187 countries
 Population: 2.07 million
 Average Annual Income (GNI) per capita: \$2,798
 Life Expectancy: 49.4 yrs

Mozambique

Human Development Index: 178th of 187 countries
 Population: 25.83 million
 Average Annual Income (GNI) per capita: \$1,011
 Life Expectancy: 50.3 yrs

Malawi

Human Development Index: 174th of 187 countries
 Population: 16.36 million
 Average Annual Income (GNI) per capita: \$715
 Life Expectancy: 55.3 yrs

Zambia

Human Development Index: 141st of 187 countries
 Population: 14.54 million
 Average Annual Income (GNI) per capita: \$2,898
 Life Expectancy: 58.1 yrs

Tanzania

Human Development Index: 159th of 187 countries
 Population: 49.25 million
 Average Annual Income (GNI) per capita: \$1,702
 Life Expectancy: 61.5 yrs

Uganda

Human Development Index: 164th of 187 countries
 Population: 37.58 million
 Average Annual Income (GNI) per capita: \$1,335
 Life Expectancy: 59.2 yrs

Ethiopia

Human Development Index: 173rd of 187 countries
 Population: 94.10 million
 Average Annual Income (GNI) per capita: \$1,303
 Life Expectancy: 63.6 yrs

Vietnam

Human Development Index: 121st of 187 countries
 Population: 91.68 million
 Average Annual Income (GNI) per capita: \$4,892
 Life Expectancy: 75.9 yrs



Minister Charlie Flanagan with Dutch PM, Mark Rutte, co-chairing 'Delivering Zero Hunger – Demonstrating Impact' at the UN in September 2014

We also deliver assistance through partnerships with development NGOs and civil society organisations, missionary organisations, academic institutions, public sector bodies, and with the Irish public more broadly to achieve greater quality and effectiveness. In particular, we use our voice internationally to rally support behind the related development challenges of hunger and under-nutrition.

We are recognised as having one of the most effective development programmes in the world. The OECD-conducted peer review of Ireland's international development programme in 2014 praised our strong focus on tackling hunger and poverty and noted that Ireland excels at delivering aid that is effective and reaches those who need it most. We are proud that we are recognised as delivering, through Irish Aid, on our commitments to international development and to promoting peace, human rights and food security.

Ireland remains a very significant international aid donor. The Government has succeeded in stabilising the development aid budget over the past three years and is committed to making progress to achieve the UN target of providing 0.7% of GNP in Official Development Assistance as our economy improves. Our aid is 100% untied. We remain one of the most generous countries per capita in the world.

Keeping Pace with a Changing World

But despite the progress achieved, one billion people, or one in seven of the world's population, remain hungry today. The distribution of global poverty is changing. By 2030, half of the world's poor will be in sub-Saharan Africa. Cities in middle-income countries are home to increasing numbers of the world's poor, who face rising levels of inequality and social exclusion. The incidence of poverty is greatest in Least

Developed Countries, where nearly half the population lives in extreme poverty (less than €1.25 a day).

Ireland is a world leader in the proportion of aid which we direct to these countries. We have campaigned to draw attention to under-nutrition and child stunting, one of the world's most serious, yet least addressed problems.

The effects of climate change impact most acutely on the poorest communities. We are supporting developing countries and vulnerable communities to develop their own national responses to environmental degradation, natural resource management and efforts to conserve and promote biodiversity. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade brings a strong development perspective across government to Ireland's broader work on climate change and sustainable development.

Poor governance and corruption, which persist in many countries, undermine development and require the highest vigilance against mismanagement and fraud in the use of public and donor funds. Its main victims are poor communities in developing countries. We are working with partner governments, parliaments and communities at national and local level to strengthen public financial management systems and accountability for equitable, efficient and sustainable service delivery. Irish Aid is the Irish people's aid programme.

We are committed to openness, transparency and accountability in the use of public funds and to demonstrating clearly the results achieved and the impact of our assistance. Oversight and accountability systems have been strengthened and strong internal controls put in place to protect public

funds and mitigate the risk of fraud. We are determined that fraud at any level will not be tolerated.

Gender inequality remains a huge issue, and women still have significantly less access than men to resources and opportunities. Our approach is based on a firm commitment to the empowerment of women and girls, and to their role in driving an end to poverty. We work to address inequalities, in particular gender inequality, across our development programme. We focus on countering barriers to women's participation, and strengthening the voice and role of civil society and local communities.

Good governance and accountability are vital for the realisation of human rights, and key to addressing inequality, discrimination and exclusion which lie at the core of poverty. We will continue to focus on building effective institutions and policies as well as encouraging popular participation in the democratic process.

In many parts of the world, inequality and insecurity are linked. 42% of the world's poorest people now live in countries affected by conflict, violence and instability. The number of humanitarian crises continues to rise while the international humanitarian system is stretched beyond acceptable levels. Many fragile regions and states struggle to emerge from longstanding emergencies. Ireland is playing its part in helping address this wave of suffering, and we have not neglected emergencies in parts of Africa which do not always receive public attention.

To respond to these changes, the Government adopted a new Policy for International Development: ***One World One Future***, in 2013. It makes clear that aid alone will not solve the problems of poverty and hunger. Lasting solutions must be underpinned by developing

countries' own leadership, their ability to raise revenue and boost foreign direct investment, to integrate into world markets and to address inequality. It also recognises that, in addition to our aid programme, other policies across government have an impact on international development.

In addition to reaffirming our commitment to the fight against hunger and poverty, there is a strong focus on sustainable development and inclusive economic growth, better governance, human rights and accountability.

New partnerships are being established in some of the most vulnerable regions in sub-Saharan Africa. We have expanded the Irish Aid programme in Sierra Leone, and upgraded our presence to a full embassy. This will strengthen our efforts to help address the devastating consequences of the Ebola epidemic in Western Africa. Ireland's whole of government response is reflected in the deployment of Irish military personnel to support the embassy staff in Sierra Leone, where Irish NGOs are also playing a vital role. This work is evidence of our commitment to working in fragile states, often in difficult and challenging environments.

The Ebola crisis has underlined the devastating effect of a public health crisis in poor countries, and the regional and global implications and risks. Strengthening the capacity of health systems will be a necessary part of our response. The provision of essential public services is a key requirement for development and we are working to improve the access of vulnerable people to quality services such as health, education and social protection with a strong focus on people affected by HIV and AIDS.



My Job

Dr. Jonas Chambule

Health Programme Adviser,
Embassy Maputo

I joined the embassy in 2004 to advise on the health and HIV and AIDS sectors in Mozambique. My work is focused on ensuring appropriate planning, management and value for money of Ireland's support to Health in Mozambique. This support aims to reform and improve delivery and quality of health services at national and provincial levels in partnership with the Ministry of Health. I work to strengthen our partnership with the Clinton Health Access Initiative and to ensure lessons learned from Ireland's support to Health in Mozambique are documented and used.

I am grateful for the opportunity to work with Ireland to achieve a better future for the people of Mozambique. The Health Minister described Ireland as Mozambique's best partner in the health sector during the State visit of the President of Mozambique to Ireland. Long may Ireland's good reputation continue!

More Needs to be Done

Sustainable growth must be underpinned by developing countries' own leadership, and their ability to raise revenue and better integrate into regional and global markets.

Many sub-Saharan African countries are experiencing rapid economic growth, increased trade and investment, and greater democratic participation. Africa is increasingly financing its own development as it becomes more integrated into the global economy, and the views of African countries are gaining increasing weight at international level.

As countries drive their own development, aid will need to complement other tools for change such as taxation, political dialogue, and foreign investment. To achieve a lasting solution to poverty, countries need sustained and inclusive economic growth, that leads to domestic revenue generation, increased employment and trade opportunities, and enhanced wellbeing of all citizens.

We are committed to strengthening and broadening Ireland's engagement and partnership with Africa. Ireland now has ten embassies in sub-Saharan Africa, mandated to promote all aspects of our relations with African countries, including

increasing trade and investment links. Our aid programme recognises the interdependence between political engagement, peace and development.

We will partner with African countries on issues such as climate change, disarmament, peacekeeping, human rights and hunger. We will deepen our dialogue with the African Union and regional economic communities.

Making a Step Change

2015 will be a pivotal year in international development, as we work with partners to maximise progress under the Millennium Development Goals adopted in 2000, and negotiate a new global framework to replace them. Our ambition is to achieve a transformative shift to sustainable development goals, including a commitment to end extreme poverty and hunger by 2030. This will require sustained effort and commitment.

Ireland has already demonstrated strong leadership on this challenge, including during our 2013 Presidency and at the United Nations. We have been asked by the UN to take on the responsibility of co-facilitating, together with Kenya, the international negotiations on the new global development framework at the UN in 2015. This is a significant honour for Ireland and a global recognition of the quality and value of our aid programme and our partnership approach to development. More importantly, it is an opportunity to shape global debate, and to help secure an outcome that will make a difference to the lives of the world's poorest people. We will engage purposefully and in a spirit of partnership to achieve this.



School children in Machanga District of Mozambique. Photo: Hu O'Reilly, Trócaire



Election observation at Wabera Polling Station in Kenya. Photo: John Lynam, Irish Aid



Dry water body in Kilosa District, Tanzania

A Sustainable World

Challenges posed by climate change, population growth, management of natural resources, and food, water and energy security require closer cooperation at national, EU and international levels if we are to prevent them from becoming drivers of insecurity and obstacles to development.

Climate change is a global environmental, development and security challenge. It acts as a catalyst, exacerbating tensions over land, water, food and energy prices and creating migratory pressures and threatening food and nutrition

security and public health. It will play a significant role in shaping the future security environment.

Ireland and the EU are committed to an effective, long-term global response. An EU Framework on Climate and Energy for 2030 includes a target to cut EU greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. This level of ambition underlines the important role the EU is playing in shaping the global climate change agreement due to be concluded at a UN climate conference in Paris in 2015.

Because it affects poorest communities most, climate change is a priority in our international development policy. We will press for climate change to be addressed in an integrated manner in the post 2015 development framework.

Through our ratification of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, we are committed to playing our role in reaching and implementing global solutions to the climate challenge. Through the Government's Framework on Sustainable Development, *Our Sustainable Future*, we strive to promote a balance between the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental.

We will maintain our engagement as a party to the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol and strive to meet our obligations arising from them. We will work constructively for an agreement in 2015 that will strengthen the international response to climate change, and establish a comprehensive and effective course of action consistent with the ultimate objective set out in Article 2 of the 1992 Convention. Former President Mary Robinson will play a role in preparing for this conference as the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Climate Change. We are also supporting natural resource management, as well as supporting developing countries to conserve and promote biodiversity and to strengthen resilience against climate change.

Tensions and conflicts over **access to water and other resources** are likely to become more frequent over the next decade with the potential to have a direct bearing on European policy and interests, and on international peace and security.

Food security - ensuring enough nutritious food to feed a growing world population and making more efficient and more sustainable use of the world's natural resources – is a key challenge in the global policy agenda. It is central to Ireland's International Development Policy, which prioritises action to reduce hunger and undernutrition sustainably.



Irene Mosoboya, a carer with CHOICE, a South African NGO funded by Irish Aid, giving horticulture advice to HIV patient Betty. Photo: Irish Aid

Ensuring equitable access to raw materials and a sustainable supply of these commodities is important for both the European economy and for developing countries. We are supporting sustainable natural resource management and use of sustainable energy sources. As part of the EU's Water Diplomacy policy, we will support regional cooperation on sustainable water management.

We also support initiatives by the WTO and EU to support best practice in relation to the trade of raw materials and initiatives which promote sustainable access to raw materials.

Energy security is a growing challenge in many parts of the world, while high dependence on energy imports is a key issue for European countries. Given its potential to become a source of conflict or target for attacks on states, access to energy is receiving increasing attention at EU and international level.

