



**An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha**  
***Department of Foreign Affairs***

**Preas Ráiteas**  
***Press Release***

**Minister's Visit to New York and Washington**  
**Emigrant Support Programme Grants**

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Micheál Martin, T.D. today announced the allocation of grants totalling \$2.68million to 28 organisations in the United States.

Speaking following a series of engagements with frontline Irish community groups in New York, the Minister said:

“In my closing address to the recent Global Irish Economic Forum at Farmleigh, I emphasised my firm commitment to achieving a new level of sustained engagement with members of our Diaspora and Irish communities abroad. As part of my determination to follow up quickly on the momentum generated at Farmleigh, I am pleased to announce the allocation of \$2.68million to a range of Irish organisations in the US”. The funding is provided under the Emigrant Support Programme managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Included in the grants announced by the Minister is a grant of US\$50,000 to the Irish Technology Leadership Group in California to assist and nurture Irish companies in the software industry by utilising the expertise of experienced Irish executives in Silicon Valley. The Minister noted that this was one of the specific proposals raised at Farmleigh.

The Minister emphasized that supporting Irish communities overseas, and in particular the most vulnerable members of these communities, remains an important priority for the Government.

Minister Martin said: “We will continue to offer support to all sections of the global Irish. In addition to the increased economic element to our work arising from the recent Forum, I am determined to ensure that we continue to attach a high priority to meeting the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalised members of the Irish

abroad. The funding provided by the Government under the Emigrant Support Programme in recent years has helped ensure that the quality of life for elderly and other vulnerable Irish emigrants in Britain, the US, Australia and elsewhere has improved. By investing in community facilities and capital projects, we are not only reducing isolation and marginalisation among the vulnerable Irish abroad, but also helping to foster a greater sense of Irish identity among our diaspora and to ensure that Irish communities abroad remain vibrant for decades to come.”

Also included in the grants announced was a grant of \$50,000 for the Irish Lobby for Immigration Reform (ILIR). This brings total Government funding to the ILIR since 2006 to \$285,000. Speaking after his meeting in New York with representatives of ILIR and the Coalition of Immigration Centres, Minister Martin noted:

“The resolution of the situation facing the undocumented Irish, and the early establishment of new arrangements to facilitate legal migration between Ireland and the US remain a priority for me as Minister. The allocation of additional Government support to the ILIR is a further indication of the Government’s firm determination to work with our community in the US to find a long term solution”.

On the prospects for US immigration reform, referring to/in advance of his high-level meetings in Washington, the Minister said:

“Following a series of meetings on Capitol Hill this week, I am hopeful that progress can be made on the question of immigration reform over the coming period. Although healthcare reform has the political spotlight in the US at the moment, and in spite of the very significant political challenges in progressing immigration legislation, I am in no doubt that there remains a real commitment among many of our friends on Capitol Hill to work for a solution for the undocumented and to establish additional opportunities for legal migration between Ireland and the US”.

#### **NOTE FOR EDITORS**

Over the past five years the Government has allocated more than €60 million, under the Emigrant Support Programme, to support Irish communities abroad.

The 2009 grants for US organisations/projects are detailed below:

**2009 US ESP Grant Recipients**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>2006 \$</b>	<b>2007 \$</b>	<b>2008 \$</b>	<b>2009 \$</b>
<b>Washington DC</b>				
Coalition of Irish Immigration Centres	85,000	100,000	68,000	68,000
Irish Apostolate USA	15,000	20,000	22,000	23,790
Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Eireann	-	-	-	20,000
<b>Boston</b>				
Irish Cultural Centre of New England, Canton	25,000	-	350,000	350,000
Boston Irish Immigration Centre	162,500	187,000	200,000	210,000
Irish Pastoral Centre, Boston	146,250	164,000	172,000	179,516
<b>Chicago</b>				
Chicago Celts for Immigration Reform	-	-	-	10,000
Chicago Gaelic Park	-	-	250,000	250,000
Chicago Irish Immigrant Support	85,000	100,000	125,000	150,000
<b>New York</b>				
Aisling Irish Centre	107,000	120,000	146,000	130,000
Emerald Isle Immigration Centre	162,500	187,000	196,000	210,000
Senior Helpline Project	-	-	15,000	25,000
New York Irish Centre / Fáilte Care Corporation	107,000	123,000	210,000	130,000
Project Irish Outreach	110,400	106,680	112,000	107,386
Irish American Cultural Institute	-	-	-	50,000
Irish American Heritage Museum	-	-	-	12,600
Irish Arts Centre, New York	-	-	20,000	22,649
American Irish Historical Society	-	-	255,000	160,000
Gaelic-American Club, Fairfield	-	-	-	100,000
Irish Immigration and Pastoral Centre, Philadelphia	107,000	124,500	130,000	130,000
Commodore John Barry Club	-	25,000	25,000	13,800
<b>San Francisco</b>				
Irish Immigration & Pastoral Centre (IIPC)	107,000	123,000	130,000	140,600
Irish Lobby for Immigration Reform	85,000	100,000	50,000	50,000
Irish Outreach San Diego	20,000	22,500	27,000	35,000
Seattle Irish Immigration Support Group (SIISG)	2,400	2,500	2,500	5,000
Irish Technology Leadership Group	-	-	-	50,000
AOH Thomas Meagher Memorial, Montana	-	-	-	10,000
University of Montana	-	-	-	38,000
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$2,681,341 (€1,878,742)</b>

**Ends+++**  
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