Access to a diverse, secure and affordable energy supply is critical for our economic growth. Exploring opportunities for offshore oil and gas, and developing renewable energy onshore and offshore, including ocean energy, are key objectives. The possible development of a renewable electricity export market would be a significant contribution to EU energy and

climate goals. Consistent global implementation of safety provisions with regard to major hazards in relation to offshore exploration and production of oil and gas is crucial for sustainability and competitiveness.

We will support an EU external energy policy aimed at ensuring security of supply and sustainable energy management. Renewable energy and efficiency targets agreed under the EU 2030 framework will increase the security of the EU's energy supplies and help reduce dependency on imported fossil fuels. Solidarity among member states and speaking with one voice for collective impact is a significant tool for the further development of EU security of supply, competitiveness and sustainable development.

One of the EU's key energy objectives is to develop a single EU energy market, with an interim step of creating seven regional electricity markets. Securing Ireland's integration with EU regional energy markets has the potential to enhance security of supply, increase trade and competition and benefit energy consumers (business and residential) and the wider economy.

We will continue to play an active role in international organisations such as the International Energy Agency, and to support the ongoing

work of the International Renewable Energy Agency, particularly in relation to promoting sustainable energy production in developing and emerging economies. Through our development policy, we support the use of sustainable sources of energy.



My Job

Sinead Walsh

Ambassador, Sierra Leone and Liberia

I have been working at the embassy in Freetown for three years. We are a small team, working to help Sierra Leone rebuild after the brutal 11-year war which ended in 2002. Ireland is the lead donor on nutrition and women's rights, supporting children's nutrition at the critical growth stages, and assisting survivors of sexual assault to get medical care and access the legal system. We also help Irish companies doing business in Sierra Leone's fast-growing economy. The embassy also manages the Irish Aid programme in Liberia and I make monthly trips to support our two programme officers on the ground.

We are playing an active role in response to the Ebola outbreak, supporting the International Medical Corps in Sierra Leone and Liberia to establish and run treatment centres, and UNICEF in Sierra Leone for emergency nutrition for Ebola-affected households.



Mary Robinson, UN Special Envoy for Climate Change, addresses the Hunger, Nutrition and Climate Justice Conference in April 2013

Our Prosperity





Samuel Beckett Bridge, Photo: Fáilte Ireland

Driving Economic Growth

Over recent years, the Irish Government has had an engagement with the European Union, with international financial institutions and with other governments which is unprecedented in our recent history, both in range and depth. Direct engagement by the Taoiseach, Tánaiste, the Minister for Finance, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, and other Government Ministers has helped promote a positive image of Ireland and deepen economic links with our trading and investment partners. Rebuilding our reputation internationally has made a major contribution to restoring economic stability and growth at home. This has involved a number of Government Departments and the State agencies that report to them, in particular Bord Bia, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Science Foundation Ireland and Tourism Ireland.

In support of this economic diplomacy, and building on prior activities and successes, new relationships have

been developed, new knowledge and skills acquired and close partnerships fostered. Co-operation in promoting our economic interests has intensified across government, as well as with state agencies, the private sector, non-governmental organisations and interest groups.

The Export Trade Council (ETC), chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, works to strengthen coordination in implementing the Government Trade, Tourism and Investment Strategy, a Review of which was published in February 2014. The Council includes the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation; the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine; the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport; the Minister for Education and Skills; and the Minister of State for Development, Trade Promotion and North South Cooperation, as well as the heads of the State agencies and representatives from business.

The chairmanship and secretariat of the ETC was one of a number of trade promotion functions allocated to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 2011, when its name was amended accordingly. The work of Ireland's diplomatic network has

been re-orientated to better support economic promotion and officials have been seconded from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to the Department of the Taoiseach; the Department of Finance and IDA Ireland. The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation has responsibility for Enterprise Ireland; IDA Ireland and Science Foundation Ireland which work closely with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in implementing the Government Trade, Tourism and Investment Strategy.

These steps towards a more skilled and integrated economic diplomacy have supported our successful exit from the EU/IMF programme, the return of our bond ratings to investment grade, the decline of our bond yields to historic lows and the restoration of international confidence in the Irish economy.

Our prosperity is closely linked to the opportunities and advantages of membership of the EU, not least through the single market. The richness and complexity of these links are treated in greater detail in the following chapter.



Promotion event for Irish food in the Republic of Korea



A bioscience class at Athlone Institute of Technology. Photo: Athlone Institute of Technology

However, the open nature of Ireland's economy means that our ability to trade and to attract investment and tourism is affected to a degree that is rare among our European partners by developments elsewhere. The issues of development, security and sustainability set out in the previous chapter exert a powerful effect on the global economy. Our values and our economic interests are closely interrelated.

As a small, open economy, Ireland is reliant on trade, investment and tourism to sustain around 900,000 jobs. The foreign owned sector employs over 250,000 people in Ireland and contributes many more jobs indirectly. Indigenous exporters employ 175,000

people and support a total of 300,000 jobs, or some 16% of the workforce. The value of exports has exceeded our GDP since 2010. The eight million tourists who visited the island of Ireland in 2013 helped sustain 240,000 jobs North and South. All three sectors show strong growth potential over the next five years.

To take full advantage of this, intensive, targeted and coordinated engagement will be required on several fronts – to remove barriers to trade, investment and mobility, to ensure a sustainable and competitive tax regime, to deepen engagement with priority and high potential markets and to leverage our competitive advantages to greatest effect.



My Job

Michael Collins

Ambassador Germany

I came to Germany last year from Washington DC and to another relationship that is of vital importance to Ireland. The job of our embassy team is to ensure that we are engaged with Germany in a way that advances Ireland's huge trade, investment and tourism links and our EU interests.

What Germany is thinking, and how it is doing, matters to Ireland. Hosting the Taoiseach here in Berlin last July when he met with the Chancellor and business leaders really brought home to me the substance and scale of our relationship. As an embassy, we are dedicated to building this relationship in every way that we can and forging a strong future together as committed members of the EU.

Removing Barriers to Trade, Investment and Mobility

As an open economy, Ireland has a strong interest in robust international trade frameworks. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) sets the rules of trade and mechanisms for dispute resolution between nations while the World Intellectual Property Organization and the International Labour Organisation help to regulate the international environment for economic growth and development.

The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation takes the lead in this area.

Negotiations in the WTO framework have been slow in recent years, resulting in new emphasis on regional and bilateral trade agreements among WTO members. The recent success in concluding a Trade Facilitation Agreement, the first multilateral agreement in the WTO's history, may help renew ambitions in the area of multilateral trade agreement negotiations. The development of sectoral plurilateral and multilateral agreements in services, green goods, government procurement, customs and trade facilitation, and information technology represent a new and significant departure in large scale trade negotiations while still holding the potential to reduce costs and boost exports in the Irish economy.

Ireland already benefits from an extensive network of EU Trade and Association Agreements with other countries and regions. In the immediate future, the EU will complete or advance comprehensive trade and investment agreements with critically important trading partners for Ireland including the United States and Japan. This builds on work already concluded with Canada and the Republic of Korea.



Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Simon Coveney TD, pictured with US Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack. In 2015 Minister Coveney announced that Ireland is the first EU state to gain entry to the valuable US beef market

It is estimated that completion of these EU trade negotiations would generate over two million jobs across the EU and bring significant benefit for Ireland. These agreements present further opportunities to promote trade and investment with these countries.

In the immediate future, negotiations on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the EU and US, launched under Ireland's EU Presidency, have the potential to lead to what would be the world's largest bilateral trade agreement with very significant benefits to Ireland which is one of Europe's greatest beneficiaries of transatlantic economic activity. An outcome which delivers greater regulatory cooperation and facilitates better access to US markets for goods and services produced in Ireland is a key goal in the short term.

The recently concluded Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with Canada will open up tariff-free access to Canada for Irish goods and services and increased opportunities in Canadian public sector purchasing.

Ireland has a sophisticated network of Double Taxation Agreements (DTAs). DTAs (most recently with Ethiopia in

2014 and Thailand in 2013) and Social Security Agreements (with the US, Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and others) help Irish businesses operating overseas, support the attraction of foreign direct investment to Ireland and assist Irish people working abroad.

New air routes to Ireland (Dublin-San Francisco in 2014, and Addis Ababa-Dublin-Los Angeles in 2015) connect Ireland with major African and US West Coast hubs and, together with new air transport agreements, support tourism, trade, investment and mobility.

A well-functioning visa system strengthens immigration controls and supports business and tourism. The Department of Justice and Equality, working closely with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, has opened visa offices at our embassies in Abu Dhabi, Abuja, Ankara, Beijing, London, New Delhi and Moscow which now provide a streamlined service to applicants from these regions. A short-stay Visa Waiver Programme, introduced in 2011, has increased tourism and business visits from eighteen countries by enabling holders of a UK visa to travel to Ireland.



My Job

Aidan Tumbleton

Visa Office Manager,
Embassy Ankara

Applications from Turkish nationals wishing to travel to Ireland are increasing at a remarkable rate, and have more than doubled in the past four years, to 4,446 in 2013. My duties include supervising Visa Officers and locally recruited staff, developing vetting procedures and best practices, and liaison with our key customer groups.

Our average processing time of three working days was the shortest of all Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service Offices in 2013, and compares favourably against the majority of other EU embassies in Turkey. This is doubtless a key factor in attracting increasing numbers of visitors to Ireland.

Building on this, Ireland and the UK have introduced reciprocal visa arrangements under which each recognises short-stay visas issued by the other. This will allow the holder of a short-stay visa to travel freely between both jurisdictions. New arrangements for visitors from China were introduced in autumn 2014 and further countries will be added.

New markets are being opened up for Irish agri-food exports, worth almost €10 billion in 2013, an increase of 40% since 2009. Bord Bia, Enterprise Ireland



Former President McAleese and Queen Elizabeth at the Garden of Remembrance in Dublin in 2011

and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, in cooperation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and its embassy network, are promoting growth in this sector through the Origin Green initiative which aims to make Ireland known globally as one of the most sustainable producers of quality food and beverages. The EU milk quota regime, in place since 1984, will be removed in 2015, opening up new opportunities for the Irish dairy sector. Already, in sub-sectors such as infant milk formula, Ireland supplies 10% of the global market. Overall, Ireland is well-placed to benefit from opportunities for agri-food exports arising from increased global demand for food in view of the projected growth in the world population. The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation has invested heavily in the food and beverage sector through Enterprise Ireland, to support the development of company capability and innovation to ensure the sector is positioned to take advantage of emerging opportunities.

The Japanese market was opened to exports of Irish beef in 2013 in a deal worth €15 million a year. The US market, worth an estimated €30 million annually, will also shortly reopen to Irish beef. The potential in

the Chinese market is even greater, with demand for beef in China expected to grow by one million tonnes over the next five years. Talks with the Chinese food safety authority indicate a possibility of opening up that market to Irish beef in 2015.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and its Embassy network, the Department of Education and Skills, and Enterprise Ireland through its 'Education Ireland' brand, are working with higher education institutions to attract international students and position Ireland as a global leader in the provision of high-quality education to the next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs and decision-makers internationally. Building stronger alumni associations also contributes to this work.

The Review of the Government Trade, Tourism and Investment Strategy, set an ambitious target for the international education sector to directly contribute €900 million to the Irish economy by the end of 2015, from its estimated contribution of €800 million in 2012-2013.

Ensuring a Sustainable and Competitive Tax Regime

Another issue of importance for Ireland in the immediate future will be the international response to concerns around international tax rules.

Ireland's interests are best served by ensuring a sustainable and competitive tax regime that plays by the rules but wins foreign direct investment into Ireland. In this context, the Government is committed to maintaining an open, transparent, stable and competitive corporate tax regime and, in particular, to maintaining a corporation tax rate of 12.5%.

Ireland's International Tax Strategy, published in 2013, sets out the Government's commitment to a full exchange of tax information with our tax treaty partners; to global automatic exchange of tax information, in line with emerging EU and OECD rules; to tackling harmful tax competition as part of EU and OECD efforts, including the OECD's Base Erosion and Profit-Shifting (BEPS) project; and to engaging constructively and respectfully with developing countries in relation to tax matters. In respect of this last point, a *Spillover Analysis on the Possible Effects of the Irish Tax System on Developing Economies* was launched in 2014, with results expected to be published in early 2015.

A new *Road Map for Ireland's Tax Competitiveness* was published in October 2014 which updates the *International Tax Strategy* and sets out a comprehensive package of competitive tax measures designed to reposition Ireland to reap the benefits, in terms of sustainable foreign direct investment, of a changed international tax landscape. One such measure is

the extension of the Foreign Earnings Deduction until 2017. The scheme has also been enhanced to make it easier for companies to expand their exports to foreign markets and the list of eligible countries has been increased to include countries in the Middle East, Asia, and Central and South America.

This issue has underlined the role of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in addressing this and other issues that are fundamentally important for Ireland's prosperity including public sector reform, education, science and technology, energy policy and development as well as growth and jobs. Engagement with the OECD has been significantly deepened through discussions led by the Taoiseach and then Tánaiste in February 2014.

The Department of Finance manages Ireland's engagement with the bodies charged with helping ensure international economic stability and sustainable development including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and other international financial institutions such as the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Asian Development Bank. The UN also has an important influence on the EU regulatory regime.

The embassy network provides invaluable support to the international financial policy work of the Department of Finance, both globally and within the EU framework. Analysis and political insight from the network contributes to better national outcomes in negotiations.

A different challenge is posed, however, by organisations which exert significant influence but in which we do not participate directly. Foremost among these are the G8 and G20, which have assumed a

growing importance in response to the global financial crisis. To fully protect our interests, we need to influence discussion on issues that affect us in these frameworks. With the opening of an embassy in Indonesia, Ireland is now represented in all G20 members and will need to use these relationships to ensure Irish positions are understood.



My job

Michelle Middleton

Office Manager, Embassy New Delhi

My role involves a very wide range of activity, from event management to overseeing building maintenance to helping Irish citizens in difficulty. On a day-to-day basis I oversee the working of the embassy and supervise its local staff. I am responsible for the embassy buildings and equipment, as well as vehicles and security. I am also responsible for monitoring the embassy budget. The embassy hosts frequent events to promote Ireland in India. These can be for anything up to 250 attendees and require an enormous amount of planning to ensure they run smoothly.

I also liaise with the Ministry of External Affairs, local authorities and the Police. My role involves helping Irish citizens in distress in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh and liaising with our honorary consulates across South Asia.

IRELAND'S ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY IN ACTION: 2013

Deepening Engagement with Priority and High Potential Markets

Ireland's position as a member of the European Union, with access to a single market (of over 500 million people) for labour, goods and services, benefitting from close integration into the sterling area as well as the Eurozone, and enjoying a uniquely strong economic relationship with the US, is a strong economic asset. The strong links with three currency areas allow Ireland to benefit as a bridge between these areas.

In our high-value markets, relationships at the highest political level, through Ministerial and other official visits and meetings, support trade, tourism, education links and investment goals.

As the first export market for many Irish companies and one of the largest economies in the world, the **United Kingdom** is our most important trade partner. Business is valued at €1 billion per week, supporting around 10% of jobs in Ireland. A joint economic study in 2013 examined a number of areas for greater collaboration, including agriculture and food; construction and physical infrastructure; energy; financial and professional services; innovation, research and development; and transport and tourism.

Cooperation and dialogue is increasing. In 2013, thirty-six meetings took place between Irish and British ministers and over 30 high-level visits to Britain have been facilitated by the embassy in London in 2013 and 2014.

Six of our remaining top ten trading partners - Germany, Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain - are in the **Eurozone** accounting for 42%



of merchandise exports in 2012, worth €38.9 billion. 25% of our inward investment flows are from Europe.

The continuing importance of the economic relationship with the **US** cannot be overstated. This is evident across the board: in investment flows, in trade, and in tourism. US investment in Ireland continues to accelerate: in the past half-decade, US firms invested more capital in Ireland than in the

previous half-century. This translates into high quality employment: more than 130,000 jobs in Ireland directly result from inward investment from the US. The US is also Ireland's largest trading partner for services and our largest single export market for goods. Additionally, it is our second-largest market for tourism – and an exceptionally vibrant one, currently the fastest growing among our major markets.



The Taoiseach and President Obama at Farmleigh House in Dublin in May 2011

A review of our US strategy, *Ireland and America: Challenges and Opportunities in a New Context* in 2014 highlighted the constant evolution in the relationship, the potential still to be realised, and the need to remain fully engaged so as to respond to new opportunities as they emerge. Consulates have been opened in Atlanta and Austin in recent years to benefit from the strong opportunities in these regions of the US.

As exports continue to be the main driver of our economy, new high-growth markets are increasingly important targets for Irish companies, accounting for a small but growing share of trade and investment. The relevant Departments and State agencies will continue to plan for longer-term trends, strengthening and diversifying our trade and investment links and capturing opportunities in dynamic, rapidly growing economies in Asia, Latin America and Africa. The

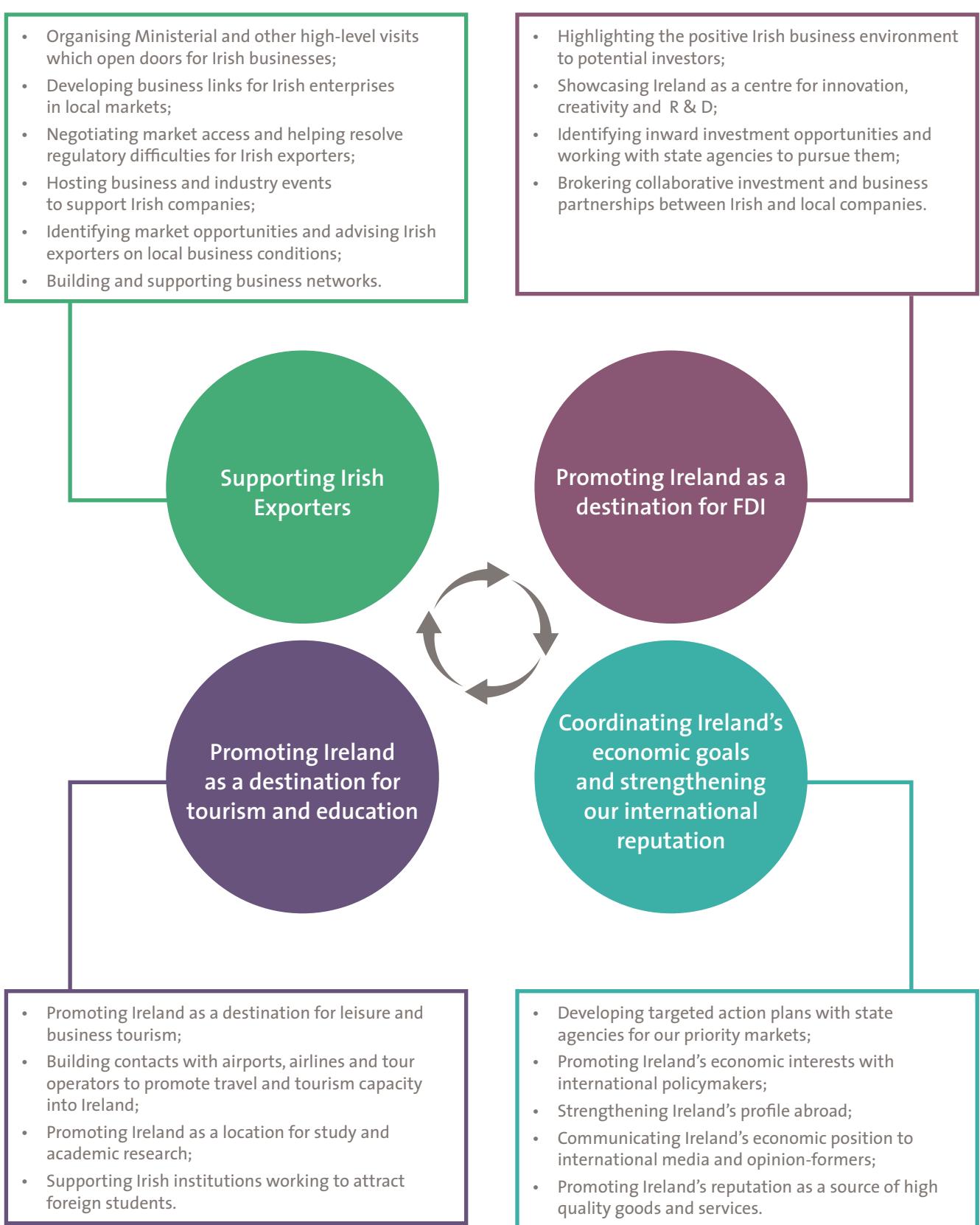


Tánaiste Joan Burton addressing the Irish Business Organization of New York

Review of the Government Trade, Tourism and Investment Strategy recognises this need while continuing to nurture our existing markets.

In many of these markets, the state plays a key role in economic activity, increasing the importance of government-level relations to open doors.

SUPPORTING JOBS IN IRELAND: THE EMBASSY NETWORK





My Job

John Conlan

Asia-Pacific Director, IDA, Shanghai

IDA Ireland is the Irish Government's economic development agency responsible for attracting Foreign Direct Investment to Ireland.

Based in Shanghai, I lead all of IDA's activity throughout the Asia Pacific region including IDA's offices in China, Japan, Korea, India, Singapore and Australia. IDA's business development teams in Asia Pac work across a range of sectors to win new investments for Ireland from this fascinating and growing part of the world. I took up my current role in August 2014.

Each of the markets here has different characteristics & opportunities for winning FDI and we employ a mixture of Irish and local staff. A lot of our job is very specific to developing relationships with companies but we work closely with our agency and embassy colleagues, helping build a stronger profile for Ireland in each of our markets. We are increasing our FDI business over the last few years and growing the number of world class companies from the Asia Pacific investing in Ireland.



Pictured in Milan at Bord Bia's offices, Minister Flanagan with Ambassador to Italy Bobby McDonagh and Bord Bia's Liam McHale. Italy is Ireland's ninth largest trading partner

The rise of **Asia** is transforming the way the world works. By 2025, it will account for almost half the world's output and will overtake the combined economic output of Europe and North America before 2020. In the near future, Asia will not only be the most populous region in the world, but also the largest economic zone and home to a majority of the world's middle class.

China is now the second largest economy in the world and is a major focus of our trade, tourism and investment. A programme of high level visits to China has boosted political and economic ties, culminating in a State Visit by President Higgins in 2014 and in the commitment by President Xi Jinping to make a return visit. A Strategic Partnership Agreement with China, launched during the Taoiseach's visit in 2012, provides a framework to

deepen bilateral engagement with this important economic partner. Agriculture is one of our priority sectors; food and drink exports have tripled in the last three years, and China is on course to become our second-biggest market in this sector. Negotiations for an EU-China Bilateral Investment Agreement, begun in 2013, should provide a firm basis for two-way investment opportunities and, in the longer term, an EU-China Free Trade Agreement.

A Partnership for Prosperity and Growth agreed during the Taoiseach's visit to **Japan** in 2013, sets out a path to enhance political and economic relations with this key Asian country and third largest economy in the world. Building on these agreements and expanding their number will be an important task in the period ahead.



President Michael D. Higgins and Chinese President Xi Jinping, Beijing, December 2014



Richard Bruton, Minister for Jobs Enterprise and Innovation, and Enterprise Ireland representatives with staff and students of Kolej Mara Banting in Malaysia

A joint strategy and targets for **India** are being developed, involving the embassy in New Delhi and the State agencies and there are growing links with the **Republic of Korea**, the fifteenth largest economy in the world and the first Asian country to conclude a Free Trade Agreement with the EU. Ireland is now present on the ground in five **ASEAN** members following the opening of embassies in Bangkok and Jakarta in 2014 (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam). This provides a solid platform for building stronger links in this dynamic and rapidly developing region.

These engagements will require sustained prioritisation and strategic investment in the coming years.

In the immediate future investment will also be required in the skills needed to deepen understanding of doing business in Asia. Initiatives such as the Farmleigh Fellowship provide third level students with first-hand experience of studying and working in Asia. Studies in Chinese, Japanese and Korean are already offered by Irish third level institutions. At secondary school-level, Mandarin will shortly be available as an option in the Junior Cycle, while Japanese is now available for Leaving Certificate.



Case Study: Japan

The Irish embassy in Tokyo has been working for several years together with the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine to re-open the Japanese market to Irish beef. Agreement was reached during a visit by the Taoiseach and Minister Coveney to Japan in 2013, making Ireland one of a select group of countries able to export beef to Japan. Bord Bia estimates that the short to medium-term opportunity for Irish beef in Japan is €12-15 m, with potential for significant expansion over time. The decision was a key milestone for the Irish agri-food sector, and beef sector in particular.



My Job

Smruti Inamdar

Director ASEAN, Enterprise Ireland, Singapore

The primary role of Enterprise Ireland's overseas offices is to help Irish companies identify and win business abroad and thereby increase employment in Ireland and exports from Ireland. We maintain strong relationships and collaboration with Irish embassies and the other state agencies in the ASEAN region to deliver the joint objectives of the Government's Trade, Tourism and Investment Strategy.

My office is co-located with the embassy in Singapore. Our Market Advisers connect Irish companies to potential partners and new business contacts across the globe. We assist client companies entering overseas markets for the first time by helping them identify and target new market opportunities, validate their product/service potential and make introductions to key buyers and decision-makers. We also assist companies already doing business to further develop, diversify and grow their business in both existing and new overseas markets.



Latin America and the Caribbean is a region of very significant potential, with 600 million people, enormous natural resources and a rapidly growing middle class. Growth rates of almost 5% over the last decade have transformed the region and growth is expected to continue with particularly strong opportunities for Ireland in Brazil and in Mexico which is the world's fourteenth largest economy and projected to move into the top ten.

Exports to the **Middle East and the Gulf** amounted to just over €2 billion in 2011. The region offers high potential for Irish companies in the education, health, construction and agri-business sectors. Gulf economies, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), are priority markets. Irish companies are establishing a direct presence in the region, with over seventy companies operating in the UAE alone. There are also opportunities in Egypt in the food, health and information technology sectors.



Case Study: Brazil

The Irish embassy in Brazil and the Department of Education and Skills secured participation by twenty-two higher education institutions in the 'Science without Borders' scholarship programme funded by the Brazilian Government and private sector. The scheme will bring up to 4,000 Brazilian students to study in Ireland at under-graduate level and a further 1,500 at post-graduate level from 2012 to 2016, boosting scientific and academic links with Brazil. In 2015 alone, the value of this scheme to the economy is estimated at over €35m, whilst also creating a future pool of alumni links between Ireland and Brazil.





My Job

Sonja Hyland

Ambassador Mexico

I took up duty as ambassador to Mexico in August 2013. Our embassy covers seven other countries in Central and South America which, together, amount to the sixth largest economy in the world. Since I arrived, our small team has managed the visit of President Higgins to Mexico, El Salvador and Costa Rica, two Irish Ministerial visits and one Mayoral visit to Mexico and a visit by the Mexican Minister of Economy to Ireland. We have also facilitated hundreds of business, academic, media and cultural links between Ireland and Latin America. We work closely with Mexico to advance shared global values, such as disarmament, non-proliferation, and sustainable development.

There are major opportunities for Irish companies in the region and for Mexican companies to use Ireland as a gateway to Europe. It is a huge privilege to represent Ireland in this dynamic, challenging and fascinating region.



Electricity workers in Tanzania. Irish Aid/Jeff Barbee

Africa is home to six of the ten fastest growing economies in the world. Foreign direct investment in Africa is growing quickly. Starting from a low base, trade between Ireland and Africa has increased significantly in the areas of ICT, financial services and telecommunications. An annual Africa Ireland Economic Forum in Dublin attracted 200 Irish business delegates and representatives from twenty-two African countries in 2014. Trade visits (most recently to South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and Ghana) have increased

and an Africa Agri-Food Development Fund was established in 2012 with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Joint Economic Commissions with China, the Republic of Korea, Russia, and Saudi Arabia provide a forum to develop trade and economic, business, scientific and technological cooperation.



The Africa Ireland Economic Forum in Dublin, November 2014



Making the Most of our Competitive Advantages

Ireland's strong **national image** is one of our greatest assets. Our culture resonates globally with parades and festivals worldwide helping to promote a strong image of Ireland and its people. In the United States, St. Patrick's Day events give Ireland an access to the President and members of the Administration and a visibility which is unmatched by far larger countries. Even in the US, however, the changing make-up of America means that Ireland's visibility should not be taken for granted.

Benefits flow from projecting a strong and clear image of Ireland abroad and from influencing how we are perceived by other governments, by the international media, by the business community, international markets and investors and by the general public. Visits to Ireland, for example by Queen Elizabeth and President Barack

Obama, have not only deepened these relationships but have generated publicity worth an estimated €300 million. Almost two thirds of tourists who visit Ireland rate our history and culture as central factors in their decision to visit.

But while awareness of Ireland is strong and perceptions are overwhelmingly positive in Europe and North America, sustained investment in our image is required in emerging markets in Asia, Latin America and Africa where our visibility is relatively low and our reputation is critical to success.

Visits abroad by the President – to Latin America in 2013 and to Africa and to China in 2014 - have generated enormous goodwill towards Ireland and helped underline values we hold in common. Culture also plays an important role, in China for example where the success of *Riverdance* has helped create a wider awareness of Ireland.

As a pilot, the Government is currently engaged in a project to improve Ireland's strategic messaging in China, and will look at how this can be replicated in other markets.

Our **diaspora** and our business networks are an extraordinary asset which few of our rivals can match. With over 300 members based in almost forty countries, the Global Irish Network brings together many of the most influential Irish and Irish-connected individuals around the world. Network members provide an invaluable resource of international expertise, through mentoring and guidance to Irish SMEs and supporting Ireland's embassies and State agencies in pursuing trade and investment promotion opportunities.



Taste of Ireland Green Box Competition was launched in Dubai in 2012



Delegates attend the third Global Irish Economic Forum in Dublin Castle in October 2013



My Job

Michael Hussey

Manager Middle East region,
Dubai, Bord Bia

We opened our Dubai office in March 2014 and co-locate with Enterprise Ireland. We cover the Gulf Cooperation Council countries (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar) with watching briefs on Jordan and Iran. Current exports of Irish food & beverages to the Middle East are €320 million with the GCC countries accounting for €192 million.

My role is to provide information and intelligence on market opportunities, build relationships with current customers, and seek out new opportunities and relationships across retail, food service and manufacturing for the food & beverage sector. We work closely with embassies in the region. Our goal is to double exports to the region by 2020. There are opportunities across all sectors, but the biggest opportunities are in dairy and dairy ingredients.



Deputy Pat Breen, Chairperson of the Oireachtas Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade

The Global Irish Economic Forum was first convened in 2009, and subsequently in 2011 and 2013, to explore how the Irish at home and abroad, and those with a strong interest in Ireland, could work together and contribute to Ireland's economic recovery. 2013 saw the reach of the Forum extended, with regional meetings in Cork, Galway and Belfast, and a large-scale mentoring event for Irish SMEs in partnership with Enterprise Ireland.

Concrete results have flowed from these meetings, including an 'Invest in Ireland' roundtable with President Clinton in New York in February 2012, the Global Irish Contacts Programme where over 100 members have signed up to support Irish exporters, and the designation of 2015 as the Year of Irish Design, as well as giving impetus to initiatives such as The Gathering 2013 and the Succeed in Ireland initiative. The Government will convene a fourth Forum, which will see its reach broadened and deepened.

In the context of competing demands, we must ensure **the most effective use of our resources**, which is a key focus of the Export Trade Council's work to enhance coordination of the Government's efforts to promote our international trade, tourism, education and investment.

A flexible approach helps target resources in the most effective way as opportunities are identified in both priority and high potential markets. This approach is mirrored by Local Market Teams chaired by the ambassador and bringing together embassy and State agencies to support a more coordinated approach in priority markets. Such flexibility will continue to be reflected in the strategies of the State agencies, which are driven by their client-needs to ensure maximum benefit. It also includes the flexibility to open and close offices across markets and to locate resources in commercial centres.

The Government will continuously review how resources, including the embassy network and State agency offices, are deployed in order to benefit from changing opportunities in these high-growth markets.

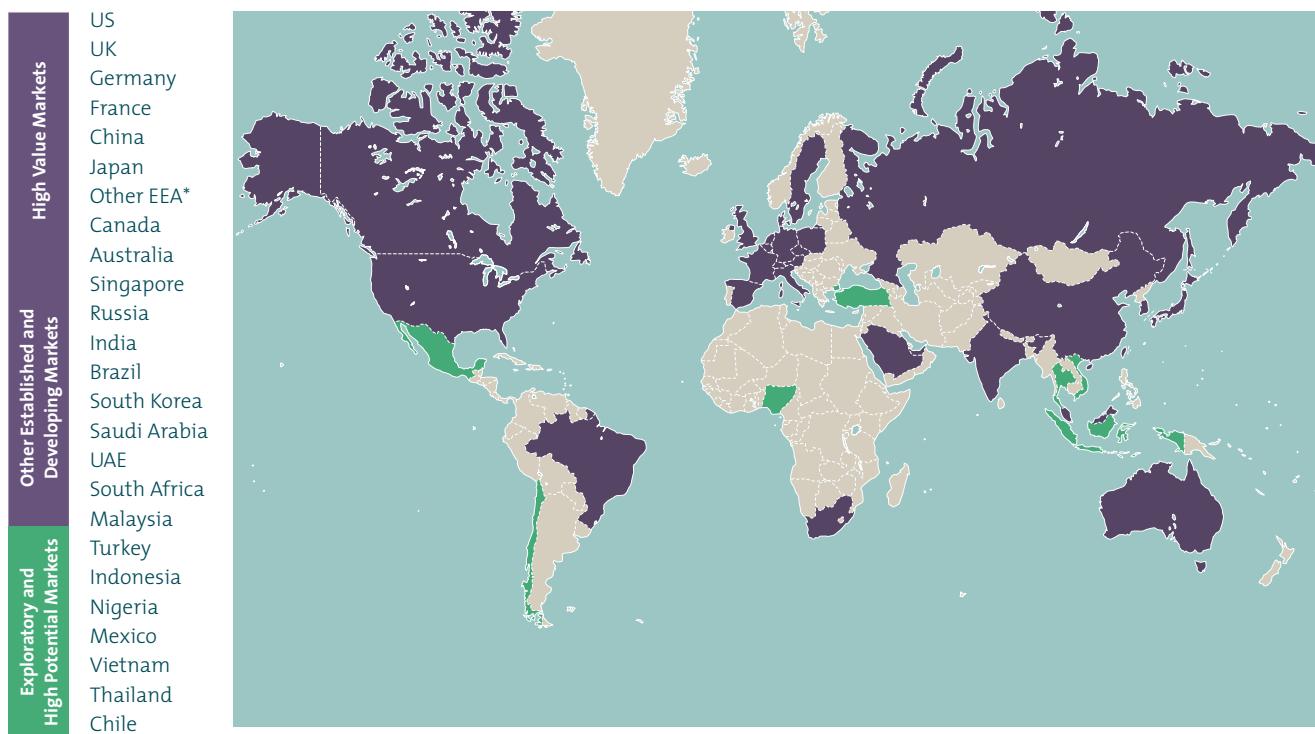
This network comprises offices in 96 locations worldwide. Many of our competitors for trade and investment present a unified image of their embassies and promotional State agencies abroad. The Ireland House concept, which brings embassies and State agencies under one roof, helps to ensure a joined-up approach to promoting a *Team Ireland* image. New Ireland House arrangements are currently being established in Austin, Hong Kong and Sao Paulo, where Enterprise Ireland is already established.

New embassies or consulates have recently been opened to take advantage of opportunities in Indonesia, Thailand, Kenya, Croatia, the US (Texas), China (Hong Kong) and Brazil (Sao Paulo). In the future, observer status at regional organisations which are playing an increasingly important role in many areas could offer an opportunity to deepen interaction with potential new partners.

Direct economic benefits may flow from asserting Ireland's **legal entitlements** in maritime zones off our coast, and to the natural resources located in and under them. Working within the framework of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Government has successfully promoted Ireland's claims to extend its continental shelf area and to win recognition of our entitlement to a large area of additional seabed in the North Atlantic, together with any mineral deposits located there, with further work ongoing in this area. Boundaries with the UK in our respective exclusive economic zones have been settled, offering greater protection of fisheries and the marine environment and facilitating the development of offshore renewable energy resources within our zone.

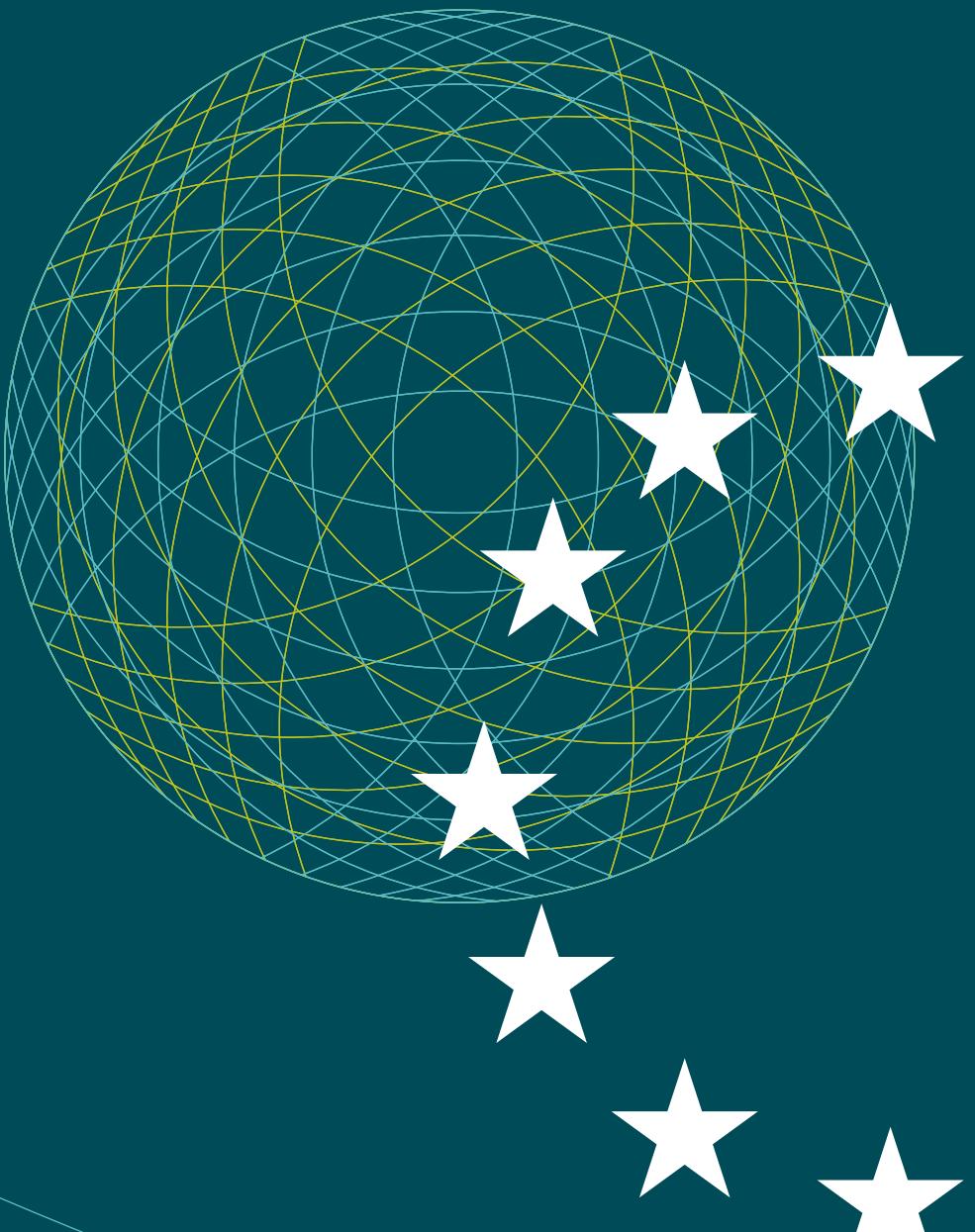


NEW MARKET APPROACH



Ireland House Madrid

Our Place in Europe



Our membership of the European Union has shaped and amplified our foreign policy since 1973.

At the same time, the impact of EU membership is much broader than foreign policy, touching all areas of Government. In many areas, national and EU policy-making are intertwined.

EU membership has been central to the transformation of Ireland's economy and society over the past forty years. In particular, our economy has benefited immensely from the creation of the internal market; from the EU's role as the world's leading trading bloc; from the Structural Funds and from the Common Agricultural Policy.

Our shared membership of the EU has been very important to the Northern Ireland peace process and to North South co-operation, and has helped change the context of the British-Irish relationship. The EU remains fundamental to our interests, to our security and prosperity, and to the well-being of the Irish people. Reflecting a continuing broad national consensus, the Government is committed to safeguarding and promoting Ireland's place at the heart of Europe, as an active and constructive EU member state.

Membership has transformed our links with other European countries, and in most cases is the principal focus of our relations with them. Our capacity to promote our values and advance our interests through the projection of our foreign policy is also greatly enhanced by EU membership.



Engaging at the Heart of Europe

Our successful exit from the EU/IMF programme in December 2013, our EU Presidency in the first half of that year, and progress towards economic recovery at home have helped us to regain international credibility and ensure the renewed respect of our European partners. The experience of the economic and financial crisis has shown the importance of a coherent and concerted engagement across the full EU agenda, and of investing in relationships with each of our EU partners. The coordination of our EU engagement and the development of our overall strategy rest with the Department of the Taoiseach, while the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has strengthened the existing focus of our embassies in Europe on safeguarding Ireland's EU interests. The assignment of Dara Murphy TD as Minister of State for European Affairs and Data Protection to both

Departments reflects this. We must continue to chart a coherent and consistent path in advancing our interests in the Union.

As a trading nation, we depend on international rules which permit the free flow of goods, services and capital. The most important set of rules is those governing the EU Single Market, which is constantly developing, including by addressing the new economic realities of the digital sector, and of trade in services, in a more closely integrated European economy. We will continue to influence the evolution of the Single Market, through our participation in EU legislative and regulatory processes. We will also continue to influence and promote policies that contribute to the competitiveness of the EU. The social dimension of the EU, with its focus on workers' rights, gender equality and non-discrimination reflects a distinctively European set of values shared by Ireland.



Uachtaránacht na hÉireann ar Chomhairle an Aontais Eorpaigh
Irish Presidency of the Council of the European Union
eu2013.ie

The EU is also a major global economic actor, standard-setter and source of regulatory norms in many areas, including the environment, climate change, energy and international trade.

Our membership of the EU's Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) provides the basis for our financial stability, as well as our currency. In response to the crisis, economic governance arrangements have been strengthened and a Banking Union has been created. This has implications for the financial stability and economic prospects of Ireland and of key trading partners. Our active, constructive participation in economic discussions in the European Council, the Finance Ministers' Council (ECOFIN) and the Eurogroup is critically important to Ireland's economic future.

Responding to Critical Challenges

Notwithstanding its resilience, the EU is facing a number of serious challenges. Foremost among these is supporting economic recovery and growth across Europe, a necessity if intolerably high levels of unemployment in many member states are to be reduced. The consequences of stagnation are not just economic, but also social and political. Relatively high current levels of public dissatisfaction with the EU, while related in part to a sense of remoteness from political institutions which is also visible at national level in many member states, are clearly also linked to frustration with its economic underperformance.

The EU's role in co-ordinating member states' budget and macro-economic policies has been strengthened during the crisis, but implementation of the new rules remains complicated and at times controversial. While the debate about the further deepening of



An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny TD, addressing the European Parliament plenary during Ireland's 2013 Presidency of the EU Council

Economic and Monetary Union is not currently as intense as in 2012-13, it can be expected to resume and, in addition to technical issues, to pose questions about the relative powers of national and European institutions.

The need to boost the levels of investment within the EU, with a view to stimulating growth and creating employment, is at the very top of the current European agenda. In addition, strengthening and modernizing the European industrial base requires a broad range of coherent and coordinated policies and actions on many levels of the economy.

How Europe responds to climate change, and how it enhances its energy security, are fundamental to its long-term future.

Instability and conflict on the EU's borders, whether in Ukraine or in the Middle East underscore the need for a cohesive and effective policy towards its neighbours.



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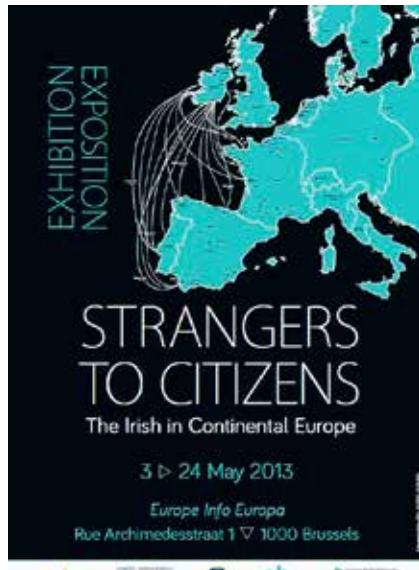


Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, Minister for Education and Skills, Jan O'Sullivan, and Minister of State for European Affairs and Data Protection, Dara Murphy launching the 2014-2015 Blue Star Programme in Government Buildings with pupils from Gardiner Street NS, Dublin

In many countries the impact of migration is high on the political agenda.

Uncertainty over the future position of the UK in the European Union has potential implications for the Union as a whole, and very particularly for Ireland.

More generally, it is essential for the EU to demonstrate and explain its continuing value to its citizens in a difficult context, in which Europe's relative position is diminishing and in which globalisation and technological innovation are driving continuous and rapid change. It is clear that a core task for the Union is to manage Europe's interaction with the wider world, but so far this narrative does not have the direct emotional appeal European integration had to generations affected by the World Wars. Communicating the fundamental importance and relevance of the Union is the responsibility not just of the EU institutions but of member state governments and civil society. But clearly, to be persuasive the Union has to be effective in addressing the main challenges ahead.



My Job

Declan Kelleher

Permanent Representative to the EU, Brussels

The Permanent Representation to the European Union (affectionately known as the 'Rep') is Ireland's largest mission overseas, with officials from almost every Government Department. I lead a team dedicated to securing Ireland's goals across the full range of EU policies and activities (such as agriculture, research and innovation, consumer rights, and employment and social affairs).

All key issues to be decided on by EU Ministers and Heads of State and Government pass across our desks. The Permanent Representatives of the 28 member states meet several times a week to discuss the most pressing issues on the EU agenda. This requires finding good compromises that work for Europe while ensuring that our national interests and values are protected and defended.

EU membership has been central to the transformation of Ireland's economy and society over the past forty years

Our EU Priorities

Priorities for the coming years are set out in the *Strategic Agenda for the Union in times of change* adopted by the European Council, with the participation of the Taoiseach, in June 2014. Within the five broad fields highlighted in the *Strategic Agenda*, Ireland in the short and medium term will focus in particular on:

- Completion of the internal market in products and services, and of the digital single market;
- Promotion of entrepreneurship and job creation, not least for SMEs, including through access to finance and reduction of unnecessary administrative burdens and compliance costs;
- Combating youth and long-term unemployment, including through investment in training and support for mobility;
- Promotion of investment in infrastructure and in research and innovation, active participation in the European Research Area and maximising our participation in Horizon 2020;
- Negotiation of trade and investment agreements with third countries, including the United States and Japan;
- The effective functioning of new economic governance arrangements, including the European Semester, and of the new Banking Union;
- Promoting access to energy which is affordable, secure and low-carbon through an integrated climate change and energy policy;
- The prevention of international crime and terrorism.

We will also defend and promote specific Irish interests in areas of prime national importance such as the development of our agricultural and marine sectors, and the maintenance of our system of corporate taxation.

We believe that it is important for the Union to focus above all on the concrete economic and social issues affecting its citizens. We believe that the potential of the many innovations contained in the Lisbon Treaty and the new economic governance arrangements should be fully exploited, and that while further reform should not be excluded the Union does not need to be distracted by the complex challenge of Treaty change.

Ireland has a long-standing tradition of working closely with other like-minded member states, on issues such as trade, agriculture and international development policy. There is also a need to build cross-sectoral alliances, including at European Council level, especially where trade-offs between member states or groups are likely to occur.

Unlike other EU partners, Ireland does not have a natural geographical constituency. To advance our interests, we must maintain strong relationships with a range of member states. We are prioritising our objectives in a strategic manner across the Council, working with smaller member states as well as our larger partners. The experience of the recent financial crisis, and the extent to which critical decisions determining our future were made by our EU partners, underlined the importance of this work.

Advancing our interests in the EU also requires us to build our influence with the **European Institutions**, notably the European Commission, the European Council and the European Parliament. In the short term, it will be essential to build relations with the new Parliament, Commission and President

Building Alliances and Influencing Outcomes

In a Union of twenty-eight member states, influence on policy is best exerted through partnerships with others. In addition, our standing and influence with the other member states on non-EU matters are enhanced by the depth of the relationships we have established in the context of our EU membership.





Minister for European Affairs and Data Protection, Dara Murphy TD, pictured with Polish Secretary of State for EU Affairs, Rafał Trzaskowski

of the European Council, so that Irish positions are understood and taken into account.

The European Parliament in particular has a growing role, and Ireland is working to maintain and build on the level of access and profile achieved during our EU Presidency in 2013.

The re-organisation of the European Commission through the creation of Vice-Presidents with clear executive responsibilities, the redefinition of many portfolios, and the creation of groups of Commissioners to work on specific projects, offers the prospect of greater focus and coherence. However, understanding and working effectively within the new structures will in their early days be a demanding challenge for all member states.

The number of Irish people working within the EU institutions, particularly at senior levels, faces a decline in the period ahead owing to retirements and the impact of enlargement. The Government will support and promote the recruitment and promotion of Irish nationals to posts in the European institutions, and will facilitate the temporary secondment of Irish personnel, in order to maintain our influence within the EU. Efforts will be

required to raise general awareness about careers in the European institutions, including through the EU Jobs campaign.

The EU-UK Relationship

The debate under way in the United Kingdom on its place within the EU has hugely important political implications for the EU and for Ireland. Ireland has a unique relationship with the UK and would, therefore, be more seriously affected than other member states by a British exit from the EU. As a consequence, while we naturally respect the right of the people of the UK to determine the issue – though we believe that membership of the Union has been advantageous for the UK – a British departure from the EU would be likely to have immediate, direct and serious implications for Ireland.

It is impossible to be precise about the concrete implications as the terms of a new relationship between the UK and the EU could vary greatly in different contexts. In all cases, very many sectors of the economy and of public administration are likely to be affected, including with regard to the relations between North and South.



My Job

Irene Kirwan

*Financial Services Attaché,
Permanent Representation of Ireland
to the EU in Brussels*

As Financial Services Attaché, I participate in the decision-making processes at EU level representing and promoting Ireland's interests in relation to the EU programme of financial services legislation, particularly within the Council's Working Party on Financial Services meetings and in the networking and intelligence gathering preparation that contributes to these meetings.

My role is to see that both our Ambassador to the EU and the Minister for Finance are adequately briefed to ensure Ireland's interests on financial services issues are promoted and defended when decisions are taken by EU Finance Ministers. I also ensure that the Department of Finance is kept informed about relevant information/intelligence on EU and international financial services issues.

Our view is that the EU is stronger, both in itself and above all in its external relations, with the UK as a member. Ireland's interests are served by the presence of a large member state which shares many of our positions, such as on trade, regulation and the Single Market, and with which, as

our nearest neighbour, we have the closest human, economic, cultural and historical links.

As a neighbour and friend of the UK, we will work hard to encourage its continued membership of the EU. This is a fundamental Irish national interest. Where the UK seeks reasonable and achievable adjustments in how the Union operates, or in its own relations with the EU, our instinct will be to be sympathetic and supportive. Where, on the other hand, we believe that a UK proposal would be unrealistic or seriously damaging – to our own interests or the broader functioning of the EU – we will be candid, but always in the context of our close relationship and our overall objective.

Ireland has, when necessary, differed from the UK in its strategic choices in regard to the EU. Based on our national interest, we will continue to do so if necessary.

In any case, it is clear that managing Ireland's interests on this issue will be an important element of our engagement with the EU in the coming years, and also of our relationship with the UK.



Ensuring Accountability and Raising Awareness

National Parliaments are increasingly active in their role as guardians of the principle of subsidiarity under the Lisbon Treaty. Debate around the role of National Parliaments in relation to a perceived democratic deficit intensified during the European elections and institutional changeover in 2014 and will certainly continue.

The scrutiny work of the Houses of the Oireachtas is an essential link with the citizen and measures to increase the public visibility of this work will continue to be of importance. While ways to enhance Ireland's parliamentary scrutiny model are primarily for the Houses of the Oireachtas to decide, the Government is open to review and discussion. The Government will also participate actively in future discussion at European level on the role of national parliaments and the balance between them and the European Parliament.

The Government is also committed to encouraging greater public awareness and understanding in Ireland of Europe and the benefits of Ireland's EU membership, in partnership with the European Commission Representation,

the European Parliament Office, the European Movement Ireland, and the Institute of International and European Affairs.

 @IrelandRepBru



My Job

Dr. Ruth Freeman

Director Strategy and Communications, Science Foundation Ireland

I was appointed as Director of Strategy and Communications of Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) in 2013. My responsibilities include developing and implementing SFI's strategy in conjunction with the Director General, SFI communications, liaison with national and international partners, education and outreach activities, and engagement with industry.

We work closely with Irish embassies on international initiatives which help to develop links with top international research institutions and enterprise markets. We also seek to develop collaborations and partnerships which reinforce Ireland's standing as a top-class research-performing nation and highlight our research achievements around the world.

A Strong European Voice in the World

The European Union is also the primary framework through which we pursue many of our foreign policy goals.

The EU is an important global actor, supported by its size and diversity, its economy and its experience of promoting common approaches over five decades of integration. Its influence is also enhanced by the relationships and resources which each of its members bring to the table.

With twenty-eight countries speaking as one, Europe's voice is stronger. Acting through the EU amplifies Ireland's voice, enabling us to exercise greater influence than we could by acting alone. The EU is also able to engage with larger partners in a way that its individual members cannot. It is in our interest to ensure the EU is able to make a positive contribution on the world stage.

In the EU's neighbourhood, **Enlargement** is its most powerful transformative tool, bringing stability, democracy and prosperity to the

Union's neighbours. Ireland is a committed advocate of enlargement from a position of principle: we wish to see others benefit from the opportunities that we have enjoyed through EU membership. Support for aspiring members also translates into solid ties with new partners as they take their place at the EU table. While some may question the future of enlargement, we emphasise its importance and the need to ensure a credible enlargement process.

EU MEMBER STATES AND CANDIDATE AND POTENTIAL CANDIDATE COUNTRIES



Ireland supports Turkey's EU accession process, and aims to deepen relations with this increasingly important political and economic partner. We also support membership for the countries of the Western Balkans, reflecting an association built up through contributions to UN and EU crisis management operations.

We will explore opportunities to increase our support for enlargement countries by sharing our own experience of EU membership. This will help them prepare for membership while fostering long-term relationships with future EU partners.

The EU's Neighbourhood

Through the European Neighbourhood Policy, the EU is promoting political and economic stability to the Union's east and south. As recent developments in Ukraine and the Middle East have shown, instability on the EU's borders directly affects the EU and its members. Responding to this will be a critically important challenge for the EU.

A significant challenge is the re-emergence of tensions with **Russia** following the illegal annexation of Crimea. Russian actions to destabilise eastern **Ukraine** and exert economic pressure on other Eastern Partnership countries have strained regional stability and political and economic relations with Russia. These actions disregard fundamental principles and obligations of international law, including respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

While sanctions have been imposed on Russia by the EU and others in response to these actions, it is uncertain how these tensions will be managed or may evolve. The reverberations have been felt in Russian incursions into the airspace and territorial waters of a number of EU member states,



The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, former Tánaiste, Eamonn Gilmore TD, addresses the Ministerial Council Dublin, December 2012

and are likely to continue to be felt both in relations with Russia and in approaches to regional security and stability.

An immediate priority will be a peaceful and negotiated resolution to the crisis in Ukraine, which respects its right to freely determine its future without external interference or pressure. This would open the way to resuming an open and constructive relationship with Russia, an important economic partner for the EU as well as on efforts to address regional and international challenges.

New emphasis will need to be placed on strengthening countries to our east, through the EU's Eastern Partnership. The signature of Association Agreements with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine in June 2014 was an important step in this respect. These tensions also

have the potential to destabilise other developing democracies on Europe's borders, and to affect the delicate regional balance in the Western Balkans.

By bringing together all the countries of Europe including Russia, as well as Central Asia, the United States and Canada, the **Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe** is an important forum for security issues affecting the continent. The promotion of security, economic development and human rights and democracy overlap and all three are at the heart of the OSCE's work. Ireland initiated the development of an ambitious road map for the future of the Organization during our Chairmanship in 2012. Building on this will be important. Ireland supports closer cooperation between the EU and the OSCE to bring greater stability to the wider European region.

The EU's Global Engagement

The EU is able to make a positive global contribution through its **Common Foreign and Security Policy** (CFSP). At its heart is a focus on conflict resolution, peaceful co-existence, and a commitment to improving the lives of its own citizens and of those of neighbouring countries and regions. This is in keeping with our own approach to foreign policy.

We engage across the board to shape the EU's response to global challenges and international events. However, in keeping with the priorities for our foreign policy, we should focus in particular on:

- maximising the EU's voice and influence on human rights issues;
- striving for a balanced and equitable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and other conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa;
- promoting stability and development in Africa;
- strengthening EU capacity for conflict prevention and resolution;
- enhancing EU-UN cooperation;
- the EU's neighbourhood.

The EU's contribution to international peace and security is an important part of the CFSP. Our approach to these issues is described in the chapter on 'Our Values'.

The majority of decisions in this area require the agreement of all member states. We work actively to achieve common positions and agreement can usually be found. Positions agreed by all twenty-eight members carry greater force, enabling the Union to exercise greater influence on key issues.

As the EU has grown in size, and with a more complex array of regional and international challenges facing it, the search for consensus has become more challenging. We have seen this in EU discussions on Middle East

issues and the crisis in Ukraine. As in other areas of the EU's work, groups of member states work together to shape discussions in keeping with their priorities and we must do the same. Ensuring EU decisions on issues of interest to Ireland continue to reflect our values and perspective will be an ongoing priority and challenge.

The post of High Representative is now firmly established as a key figure in international diplomacy, raising the EU's profile on key foreign policy issues and ensuring a consistent and coherent message to the outside world. This is a positive development.

But for the EU to have real influence, it must harness all of the instruments at its disposal - diplomatic, developmental, trade and security. The Lisbon Treaty provided the EU with the necessary tools - a permanent President of the European Council, a High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and a European External Action Service - to play a more effective role on the international stage. As a result, the EU is now pursuing a more coherent, focussed and results-driven approach to its external relations. This is good for Ireland.

The EU's engagement with regional organisations in Asia, Africa, Latin America and elsewhere offers us opportunities to influence EU frameworks on issues of interest to us and to deepen our interaction with countries where we do not have an embassy.

The European External Action Service (EEAS) and its network of EU delegations around the world have brought greater coherence to the EU's external action. Working with the EEAS to influence policy areas of interest to us will be a

priority in the period ahead. A number of Irish officials are working in the EEAS and we will build on this presence. We can also benefit from access to information and networks which its delegations can offer us in countries where we do not have an embassy. We will explore opportunities for co-location of our offices abroad with the EEAS and burden-sharing where this is practical and cost-effective.

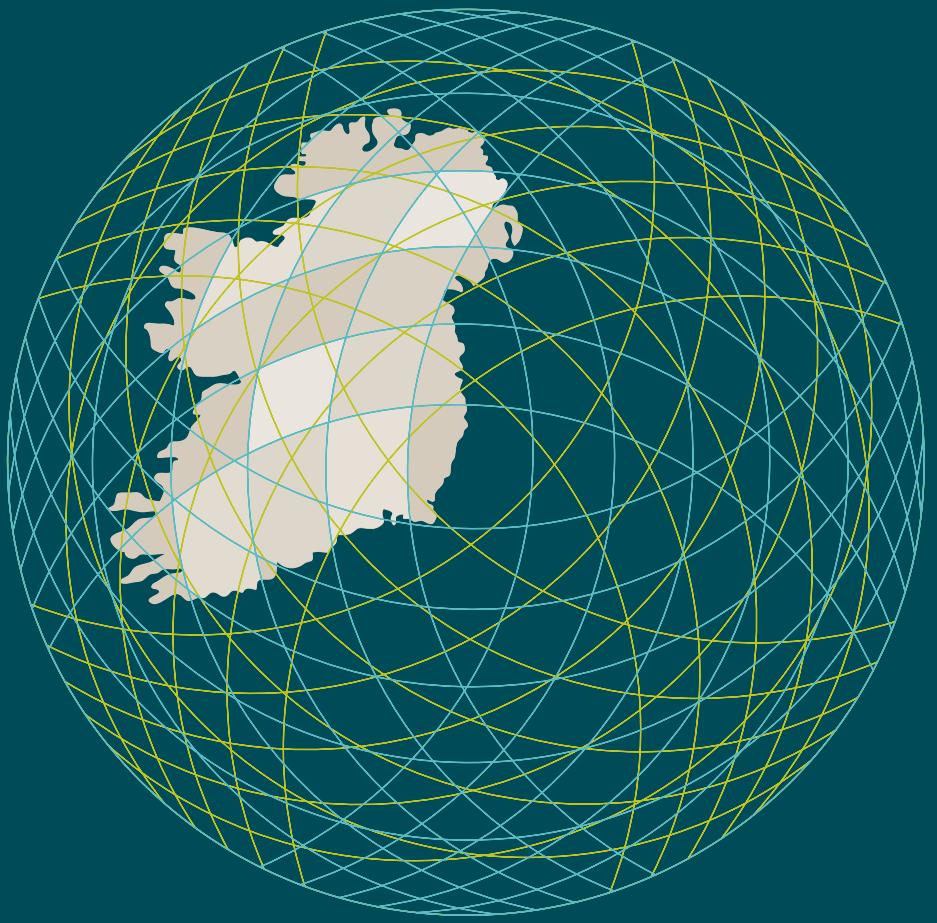
While EU delegations provide added value in many areas, they are not a substitute for our own embassies and consulates. Key national goals, such as promoting our exports and securing foreign investment, providing assistance to our citizens, safeguarding our Irish values and interests and promoting a positive image of Ireland abroad can best be achieved through our embassy network.

On a small number of issues, individual countries take a distinctive view in line with their values and foreign policy priorities. While we strive to achieve common positions wherever possible, on issues such as nuclear disarmament, for example, there may be less scope for agreement within the EU. In these cases it makes sense to work with other like-minded countries, both inside and outside the EU.

Our efforts to shape the EU's external engagement are important in themselves. They also serve our broader interests as a member state. Being a committed contributor on EU foreign policy issues means we are more respected by other member states and this strengthens our position in the EU in other areas. And by projecting a clear sense of our values through our foreign policy outside the EU we can strengthen our influence within it.

The EU amplifies our voice, enabling us to influence global events and to better navigate a changing world.

Our Influence





Minister Flanagan at the launch of the Global Horizons Youth Initiative at Scoil Chriost Ri in Portlaoise in 2014. Photo: Adrian Melia

Our Influence

As a small country, we must be smart about how we use our voice. Our ability to influence the decisions and outcomes that affect us, and to shape the global agenda rather than respond to one set by others, depends on the quality and reach of our diplomacy. Our voice is amplified through our membership of the EU, enabling us to have greater influence than we would on our own. We also seek to maximise our influence by engaging across the UN system and by working with like-minded countries, both within the EU and beyond.

Irish diplomacy has built a reputation for professionalism, integrity and effectiveness over many years.

The importance of the President in maintaining and deepening relationships which are critical for Ireland cannot be over stated. This role is exercised in many ways, but perhaps most visibly advancing reconciliation on this island and in State visits. Two ground-breaking visits to the UK and China in 2014 underline the role of the office in building strong relationships for Ireland with strategically important partners.

As Head of Government, the Taoiseach plays a very significant role in shaping Ireland's international engagement and promoting Ireland's economic and

political priorities at the highest level. This role is particularly significant as Ireland's member of the European Council. As part of this international role, the Taoiseach also undertakes a strategic programme of international travel designed to drive jobs, growth and investment in Ireland and strengthen bilateral political and economic relations, including leading trade missions. The Taoiseach also meets a large number of high level international visitors to Ireland and attends or speaks at a range of significant international events. Successive Taoisigh have played an important role in the area of Irish-British relations and Northern Ireland. The Tánaiste and other Government Ministers also play an important role in external aspects of their portfolios.

Managing our interests abroad requires whole-of-Government engagement. Ninety-seven officers from other Government Departments are working at embassies and consulates abroad, with the largest number at Ireland's Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels. Personnel from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade are seconded to the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Finance.

In an ever more interconnected and online world, a strategic, proactive and co-ordinated approach to communications and to promoting Ireland internationally across Government is vital across the range of our sectoral interests, particularly in markets and regions where awareness of Ireland may be less developed than in our longer established markets. An increasingly coordinated approach has been driven through a variety of initiatives and mechanisms in recent years including through the Strategic Communications Group and this work will continue.

The primary responsibility for day to day coordination of foreign policy lies with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade assisted by one or more Ministers of State.

An Accountable Foreign Policy

The Government is committed to ensuring accountability for Ireland's foreign policy.

The Houses of the Oireachtas ensure democratic accountability, through debating and approving treaties and legislation, discussing issues of foreign interest and questioning the Government on its foreign policy. The work of Oireachtas Committees dealing with different aspects of our external relations also contributes to democratic oversight. The Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Joint Committee on European Union Affairs exercises particular oversight of Ireland's foreign policy while the Joint Committee on Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement performs a similar function with regard to Northern Ireland related issues. Other Oireachtas Committees examine external aspects of Government policy falling within their remit.

Parliamentary Questions allow members of the Dáil to enquire into any aspect of foreign policy. The Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade receives the majority of

questions dealing with external relations. Questions relating to EU and international issues are also directed to the Minister having responsibility in that particular area, while the Taoiseach also answers a considerable number of questions on Ireland's foreign policy. Ministers at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade responded to 1,681 questions from members of the Dáil in 2013.



My Job

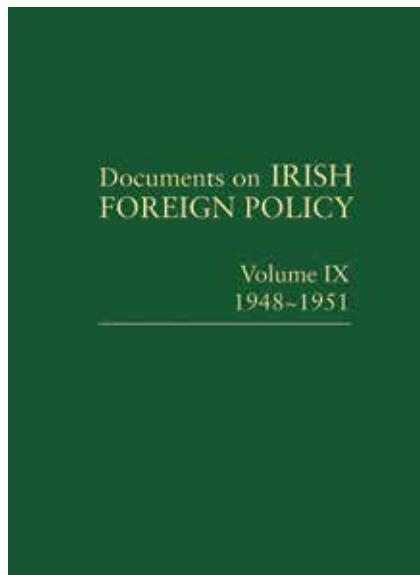
John Histon

Head of Procurement, Limerick

As Head of Procurement for the Department, my role is to lead and support the public procurement operation across the Department, including at HQ and embassies, for all sourcing requirements. This responsibility includes providing technical support, management and co-ordination of fair and transparent procurement activities, compliance with EU and Government regulation and contract formation. As the supply management lead, the primary focus of my role is to ensure that the Department's commitment to achieving value for money is the drive in obtaining goods, works and services that provide the best quality at the best market price.



The launch of the Ireland in China Weibo account



Documents on Irish Foreign Policy (DIFP) is a public resource for the study of Irish diplomatic history. Since 1998, its print and online volumes of documents from the archives of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade have contributed to academic research and public understanding of the history and heritage of Ireland's foreign relations at home and abroad. DIFP is available online at www.difp.ie and on Twitter

 @DIFP_RIA



My Job

Caoimhe Ní Chonchúir

Third Secretary, Embassy Madrid

Madrid is Ireland's busiest consular mission, with around 1.3 million visits by Irish people to Spain each year. We deal with over 25% of consular cases worldwide. I oversee the consular and passport services we provide to Irish holidaymakers and residents in Spain. In 2013, our small consular team here, supported by our network of ten honorary consuls provided assistance in connection with 50 deaths of Irish citizens and 100 arrests, as well as hospitalisations. Most holidays to Spain go very smoothly, but we are there to help if things go wrong.

Another part of my job is to work with the Spanish-Irish Business Network to promote business links between Ireland and Spain. With 900 members, the network brings businesses and individuals together to deepen trade between Ireland and Spain (currently worth about €7 billion per year).

An Open Approach to Foreign Policy

In today's hyper-connected world, getting Ireland's message across is a key strategic objective. This means engaging at all levels – with governments and organisations, with companies and institutions and, most importantly, with people.

The embassy network and State agency offices abroad play a vital role in promoting Ireland, in particular through new media, providing accessible and user-friendly online services and information about Ireland. Social media is central to this outreach, with a growing presence on Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook and on local media platforms such as Weibo in China. The embassy network acts as the eyes and ears of the Government overseas, engaging with international media and contributing to strategies to address reputational threats, in partnership with relevant Government Departments and Agencies.

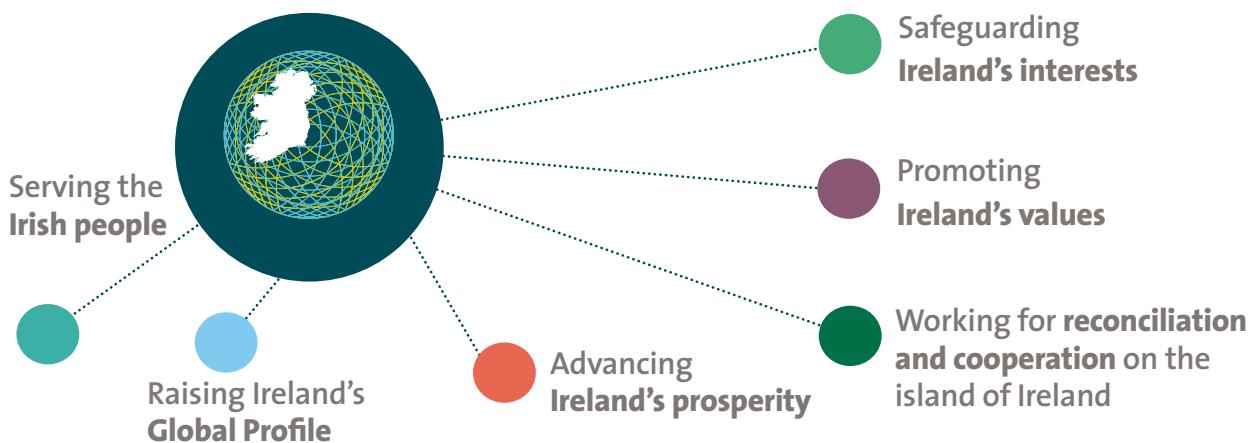
The Government encourages partnership and collaboration with NGOs, academics, members of the public and other stakeholders.

A deeper engagement with Ireland's foreign policy objectives should begin in schools, where a new outreach programme is now under way with the aim of encouraging students from all backgrounds, including those from immigrant and diaspora backgrounds, to engage with Ireland's foreign policy.

To reach a wider audience in Ireland, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade organises events such as the Iveagh House Commemorative Lecture Series, Africa Day and the Iveagh Scholars schools outreach programme. It promotes awareness and understanding of the history of Irish foreign policy in partnership with the Royal Irish Academy and the National Archives of Ireland to make archives available through the Documents on Irish Foreign Policy series.

A process of consultation was held involving Government Departments and State agencies, members of the Oireachtas, civil society and members of the public as part of the preparation of this review.

WORKING FOR IRELAND: THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE



Serving the Irish people



800,000

consular, passport and visa queries dealt with annually



629,446

passports issued in 2014



Over €29m

funding for 1,300 peace and reconciliation projects since 2004



€110m

for diaspora groups worldwide since 2004



350

cultural events funded by embassies and consulates in 2014

Supporting Irish jobs



Flying the flag for business: growing exports, attracting investment, boosting tourism

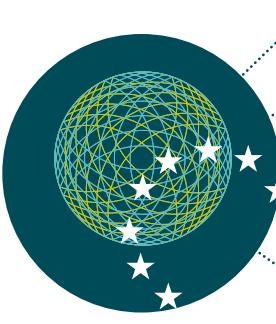


St Patrick's Day: embassies organised on average 17 events each in 133 cities across 68 countries in 2014



Communicating our economic strengths: audience of over 53 million reached in 2013

Representing Ireland in the EU



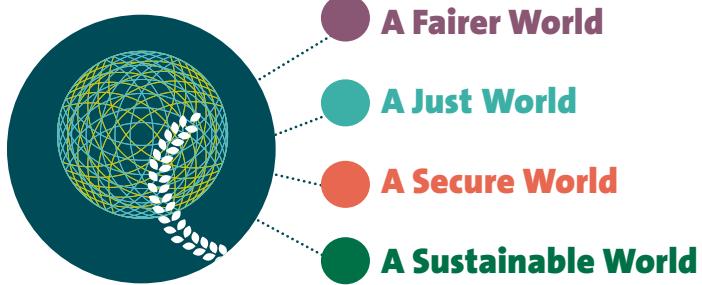
Advancing Ireland's EU interests

Shaping the EU's global engagement

Building strong partnerships in Europe

Working with all Government Departments

Promoting Ireland's Values



Supporting International Development



How we do this – 5 signature foreign policies:



Combating Poverty and Hunger



Advancing Human Rights



Promoting Disarmament



Committed to UN Peacekeeping



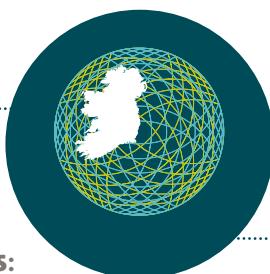
Sharing our experience of peace and reconciliation on the island of Ireland

About Us

80

Managing relations with 178 countries through 80 diplomatic & consular offices:

Europe:	33
Asia Pacific:	13
The Americas:	12
Africa:	10
Middle East:	5
Multilateral Organisations:	7



Over 40 languages
Working in over 40 languages every day



57%
of our staff at home

43%
abroad



97
staff from other Departments working at embassies abroad



60%
of our embassies have 1 or 2 diplomatic staff

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade serves as a knowledge bank for Government, helping other Departments achieve their external goals through its access to networks abroad through Ireland's embassies and consulates and its local knowledge. Maintaining a permanent corps of experience in international affairs is vital if the Government is to secure the maximum benefit from Ireland's international engagement.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade comprises a headquarters at home and eighty diplomatic and consular offices abroad, as well as the North South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat in Armagh and the British Irish Inter-Governmental Secretariat in Belfast. A system of secondary accreditations allows us to manage relations with a wider range of countries than those where we have embassies. We provide a limited range of services for Irish citizens and businesses in these locations through a network of 100 honorary consuls. The Government will keep the embassy network under review and will move to address this in light of evolving needs and priorities and as resources permit.

Some 1,360 people work for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade at home and abroad, including a multinational workforce of locally engaged staff. Staff work in over forty languages daily, in offices located across fourteen time zones. 60% of staff are directly engaged in providing services to Irish citizens and business, or delivering aid to some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in the world.



Iveagh House, headquarters of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

In relative terms, the Irish foreign service is modest in size: 60% of Ireland's offices abroad have one or two diplomatic officers, while only fourteen have more than three.

In partnership with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, it is delivering significant efficiencies through improved productivity and reduced costs. We have reduced our staff numbers by approximately

one-in-seven posts since 2009, while maintaining services and opening eight new offices abroad.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is one of the oldest institutions of State. Ireland's first foreign minister, Count Plunkett, was appointed by Dáil Éireann on 22 January 1919, and our first envoys were despatched abroad soon after. In the decades since then, the Department has



played a central role at key moments of Irish history: from consolidating our independence in the 1920s and 1930s, to protecting our security and neutrality during WWII, making a distinctive contribution at the UN, to negotiating our entry to the EEC in 1973 and guiding our membership of the EU since then, to building and sustaining peace and promoting reconciliation on the island of Ireland. Each of these achievements required the Department to evolve, as the interests and goals of the nation have evolved.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade will mark the centenary of the founding of the Irish diplomatic service in 2019 and a century of service to the Irish people. As it looks to the future, its goal is to serve the Irish people, promote their values and advance their prosperity abroad, and to provide Government with the capabilities, analysis and influence to ensure that Ireland derives the maximum benefit from all areas of its external engagement.

Securing Ireland's external goals involves many Government Departments working together, reflecting the growing extent to which domestic and external policy making are connected. Taking a whole-of-Government approach, including through the Cabinet Committee structure, will remain crucial in the period ahead. The Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade will bring forward a series of initiatives to progressively advance the goals set out in this document, with an initial review of progress at the end of 2015.



My Job

Brian O'Brien

Human Rights Unit, Dublin

I work in the Human Rights Unit, which deals primarily with Human Rights at multilateral fora. We are particularly busy since Ireland's election to the 47-member UN Human Rights Council for the 2013-2015 term. Membership gives Ireland a platform to advocate for human rights around the world. We work closely with Irish NGOs through the DFAT-NGO standing committee which meets quarterly. I work with Irish Aid on incorporating human rights into Ireland's development programme.

I am also responsible for tracking and influencing developments at the UN General Assembly in New York. We work hard to ensure that Irish priorities such as protecting human rights defenders and combating violence and discrimination based on gender or sexual orientation are reflected on the international stage.

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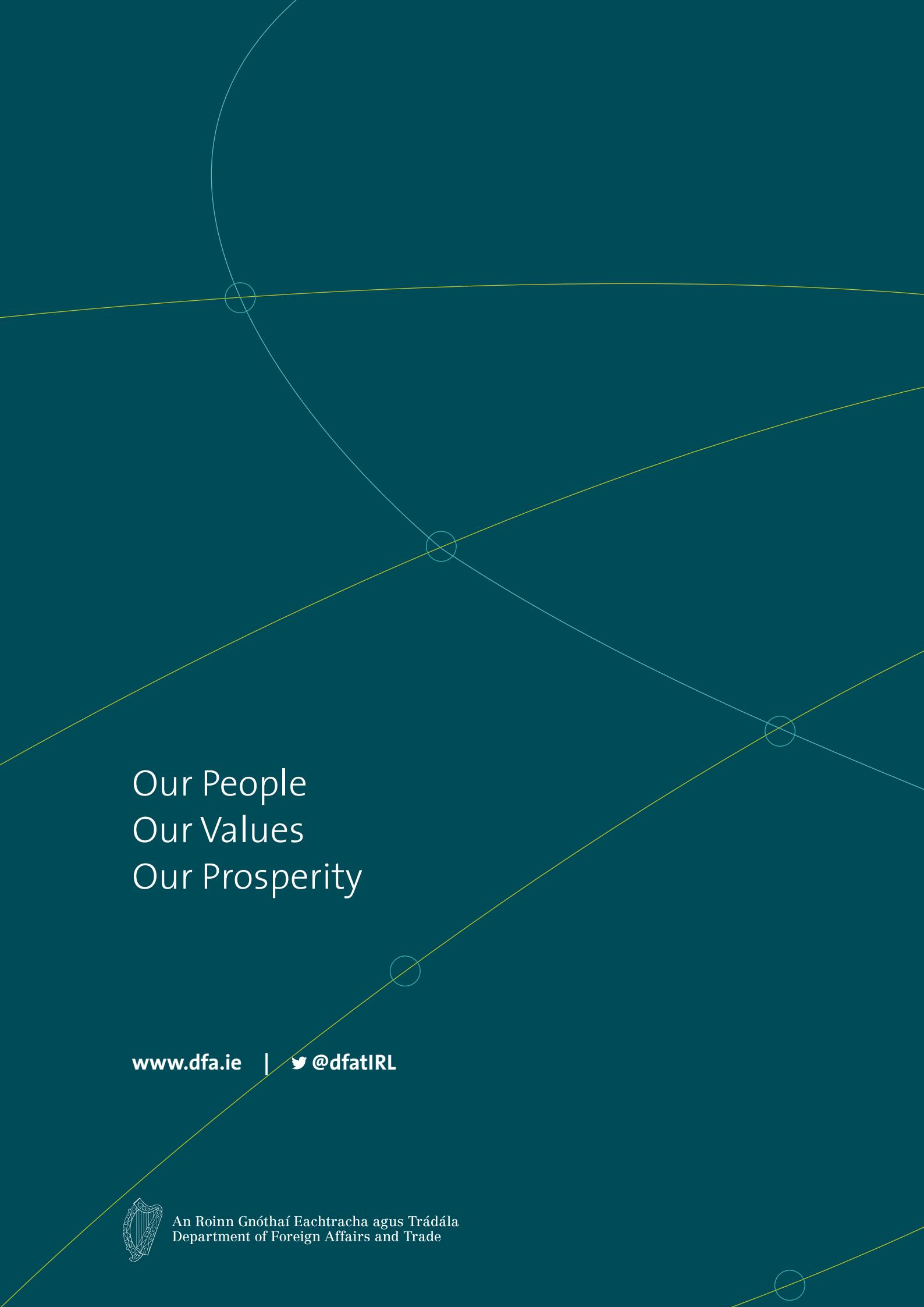
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Our People
Our Values
Our Prosperity

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An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade