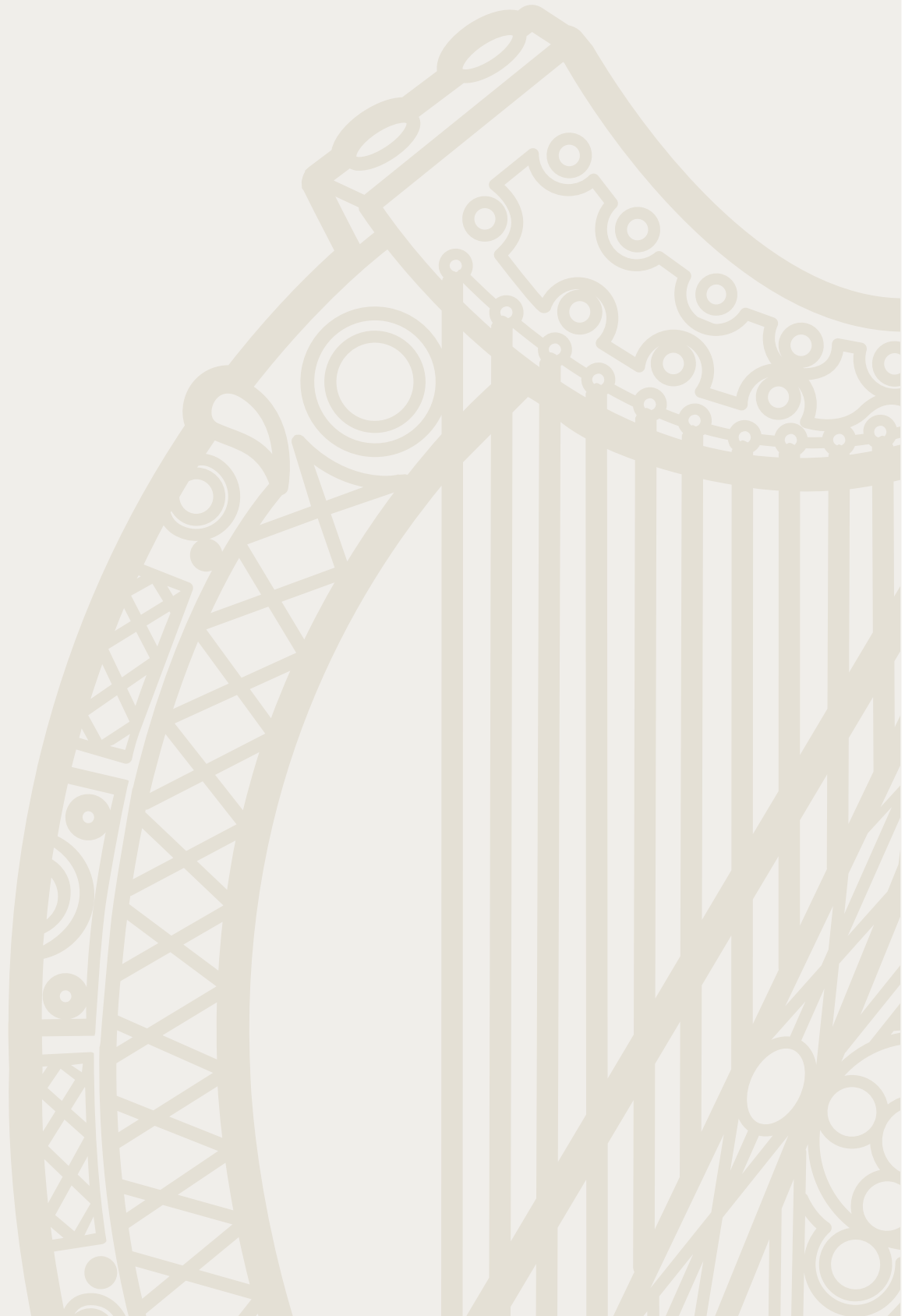




An Roinn Gnóthaí
Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of
Foreign Affairs and Trade

2019 Annual Report





Foreword

An Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade,
Simon Coveney T.D.



An Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D.
© Julian Behal / DFAT

2019 – viewed from a very different vantage point in 2020 – is a year in which the achievements of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade greatly enhanced our response to the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic. They have also better prepared us to seize the opportunities that already present themselves as we look more hopefully toward 2021.

The year began with the launch of Ireland's new international development policy, *A Better World* and ended with our, ultimately successful, election campaign to the United Nations Security Council in full swing. Both mark a new and exciting chapter in Ireland's history of international engagement. They increase our standing internationally in support of those in greatest need around the world and in building resilience against future emergencies, through climate action, addressing humanitarian need, and strengthening governance and the role of women in our societies.

A key achievement was the Department's new Consular Strategy, which set ambitious objectives for the assistance and services this Department provides to our citizens abroad. This enabled the fullest response by the Department to the exceptional demands generated in the wake of the international measures to restrict the spread of Covid-19, in particular, assisting in the repatriation of over 8,000 people from across the globe.

2019 also saw the further expansion of Ireland's diplomatic and business network - with new missions established in Bogotá, Mumbai, Amman, Santiago, Cardiff, Los Angeles

and Frankfurt. These Embassies and Consulates strengthen our ability to advocate for Ireland's interests internationally and to support our citizens abroad. Many played key roles in the Department's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Along with new regional strategies for our engagement with the US and Canada, and with Africa, they mark a further milestone in the implementation of the Global Ireland 2025 agenda - a holistic, cross-Government approach to our international relations.

No review of 2019 is complete without a mention of Brexit. It was a year of long and, at times, difficult negotiations. The Department was and remains at the forefront of the Government's efforts to ensure Ireland's interests are safeguarded, particularly the avoidance of a hard border on our island.

Every member of the DFAT team has contributed to these efforts to support our citizens, safeguard our interests and promote our values. I would like to thank all colleagues in the Department who go the extra mile every day, often in challenging circumstances, on behalf of our country.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon Coveney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Simon Coveney T.D.

Foreword

Secretary General
Niall Burgess



Secretary General, Niall Burgess © Phil Behan / DFAT

From the perspective of 2020, and the global disruption wrought by the Covid-19 pandemic, 2019 feels like a different world. In spite of this, the very welcome developments which took place in 2019 should not be overshadowed, among them the launch of new regional and international development strategies, the establishment of new Culture and Global Ireland units at headquarters, and a significant expansion of our diplomatic network overseas, which was recognised by a Civil Service Excellence in Innovation Award. Together, these strengthen this Department's capacity to showcase the best of Ireland overseas.

Supporting us in this work is our network of Honorary Consuls, spread far beyond the footprint of our diplomatic missions. The inaugural conference of Honorary Consuls which took place in September was a valuable opportunity to engage with a critical group of partners who do so much for our citizens abroad. Building on the conference, we expect the Honorary Consul network will go from strength to strength in the years ahead.

It was also great to see the Passport Service recognised by multiple awards, including a NALA Plain English in Digital Award and a Promoting Ireland Abroad Award at the eGov

Awards, and Team of the Year 2019 for the Passport Service's Customer Service Hub at the Irish CX Awards. These well-deserved awards come after many years of innovation which have greatly improved customer experience.

The launch of the "Ideas to Reality" initiative in May certainly helped foster a culture of innovation across the Department. The Ideas Bank caught the imagination of many, and the first Iveagh Innovation Awards, scheduled for January 2021, will be an early showcase of some of the best of these ideas.

Looking to the near horizon, our bolstered capacity at home at abroad will stand us in good stead as we face into 2020 and the challenges and opportunities it will bring, not least Brexit and the UN Security Council election.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the dedication and goodwill of all officers across the Department, at home and abroad, and also that of their family members. The foreign service is quite unique in terms of the demands it places on staff, both those who stay and those who go, and their loved ones. I thank all involved for their commitment and forbearance in challenging times.





Contents

Forewords	01
Strengthening Our Place in Europe	09
Advancing Ireland-UK & North-South Relations	15
Building Global Ireland	21
Ireland at the United Nations	27
Peace, Security and Human Rights	29
Working for A Better World	37
Ireland and the Americas	43
Promoting Ireland's Prosperity	49
Supporting Ireland's People	57
Sustaining Ireland's Influence	63

Strengthening Our Place in Europe



Brexit

Preparing for Brexit continued to be a priority area for the Government throughout 2019. The Department supported the engagement by the Taoiseach and Tánaiste on Brexit and the Article 50 process at the European Council, the General Affairs Council and in discussions with counterparts across the EU. Our teams at home and abroad continued to support, promote and explain Ireland's key Brexit objectives.

The EU and UK concluded a Withdrawal Agreement on 17 October 2019, facilitating the UK's orderly departure from the EU. The Withdrawal Agreement includes a Protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland designed to protect the peace process and avoid a hard border on the island of Ireland. Regardless of the outcome of the future relationship negotiations, the provisions of the Withdrawal Agreement and the Protocol will apply.

In parallel to our work to secure the Withdrawal Agreement, the Department co-ordinated extensive whole-of-Government preparations for Brexit. The Brexit Contingency Action Plan Update was published in July 2019 to advise businesses and citizens on the steps they should take to prepare for a possible no-deal Brexit.

In 2019, the 'Getting Ireland Brexit Ready' campaign focused on preparedness and contingency planning. It included national radio and TV advertising, the publication of our Practical Steps Guide, and a significant presence at the National Ploughing Championships.



An Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney speaking on Brexit at the Government of Ireland tent at the National Ploughing Championships 2019
© Phil Behan / DFAT

The Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade was the lead Minister for the 2019 Brexit Omnibus Act, signed into law by President Higgins on 17 March. The Act consisted of 15 Parts under the remit of nine Ministers and was a response to the unprecedented challenges of Brexit. The Act focused on protecting our citizens and on supporting the economy and jobs.

Common Travel Area Memorandum of Understanding

On 8 May 2019, Ireland and the UK signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), reaffirming their commitment to maintaining the Common Travel Area (CTA) in all circumstances and to maintaining its associated rights and privileges for Irish and British citizens.

Under the CTA, Irish citizens move freely, reside in either jurisdiction, and enjoy associated rights and entitlements including access to employment, healthcare, education, social benefits and the right to vote in certain elections.

This MOU provides clarity and assurance that the way in which Irish and British citizens can live and work freely across these islands will not change.



An Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Simon Coveney and British Cabinet Office Minister David Lidington signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Common Travel Area © Noel Mullen

Visits to the Border by EU Political Leaders

The Government has always been clear that one of its key Brexit priorities lies in protecting the Good Friday Agreement, including by avoiding a hard border on the island of Ireland.

In 2019, the Department facilitated fourteen visits to the border region by Ministers and senior officials from all over the EU, seeking to deepen their understanding of Irish issues in the negotiations and the profound implications for Ireland of the UK's vote to leave the EU. This has been crucial in fostering the understanding that has informed support for Ireland among our EU partners.



Minister of State for European Affairs, Helen McEntee, T.D. visits the border with French European Affairs Minister, Amélie de Montchalin © Julien Behal / DFAT

All-Island Civic Dialogue on Brexit

As part of preparations for Brexit in 2019, including the risk of there being no Withdrawal Agreement, the Government held a plenary session of the All-Island Civic Dialogue on 15 February 2019 to update citizens and businesses on the work that had been done and the supports in place.

The session featured updates from the Government, contributions from political parties, as well as discussions on People, Citizens, Rights and Business Preparations and was an opportunity to listen to the concerns of representative groups across society, North and South.



An Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D. speaking to journalists at the All-Island Civic Dialogue © Julien Behal / DFAT

Brexit preparedness in 2019 at a glance:

Over **900,000** Irish passports issued, the highest in a single year, representing a 7% increase



Additional **customs and import control staff** recruited



3,319 companies evaluated readiness using the Enterprise Ireland Brexit SME Scoreboard



521 applications approved for the Brexit Loan Scheme



Over **2,900** participants at Local Enterprise Office-organised Brexit information events



Almost **1,600** participants in Local Enterprise Office-led customs training for businesses



34,517 applications received for the **€78 million Brexit Package** for the agri-food sector



Over **103,000** trader outreach letters sent by Revenue



49,685 UK driving licenses exchanged in 2019 - up from 6,486 in 2018



Infrastructure for potential No-Deal Brexit in October 2019 in place at **Dublin Airport, Dublin Port and Rosslare Europort**



7 visits by EU Ministers to the border on the island of Ireland



Brexit Omnibus Act signed into law on 17 March 2019 covers the remit of 9 Ministers



Over **200** public events held by Government departments and agencies focused on preparing for Brexit



31 Brexit Update Newsletters issued



#GettingIreland BrexitReady nationwide media campaign - **Reach: up to 2.6 m** TV audience, up to 3m radio audience, over 2m newspaper readers, **over 300,000 on social media**





Participants at the 'Ireland and the Nordic-Baltic 8: Working Together for a Secure, Sustainable and Digital Europe' event © Phil Behan / DFAT

Ireland and the Nordic-Baltic 8: Working Together for a Secure, Sustainable and Digital Europe

On 25 October, Iveagh House was the venue for the conference 'Ireland and the Nordic-Baltic 8: Working Together for a Secure, Sustainable and Digital Europe'.

This brought together leading experts from across Ireland and the Nordic-Baltic states (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, and Sweden) to explore new security challenges, the digital agenda, a more sustainable economy, and the prospects for further enhancing wider political, cultural, social and environmental connections between Ireland and the Nordic-Baltic states.

Co-hosted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, together with the Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA), and the Ambassadors of the Nordic-Baltic states accredited to Ireland, the conference underscored Ireland's shared values, challenges and opportunities with our neighbours across northern Europe.



'Ireland and the Nordic-Baltic 8: Working Together for a Secure, Sustainable and Digital Europe' event booklet © Phil Behan / DFAT

70th Anniversary of the Council of Europe

To mark the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe, the Council's Human Rights Commissioner, Dunja Mijatović, accepted an invitation to visit Dublin. The Commissioner made courtesy calls on the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of Justice and Equality, and held a substantive meeting with President Higgins in Áras an Uachtaráin on 30 May. Later, at the Royal Irish Academy, the Commissioner delivered a speech to guests attending the high-level forum entitled 'Ireland and the Council of Europe: 70 Years of Human Rights - the Challenges and the Future'.



Council of Europe Human Rights Commissioner Dunja Mijatović and Uachtarán na hÉireann Michael D. Higgins during her visit to Dublin to mark the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe © Áras an Uachtaráin

10th Anniversary of the Eastern Partnership

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, in association with European Movement Ireland and under the auspices of the Romanian Presidency, held an event to mark the 10th anniversary of the EU's Eastern Partnership mechanism on 11 June. Diplomatic representatives from the Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) were invited to speak, with Minister of State for European Affairs, Helen McEntee, T.D., providing the keynote address. The event was an opportunity for speakers and attendees from across the diplomatic corps and civil society to take stock of the Partnership's progress and consider beyond 2020.



Diplomatic representatives from Partnership countries marking the 10th anniversary of the EU's Eastern Partnership mechanism © DFAT



MARTINA KLINGBEIL-SADOWSKI
Administrative Officer | Consulate General Frankfurt

My main duties at the Consulate include administration, assistance in events, the organisation of meetings with local and state government representatives as well as some consular and translation work.

The official opening of the Consulate in October 2019 – when Ambassador Nicholas O'Brien and

members of the local Irish community were present – was a real highlight. The visit of Minister for Finance Paschal Donohoe to Frankfurt in November 2019 is also something I look back on fondly. I was very happy about the great opportunity to attend a two-day workshop to meet colleagues at the Embassy in Berlin in November.

I previously worked with the Australian and Canadian government representations here, so when I got this job – in October 2019 – I was really excited to work for Ireland and in an English-speaking and international environment again. What I like about it is the variety: no two days are the same.

Being part of the new Consulate General team in Frankfurt is something very special – I consider it a real honour.

Advancing Ireland- UK & North-South Relations



Northern Ireland- Advancing North-South and East-West Relations

Throughout 2019, the Irish and UK Governments continued to support and facilitate talks on the formation of a new Executive and resumption of the North South Ministerial Council. Following the tragic killing of the journalist Lyra McKee on 18 April, the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister asked the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D. and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to immediately convene a focused multiparty talks process.

A meeting of the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference was also held on 8 May. At this meeting, the two Governments reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining and strengthening East-West relations following Brexit, further strengthening security cooperation to bring to an end all forms of paramilitarism, implementing the Stormont House Agreement on dealing with the past in Northern Ireland. Also discussed were rights and citizenship issues along with a commitment to making the most rapid possible progress on political talks.

Negotiating working groups on the key issues were held through the following months with a view to reaching agreement. The two Governments chaired the talks with the assistance of independent official facilitators. Following the general election in the UK, the Tánaiste

and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland immediately resumed intensive talks. This process was paused on 19 December, with the Tánaiste and Secretary of State for Northern Ireland making clear that in their view that there was a basis for agreement, and pledging to bring the process to a rapid and successful conclusion in the New Year.

North South Ministerial Council and North-South Cooperation

The North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) Joint Secretariat hosted its annual Cross-Border Schools Outreach Programme at its offices in Armagh on 31 January. Seven schools from the local areas, North and South, participated in the event, which focused on the issue of Road Safety, with approximately thirty five students aged 16-17 in attendance. The event was run in co-operation with the PSNI and An Garda Síochána, in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.

The NSMC Joint Secretariat hosted an event at the Palace Demesne in Armagh on 2 December to mark its 20th anniversary. Representatives from the North-South Implementation Bodies and from Irish Government and Northern Ireland Executive Departments attended, as well as local civic and religious representatives.



North South Ministerial Council 20th anniversary event © NSMC Joint Secretariat



British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference in 2019 © Noel Mullen

British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference and Parliamentary Assembly

In early May, the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference was held at the Cabinet Office in London. Its focus was on East-West Matters, Economic Cooperation, Security Cooperation, Legacy, Rights and Citizenship Matters and Political Stability.

The British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly had plenary sessions in Wicklow in May and in Warwickshire in October. These worked on Climate Action Measures, Brexit and UK-Irish Relations.



British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference in 2019 © Noel Mullen

Commemorations and British-Irish Relations

President Michael D. Higgins and Sabina Higgins visited Birmingham and Liverpool in February. In Liverpool, the President and HRH The Prince of Wales became joint patrons of the Institute of Irish Studies at the University of Liverpool.

In May, HRH The Prince of Wales and HRH The Duchess of Cornwall visited Ireland. Their visit included a programme at the Glenree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation. In June, the Taoiseach attended the 32nd British Irish Council Summit in Manchester. He also opened the ESB Energy offices there and attended an Enterprise Ireland CEO Roundtable with Irish companies in the Northern Powerhouse region.



President Michael D. Higgins, Sabina Higgins, HRH The Prince of Wales and HRH The Duchess of Cornwall at the University of Liverpool © Maxwell Photography



DENISE HANRAHAN
Consul General of Ireland in Cardiff

It was a real honour to move to Cardiff in April 2019 to re-open Ireland's Consulate General here. This renewal of our diplomatic presence in Wales, at a time of key strategic importance for East-West

relations, is already enabling the strengthening and deepening of the existing strong ties between us.

The unique historic bond between Wales and Ireland is rooted in our shared history and heritage, and flourishes today in modern, vibrant connections across every sphere of life - culture, community, academia, trade, science, sport and more. In our first year, the Consulate's focus has been on establishing our presence, building our networks, and creating a strong team to deliver on our ambition of identifying new opportunities while showcasing and deepening the strong political, economic and cultural links across the Irish Sea.



An Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D.
at the 13th DFAT Reconciliation Networking Forum © Julien Behal / DFAT

Celtic Connection

In February, the Department hosted 'Celtic Connection' a roundtable dialogue on developing a post-Brexit partnership between the higher education & research sectors of Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, organised by the British Irish Chamber of Commerce with the support of the Scottish and Welsh Government representatives in Ireland. There was agreement among participants on the need to enable academic-to-academic collaboration and support sector-based mobility so as to sustain productive working relationships challenged by Brexit.

Ireland-Scotland Bilateral Review

The Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, and his Scottish counterpart Fiona Hyslop MSP launched the joint bilateral review of Irish-Scottish relations in November. The aim of the review was to consolidate existing ties and to unlock the further potential of the Irish-Scottish relationship. Working jointly on a bilateral review with another Government was a diplomatic first for the Department. The review focused on areas within Scotland's devolved competence. The Department's British-Irish Relations section jointly developed an online questionnaire for stakeholder engagement with Scottish counterparts, which launched. A report of the review will be finalised in 2020.

Reconciliation Networking Forum

On 5 March, the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade delivered the keynote address at the 13th DFAT Reconciliation Networking Forum held in the Convention Centre in Dublin. The Forum brought together over 180 representatives of organisations supported by the Reconciliation Fund. At the Forum, the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade pledged to maintain the new increased annual budget of the Fund at €3.7 million. This funding allowed support to be given to the work of 175 organisations in 2019.

Belfast Chamber of Commerce Speech

On 23 October, following the agreement between the EU and UK on the Withdrawal Agreement, the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade gave a keynote speech at the Annual Lunch of the Belfast Chamber of Commerce. Alongside Dublin Chamber President Niall Gibbons and Belfast Chamber Chief Executive Simon Hamilton, the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade discussed 'Boosting Business Links Between Belfast and Dublin'.



Reconciliation Networking Forum Panel Discussion © Julien Behal / DFAT

Building Global Ireland



Civil Service Excellence Award: Expansion of Ireland's Diplomatic Network

In 2019, the Department won a Civil Service Excellence in Innovation Award under the 'Excellence in Policy Making and Implementation' category for our work on the expansion of Ireland's diplomatic network. The team responsible for the expansion includes over 80 people working across 18 business units at Headquarters supported by over 13 existing diplomatic missions overseas.

The project team works closely with colleagues in the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, the State Agencies (Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland and Tourism Ireland), and the broader Civil Service, to deliver the ambitious expansion programme under the Global Ireland 2025 initiative.

The project is delivering the largest expansion of Ireland's diplomatic network in the history of the State and, appropriately, the expansion in 2019 coincided with the 100th anniversary of Dáil Éireann sending its first envoy abroad in February 1919.

Since 2018, the team have opened new diplomatic missions in Monrovia, Wellington, Vancouver, Bogotá, Mumbai, Amman, Santiago, Cardiff, Los Angeles and Frankfurt.

The new missions are already deepening Ireland's impact abroad, growing our trade and inward investment, supporting the work of the State Agencies, strengthening and expanding our strategic political engagement, promoting Ireland's values abroad, contributing to Ireland's UN Security Council campaign, exploring new opportunities in humanitarian and development partnerships, playing a more active role in supporting and promoting a rules based international environment, and supporting Irish citizens and our diaspora abroad.



DFAT Team at the Civil Service Excellence Awards, 2019 © DPER

Expansion of Ireland's Diplomatic Network



Expansion of Ireland's Diplomatic Network © DFAT

Global Ireland Schools

The Global Ireland Schools programme, launched in December 2018, is a collaboration between the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Defence, and the Defence Forces.

The programme sees Irish diplomats and members of the Defence Forces who have served on UN Peacekeeping Missions visit secondary schools around the country to talk with students about the Global Ireland 2025 programme and their work overseas.

In 2019, diplomats and peacekeepers visited 44 secondary schools across 19 counties.

During the visits, schools are presented with a UN flag and a copy of the Preamble of the UN Charter. The programme allows for a greater understanding of how UN membership has been central to our foreign policy and played a significant role in Ireland's history – including through our

contributions to peacekeeping, international development, human rights and disarmament – and how we will continue to contribute in the future.

The 2019 school visits focused on Ireland's candidature for a seat on the UN Security Council.



Ambassador Barbara Jones visits Colaiste Bride in January 2019 © DFAT



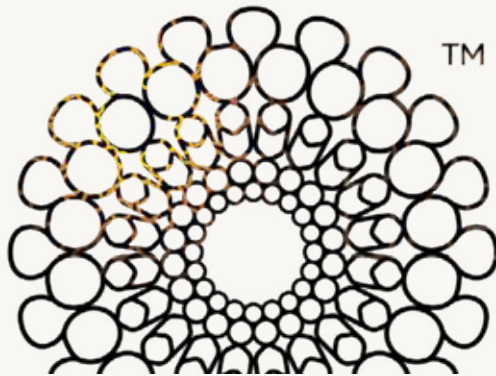
Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason visits Drogheda Grammar School in January 2019 © Phil Behan / DFAT

The Department's Expo team worked closely with colleagues across Government and the public sector to plan Ireland's participation in Expo 2020 Dubai under the theme 'Ireland, Island of Inspiration'.

In 2019, we finalised the design of the Irish pavilion and broke ground at the site. Inspired by the megalithic lightbox at Newgrange, the pavilion is a fusion of Western and Eastern architecture.

Work also began on the design of a permanent exhibition to be housed inside the pavilion. The exhibition will use projection techniques to create an immersive experience that tells Ireland's inspirational 5000-year story from Neolithic times to today's Global Ireland.

In October, the Department issued a global Open Call to individuals and organisations for content, activities and events to be part of Ireland's Expo programme. Almost 100 proposals were received, and successful applicants will deliver their work at the Irish pavilion in Dubai.



EXPO
2020
DUBAI



ANITA KELLY

Deputy Commissioner General, Ireland,
Expo 2020 Dubai

Deputy Head of Mission | Embassy of Ireland,
in the United Arab Emirates.

A native of Kerry, I joined the Department in 2017. As Deputy Head of Mission at Ireland's Embassy in Abu Dhabi, trade and economic issues are my

primary focus, fostering economic, cultural, educational and tourism ties with the UAE, Qatar and Kuwait.

I am also Deputy Commissioner General for Ireland at Expo 2020 Dubai. The Irish Pavilion will showcase Ireland to a global audience as an island of inspiration, with a long history of ingenuity, imagination and innovation. Expo will not only bring the international community together to showcase their creativity and potential: it is also an opportunity to strengthen Ireland's bilateral relationship with the UAE, an important partner and home to a large Irish community, and to create a platform for intensified Team Ireland engagement, led by Embassy Abu Dhabi.



أيرلندا

Ireland at the United Nations



Ireland's United Nations Security Council Campaign

Ireland's deep commitment to multilateralism was in evidence throughout 2019 in our action at the United Nations. In a wide range of areas, Ireland's UN Team, led by Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason, played leadership roles, demonstrating the values of empathy, partnership and independence which underpin our campaign for election to the UN Security Council for the 2021-22 term.

In September, Ireland had an unprecedented level of engagement at the UN's High-Level Week, with participation from President Michael D. Higgins, Taoiseach Leo Varadkar, Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Simon Coveney, together with a further six Ministers and Ministers of State. Ireland's representatives engaged on a broad range of issues, including climate action, counter-terrorism, and challenges facing Small Island Developing States, as well as delivering Ireland's annual statement to the UN General Assembly, and meeting bilaterally with some 90 countries. The Irish naval vessel LÉ Samuel Beckett also visited New York, highlighting Ireland's unrivalled record in peacekeeping.



Ireland's UN Security Council campaign logo © DFAT

UN Commission on the Status of Women

In March, as Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), Ireland enabled 193 countries to agree far-reaching commitments on social protection systems, access to public services, and sustainable infrastructure, in order to support the empowerment of women and girls globally.

The successful conclusion of CSW marked the completion of Ireland's two-year term as Chair of the Commission. Through active leadership and meaningful engagement with all stakeholders, our CSW team - comprising officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of Justice and Equality - enhanced Ireland's reputation as a country committed to multilateralism, gender equality and human rights.



Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason addressing the Opening Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in March 2019 © UN Photo / Evan Schneider



EOGHAN MCSWINEY

Election Officer | Permanent Representation of Ireland to the United Nations, New York

As PMUN Election Officer, I closely monitor elections to all UN bodies, provide recommendations to headquarters on Ireland's votes, and seek arrangements for reciprocal support. However, my primary focus is Ireland's Security Council

campaign, which infuses all aspects of work at PMUN. I aim to understand the positions and motivations of the 192 other UN Members and to get to know all of their election officers. This means attending as many events at the UN as humanly possible. Gathering information allows me to advise on campaign strategy, and targets for further engagement at ambassadorial or political level.

High-level visits are critical for the campaign and I have responsibility for scheduling bilateral meetings for the President, Taoiseach, Tánaiste and Ministers during the UN's High-Level week in September. Such bilaterals are a vital way to set out first-hand the policies and values that underpin Ireland's bid for election to the UN Security Council.

Peace, Security and Human Rights



Human Rights

As the promotion and protection of human rights is at the core of our foreign policy, Ireland is committed to addressing human rights issues in our bilateral relations with other countries, through our membership of the EU and via our mission network. Ireland has long championed human rights defenders, as well as advocating for open and inclusive civil society space, and continues to advance these and other priorities through bilateral contacts and in international fora.

Implementation of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights

Ireland's National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights aims to promote at a national level the UN's Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, a global standard for preventing and addressing risks of adverse impacts on human rights due to business activity. The NAP's Implementation Group met on three occasions in 2019, and three sub-groups were set up to advance work under three key pillars: Access to Remedy, Corporate Responsibility and State Duty to Respect. A baseline assessment of the legislative and regulatory framework on business and human rights in Ireland was completed in March.

International Reporting and Review

Ireland's adherence to international human rights treaties includes the responsibility to regularly report on how they are being implemented. In September, Ireland submitted its fifth report under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to the UN Human Rights Committee. In December, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) examined Ireland's progress in this area. The Irish delegation led by Minister of State, David Stanton T.D., outlined Ireland's strong commitment to promoting integration and combating racism in all its forms.

Ireland at the Human Rights Council

Ireland remained extremely active at the Human Rights Council during 2019, delivering 57 national statements and co-sponsoring over 65 resolutions. The Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D., attended the high level segment in February emphasising Ireland's strong support to the Council, its mechanisms and the High Commissioner for Human Rights. At the June session, Ireland organised a side-event on civil society space, continuing its prioritisation of the issue. At the Human Rights Council in September, Ireland, together with its core group partners, led on resolutions on the human rights situation in Yemen and condemning reprisals against human rights defenders.



An Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Simon Coveney T.D. attends the Inaugural Meeting the Business and Human Rights Implementation Group in Iveagh House, January 2019 © Phil Behan / DFAT

Conflict Resolution

Peace and Security and the Oversight Group for Ireland's third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

In June, Ireland's third National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) was launched by the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D. The NAP forms a central element of Ireland's broader commitment to gender equality. Our new development policy, *A Better World*, strengthens this engagement. An Oversight Group for this NAP was appointed by the Tánaiste made up of eight independent experts and eight government officials, with an independent Chair, Ms Nora Owen.

Women Peace and Security Week

During Women Peace and Security (WPS) Week in October, Ireland co-hosted a side event on the lessons, approaches and strategies for effectively implementing and advancing UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and the WPS Agenda from grassroots to global level. The event focused on the importance of implementing the WPS Agenda as we approach the 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in 2020.

Peacebuilding- Progress and Prospects Seminar

In November, Conflict Resolution Unit along with the Edward M. Kennedy Institute in Maynooth University, organised a seminar to discuss perspectives on peacebuilding including the UN's Sustaining Peace Agenda. Permanent Representatives from over 30 UN Member States took part, along with other key policymakers from Ireland and the UN.

Support to Peacebuilding Globally

Conflict Resolution Unit funds programmes of multilateral, regional and leading civil society organisations in the area of international peace and security. In 2019, Ireland provided approximately €6.9 million in Stability Funding to 55 such partner organisations across the globe.



Oversight Group of the third National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security © Phil Behan / DFAT



Launch of Ireland's third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security © Phil Behan / DFAT



Conference on Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for Conflict Intervention, National University of Ireland, Maynooth © Phil Behan / DFAT

Disarmament

Protection of Civilians in Urban Warfare- Addressing the Humanitarian Harm Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas

The use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA) causes damage to critical infrastructure including hospitals and schools, which has long-term impacts for communities. In 2019, following several years of international discussion, Ireland began a series of open consultations aiming to agree a political declaration on EWIPA. Ireland also led a joint statement supported by 71 states on EWIPA at the UN General Assembly.

Advancing Nuclear Disarmament

Ireland has a long history of leadership in the field of nuclear disarmament. In 2019, the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons Act was enacted in order to give effect to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

International Security Policy

The EU conducts civilian and military missions around the world under its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Ireland contributes to such missions as part of our commitment to the maintenance of peace and the prevention of conflict globally, and in accordance with the UN Charter. EU civilian missions were a particular focus in 2019, after the European Council adopted the Civilian CSDP Compact which aims to make the EU more effective and capable in this area. In September, participants from

EU Member States, EU institutions, missions and think tanks gathered in Iveagh House in Dublin for a two-day workshop on implementing the Compact.

In November, Ireland presented its first National Implementation Plan at the Civilian Compact Annual Review Conference in Brussels. The plan commits Ireland to doubling its footprint in civilian missions by 2023, among other objectives. By the end of 2019, the Department had already deployed additional border monitors, coast guard advisors and experts, to missions in Georgia and Somalia.

Irish Coast Guard Director Christopher Reynolds was appointed head of EUCAP Somalia, which advises and trains the Somali maritime security sector. Chris is the first Irish person to be appointed as Head of a Civilian CSDP mission.



Ireland's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva, Michael Gaffey, was nominated for Arms Control Person of the Year 2018, placing second overall © UNCTAD



Ambassador Orla Tunney speaking at 'From Ambitions to Outcomes: a Workshop on Strengthening Civilian CSDP' in Iveagh House © Phil Behan / DFAT

IRISH PERSONNEL SECONDED TO CIVILIAN CSDP MISSIONS



Irish Personnel Seconded to Civilian CSDP Missions © DFAT

Ireland and the Middle East

Retreat of Arab and European Foreign Ministers at Farmleigh House

At the invitation of the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, a group of Arab and European Foreign Ministers met in Dublin on 18 -19 February for an informal discussion on the Middle East Peace Process. In addition to the Palestinian Foreign Minister, Ministers from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Jordan, Spain and Sweden were present, as was the Secretary General of the Arab League.

Following two days of productive discussions, the Ministers emphasised their support for a comprehensive peace process which meets the legitimate rights and aspirations of both parties: the right of Palestinians to freedom and statehood and the right of Israelis to security and regional acceptance. The participants reiterated their support for every credible effort to commence formal negotiations.



An Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D. hosts Foreign Ministers and Secretary General of the League of Arab States at Farmleigh for a discussion on the Middle East Peace Process © Julien Behal / DFAT

International Law

Treaty Series

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is responsible for handling international agreements to which the State becomes party.

To facilitate teaching, study, dissemination and wider appreciation of international law, it is the Department's practice to publish the international agreements to which the State becomes a party in the Irish Treaty Series, available on our website.

In 2019, 21 agreements entered into force with respect to Ireland and these will be published in the Irish Treaty Series in early 2020.

Host Country Agreement with the Permanent Court of Arbitration

2019 saw the Government, in partnership with the Dublin Dispute Resolution Centre, enter into a Host Country Agreement with the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA). The Agreement provides the basis for high level international arbitration to take place in Ireland. Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D., welcomed the Agreement:

“Ireland has a huge amount to offer as a venue for international arbitration. Our legal system is highly respected internationally. Post-Brexit we will be the only fully common law, English-speaking country in the EU. We also benefit from a geographic location and transport links that make Ireland very accessible from Europe, North America and further afield.”

- Simon Coveney T.D.

Established at the First Hague Peace Conference in 1899, the PCA is the oldest global institution for the settlement of international disputes. The PCA offers a wide range of services for the resolution of international disputes. This includes inter-state disputes as well as disputes between states and private parties.

The Host Country Agreement was signed in Dublin on 5 March at an event attended by the PCA Secretary-General, Hugo Siblesz.



PCA Secretary General Hugo Siblesz speaking at the signing event for the Host Country Agreement in Dublin © Julien Behal/DFAT

Working for A Better World



Launch of A Better World

A Better World, Ireland's Policy for International Development, was launched in February, by Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar T.D., Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D. and Minister of State for the Diaspora and International Development, Ciarán Cannon, T.D. Its publication marked the fulfilment of a core commitment within the Government's Global Ireland 2025 strategy and represents a significant milestone in Ireland's international development policy and programme. *A Better World* updates Ireland's traditional focus on 'the poorest of the poor' to realise the central pledge of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) to reach 'the furthest behind first'. To do so, it commits to scaling up resources and capacity across four policy priorities: gender equality, reducing humanitarian need, climate action, and strengthening governance. It also commits to intensifying work in three intervention clusters where Ireland has expertise: protection, food and people. *A Better World*

sets the strategic direction for Ireland's development cooperation, our input at a global level to deliver on the SDGs by 2030, and to maximising our contribution to a more peaceful, equal and sustainable world.

Work is well underway to implement the new policy, with one of the first commitments – the launch of Ireland's cross-government Domestic Resource Mobilisation initiative – fulfilled in October. A collaboration between the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Department

of Finance and the Office of the Revenue Commissioners, the initiative aims to strengthen developing countries' tax administrative capacity and supports countries to raise revenue fairly and effectively while also promoting good governance. Ireland's long-term support of the African Tax Administration Forum (ATAF) was recognised at the 2019 General Assembly of ATAF, where Ireland was awarded a 'Most Valued Development Partner' award.



Launch of *A Better World*, a new policy with re-aligned focus on gender equality, climate action, good governance and combatting poverty © Phil Behan / DFAT



AILEEN O'DONOVAN
Development Specialist

Effective social protection policies and programmes contribute to more equal, just and fairer societies. Having spent five years in Ethiopia, I saw first-hand the enormous benefits of one of the largest social protection programmes in Africa, which reached up to eight million people annually.

As the Social Protection Policy Lead in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, my focus is on expanding social protection coverage for the poorest people in the world. I prioritise support for social protection systems strengthening in fragile contexts and enhancing links across humanitarian assistance and social protection, which are crucial to providing assistance to vulnerable and crisis-affected people.

To ensure that our social protection work informs and is guided by international best practise, I am active in a number of global social protection bodies, including the Social Protection Inter-Agency Coordination Board, the OECD Steering Committee on Policy Dialogue for Social Protection and Development. I also chair the EU Social Protection Development Group.



Launch of Ireland's Strategy for Partnership with Small Island Developing States at the Our Ocean Wealth Summit in 2019 © Julien Behal / DFAT

International Conference on Population and Development Summit

Ireland's delegation to the International Conference on Population and Development Summit in Nairobi was led by Minister Katherine Zappone and included youth and Irish civil society (funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade). Ireland also provided €350,000 to support Least Developed Countries to participate. The Summit secured over 1,250 commitments focused on meeting the 'three zeros' of zero unmet need for contraception; zero preventable maternal deaths; and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices, such as child marriage and female genital mutilation.

A Strategy for Engagement with Small Island Developing States

In June, the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D., launched a Government Strategy for Partnership with Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The Strategy's objective was to strengthen Ireland's support for, and engagement with, this important global constituency across four major policy priorities: gender equality, reducing humanitarian need, climate action, and governance. It outlined a holistic approach to deepening Ireland's relationships with SIDS, building on diplomatic, bilateral, multilateral, and international development links, and fostering closer bonds between our peoples.

The document was launched in the presence of SIDS representatives at the Our Ocean Wealth conference in Cork. As part of Ireland's new SIDS Strategy, a €12 million Trust Fund with the Asian Development Bank to assist SIDS in tackling climate change was launched in Fiji in May.

Launch of Ireland’s Africa Strategy

Ireland’s Strategy for Africa to 2025, launched in November 2019, sets out an ambitious strategic approach to the continent of Africa, encompassing political, economic, cultural and development relations, placing partnership at the heart of Ireland’s engagement. Building on Ireland’s traditional engagement with Africa, including our strong people-to-people linkages, it reaffirms Ireland’s

commitment to working with Africa to achieve peace, prosperity and sustainable development, in line with Ireland’s international development policy, *A Better World*. The Strategy brings a renewed impetus to supporting sustainable economic growth through boosting trade and investment ties with Africa, and supports an effective and ambitious EU-Africa partnership. It commits to expanding our presence in North and West Africa, including through the opening of three new Embassies by 2025.





Group photo at the OECD meeting with Minister for European Affairs Helen McEntee T.D. © DFAT

Humanitarian Efforts

2019 saw record levels of humanitarian need around the world, with conflict and climate change two of the greatest drivers of crises. These trends also led to growing levels of displacement, with record numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons.

Ireland continued to respond generously, targeting our funding towards the most severe crises occurring in Yemen, Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia. Ireland also led discussions on improving the international community's ability to respond to crises, including by chairing the Donor Support Groups of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Working with Civil Society

Partnership with civil society remains a key element of Ireland's overseas development programme. In 2019, the Civil Society Development Education Unit supported the work of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) with over €85 million in Irish Aid grants. This funding was used to support education, social protection, health, agriculture, governance and human rights programmes in over 70 developing countries. The funding was provided through a range of multi-annual competitive funding schemes and benefited 44 civil society organisations working in overseas development.

During 2019, Ireland served as the donor chair of the Task Team on Civil Society Organisations' Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment, with meetings in Paris, Nairobi and Dublin. Keynote addresses were delivered by Minister of State for European Affairs, Helen McEntee T.D. during the OECD-Task Team Civil Society Week in Paris in June and by Minister of State for Natural Resources, Community Affairs and Digital Development Seán Canney T.D. during the UN's High-level Political Forum in New York in July. In November, Ireland hosted Civil Society Week in Dublin, where Minister of State for the Diaspora and International Development Ciarán Cannon T.D. welcomed civil society, partner countries and donors from over 30 countries from all five continents for a series of events to discuss how best to support and strengthen civil society.

Ireland and Africa

2019 saw a number of high-level political visits between Ireland and Africa, which provided an opportunity to enhance bilateral engagement with our African partners and further our economic, trade, political, cultural, and people-to-people links. Visits from Ireland also provided the opportunity to engage with our diaspora on the African continent and to review progress and results from our development cooperation programmes in Africa.



Ireland and the Americas



North America

Launch of the US and Canada Strategy 2019-2025

Ireland's relationship with the United States and Canada is one of unique strength and historical importance. The Irish diaspora in the region number some 40 million people, and the US and Canada combined represent Ireland's largest trading partner. In 2019, the Department took concrete steps to build on our commitments, as set out in the Global Ireland 2025 initiative, to further strengthen Ireland's presence in North America.

In February, the Tánaiste visited Washington, D.C., during which time he spoke at the US launch of the Global Ireland Strategy for the United States and Canada 2019-2025 during the Congressional Friends of Ireland reception marking the centenary of the first Dáil. The Strategy was launched in Canada in March by Minister for Communications, Climate Action, and the Environment Richard Bruton T.D. as part of the St. Patrick's Day programme there. The Strategy is ambitious in its goals,

aiming to significantly enhance our current engagement in the region through strong political and diaspora partnerships and promotion of our culture and reputation, while also seeking to build a mutually beneficial economic relationship approaching 1 trillion USD by 2025.

The US and Canada Strategy is available on our website.

Opening of Consulate General Los Angeles

One of the core pillars of the Strategy, doubling the impact of a Government-led 'Team Ireland', was showcased by the opening this year of a new Consulate General (CG) in Los Angeles.

Our CG in Los Angeles aims to amplify Ireland's strong reputation for creative talent by strategic partnerships with the local entertainment industry, a goal underlined by the Taoiseach's high-level meetings with Disney, Warner Bros., and Netflix, and Screen Ireland's gala dinner, which took place during the September visit.



BARRY GUIHEN

Vice Consul General | Consulate General of Ireland in Los Angeles

In 2019, we officially opened the Consulate in Los Angeles, which is part of the plan to double the impact of 'Team Ireland' across our expanding

network of missions. It was inaugurated by the Taoiseach in September, and the ceremony was attended by the Mayor of LA, and guests from Ireland's creative and cultural communities in the city. Despite opening late in 2019, it was a very busy year for us. After preparing the Consulate for our official opening we started to engage more with the institutions, businesses and communities of the South West US, and I was fortunate to be able to attend events, not only in Los Angeles, but in San Diego and Phoenix, Arizona also. I am incredibly grateful for the welcome that we received on our arrival, and am looking forward to helping further establish the Consulate in the coming years.

Latin America and the Caribbean

New Embassies and St Patrick's Day Visits to the Region

2019 was a pivotal year for Ireland's relations with Latin America and the Caribbean, with new mission openings and the number of high-level engagements marking a true step-change in our engagement with the region. New embassies were established in Santiago, Chile, and Bogotá, Colombia, taking the total number of diplomatic missions in Latin America and the Caribbean from four to six. Linked to this, Ireland also formally established diplomatic relations with a number of countries in the region for the first time.

2019 saw a comprehensive ministerial programme of visits to the region to celebrate St Patrick's Day. Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government Eoghan Murphy T.D. visited Chile and Argentina, Minister of State for Disability Issues Finian McGrath T.D. travelled to Mexico and Cuba, Ceann Comhairle Sean Ó Feargháil T.D. visited Brazil, and Minister of State for Trade, Employment, Business, EU Digital Single Market and Data Protection Pat Breen T.D. was in Colombia and Uruguay. 2019 also marked the first year St Patrick's Day receptions were held in Cuba and Uruguay.



Our Staff at the Irish Embassy in Santiago © Embassy of Ireland in Chile / DFAT



Our Staff at the Irish Embassy in Bogotá © Embassy of Ireland in Colombia / DFAT



Minister of State Finian McGrath T.D. during his 2019 St. Patrick's Day visit to Havana, Cuba © Embassy of Ireland in Mexico / DFAT



Minister of State Pat Breen T.D. leads the first St. Patrick's Day parade in Bogotá, Colombia in 2019 © Embassy of Ireland in Colombia / DFAT

Visits to Ireland from the region

The President of Cuba, H.E. Miguel Díaz-Canel, paid an official visit to Ireland from 20-22 October, reciprocating a visit by President Michael D. Higgins to Cuba in 2017. The context of the visit was the 20th anniversary of the establishment of bilateral relations between Ireland and Cuba.

The official visit commenced with a formal welcoming ceremony and meeting with the President at Áras an Uachtaráin, and a courtesy call on the Taoiseach.

In September 2019, the Department hosted the first ever visit to Ireland by a Colombian Minister for Foreign Affairs with the visit of Minister for Foreign Affairs, Carlos Holmes Trujillo. The visit included an inaugural round of political consultations between Ireland and Colombia and was an opportunity to engage further on lesson-sharing and the peace process in Colombia.

In October 2019, Mr Rodrigo Maia, Speaker of the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies met with the President at Arás an Uachtaráin. It was the first high-level visit to Ireland from Brazil for many years.



Colombian Foreign Minister Carlos Holmes Trujillo Garcia with An Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Simon Coveney T.D. in Leinster House for a bilateral meeting © Phil Behan / DFAT



CIARA DE MORA

Deputy Head of Mission | Embassy of Ireland in Bogotá

The breadth and variety of the work of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is one of the main reasons I chose to join in 2017. Nowhere is it more visible, at least to me, than in my current role as Deputy Head of Mission in Embassy Bogotá. The Embassy was established in early 2019 and I work as part of a dynamic team to build our relationship with Colombia. My job is focused on monitoring the 2016

Peace Agreement with FARC and supporting its implementation, including through our contribution to two trust funds and a lesson sharing exchange on Northern Ireland. I also act as political counsellor, cover human rights, development and humanitarian issues and lead on Venezuela.

Here I see first-hand how the interplay between bilateral relations and multilateral processes, particularly at EU and UN bodies, plays out. The impact of discussions in human rights bodies and the UN Security Council, preparations for milestones such as the 20th anniversary of Women, Peace and Security Resolution 1325 in 2020 and new membership of organisations such as the OECD resonate at a country level and these discussions open spaces for us to strengthen our bilateral relations with Colombia.

Cooperation in Education with Mexico

In early 2019, Mexico's Minister of Public Education Esteban Moctezuma visited Dublin on a two-day programme to learn more about Ireland's model of education. The visit resulted in greater bilateral

cooperation in the area of teacher training as 100 newly graduated trainee teachers travelled to Ireland in August 2019 for a three-week training programme in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick.



San Patricio Scholars in the garden of Iveagh House © Phil Behan / DFAT



President of Cuba Miguel Díaz-Canel visiting President Michael D. Higgins and Sabina Higgins at Áras an Uachtaráin as part of his state visit to Ireland © Phil Behan / DFAT



Promoting Ireland's Prosperity



St. Patrick's Day 2019

St. Patrick's Day is one of the world's best-known national holidays. Ireland's network of more than 80 diplomatic missions uses the celebrations to share our culture, history, and values with the world. Operating through this network and with the support of the State Agencies, the Department develops a programme of activities and celebrations to promote trade, investment and tourism and to enhance Ireland's visibility and reputation internationally.

Over the St. Patrick's Day period in 2019, the mission network co-ordinated and supported visits by the Taoiseach and Tánaiste, along with 13 Ministers, 19 Ministers of State, the Attorney General, the Ceann Comhairle and the Cathaoirleach. They visited 116 cities in 56 countries across Europe, the Middle East, Africa, the Americas, and the Asia-Pacific region to promote Ireland and Irish business.

The diplomatic mission network hosted or supported 1,796 events for St. Patrick's Day, including 501 community and cultural events, 215 dedicated business events and 172 high-level political meetings.

St. Patrick's Day 2019 also provided an opportunity to underline Ireland's place in Europe against the background of Brexit, with all 27 EU capitals receiving a visit.

In addition, a record 470 sites in 55 countries around the world turned green for St. Patrick's Day as part of Tourism Ireland's Global Greening. Highlights in this tenth year of the initiative included the greening for the first time of the Burj Khalifa in Dubai - the world's tallest building - and of Victoria Falls in Zambia. The mission network, working closely with Tourism Ireland, was instrumental in ensuring that greenings took place on every continent.



St. Patrick's Day 2019

An unrivalled opportunity to focus attention on Ireland, promote our economic interests overseas and connect with the Irish diaspora

1,796 events in total hosted or supported by Ireland's Embassy network



Tell the world how Ireland's doing

172 High-level political meetings



1,153 Articles about Ireland published in print and online



1st Ireland ranked 1st globally for flexibility and adaptability of workforce and worker productivity

Ireland experienced continued solid economic growth with 5.6% real GDP growth in 2019

Ireland is and will remain a dedicated member of the European Union

Promote Irish exports, tourism, education and inward investment

116 cities
56 countries

Members of the Government, the Ceann Comhairle, and Cathaoirleach promoted Irish economic interests in 116 cities in 56 countries

215

215 dedicated business events were organised worldwide attended by over 9,970 business executives

470 With support from the Embassy network, some 470 iconic buildings and landmarks in 55 countries around the world went green as part of Tourism Ireland's Global Greening Campaign, which celebrated its tenth year in 2019.



Connect with the Irish diaspora and those with an affinity to Ireland

501



Some 501 community and cultural events organised or supported by the Embassy network





An Post and China Post co-publishing two first-day envelopes to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Irish-Chinese diplomatic relations
 © Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Ireland

Ireland-China Relations

Ireland and China marked the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2019, through an innovative and exciting programme of events.

To kick off the year, the Department, in collaboration with the Ireland China Institute, hosted an event in Iveagh House in October, while the Chinese Embassy in Dublin hosted a reception in the Convention Centre in June. The Department also sponsored the publication of a book titled *China and the Irish Volume II*, while An Post and China Post co-published two first-day envelopes to commemorate the occasion.

People-to-people links are an important element of our bilateral relationship, and the Shanghai Officials Training Programme, established in 2002, plays an essential role in building and maintaining these links. This exchange programme welcomes Chinese officials to Ireland and Irish officials to China for a number of weeks every year to meet with government officials, state agencies, and private

companies. In 2019, nine officials from Shanghai, Hangzhou and Nanjing came to Ireland, and twenty officials from across the Irish Government and state agencies travelled to China.



Logo commemorating 40 years of diplomatic relations between Ireland and China © DFAT

Asia Europe Meeting of Foreign Ministers

An Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D. attended the 14th Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) Foreign Ministers Meeting in Madrid on 15-16 December. The biannual meeting is an important opportunity for Ireland to engage at a senior political level with Asian countries at the only intergovernmental forum between Asia and Europe. ASEM is comprised of 51 countries, plus the Secretariat of ASEAN and the EU.

The Tánaiste's remarks underlined the importance of effective multilateralism, the role of women and gender equality. The Tánaiste was among the first speakers at the plenary session, and the points he raised were echoed by a number of subsequent speakers and were reflected in the Chair's Statement, which was the main outcome of the meeting.

Gerard Byrne in Singapore

In 2019, the Embassy of Ireland in Singapore supported the Botanical Fusion project. The project saw Irish artist Gerard Byrne paint in residence at the iconic Singapore Botanic Gardens for a four-week period. His work was then displayed in the gardens for over half a million locals and tourists to admire.

The new works that Gerard Byrne produced during his time as Artist-in-Residence represent a unique rendering of the colour and atmosphere of the Tropics through the prism of a great Irish talent. The initiative successfully linked Ireland and Singapore in a beautiful and creative way.



SANGDO CHUN

Office Manager | Embassy of Ireland, Seoul

I joined Embassy Seoul in November 1990, just one year after it opened, as Office Manager. For the previous twelve years, I had served in the Republic of Korea Army, in a variety of roles including as Aide de Camp to the Deputy Commander on Chief of the Combined (Korea and US) Forces Command.

My time in the army shaped my sense of loyalty and belief in the importance of protocol, and these have guided in my time in the Embassy – I will be celebrating 30 years' service later this year. I am not the only long-serving member of local staff. In fact, three of the four local staff members have been with the Embassy over 20 years. Through all the years,

we have come to be more than colleagues, indeed more like a family. The bond between co-workers is a very important part of life in Korea.

In my time in the Embassy, Korea has changed so much and so fast, becoming a major economy. The Embassy has in that time worked hard to build up Ireland's profile and its business relationship with Korea. The Irish community has grown in size. The Embassy too has changed. We are now Ireland House and the sense of family I mentioned includes our very committed colleagues in the IDA and Enterprise Ireland, and, of course, the staff from HQ. I have enjoyed working with all the staff posted here from HQ down the years. All have made their mark.

We had a busy and productive year in 2019. As well as the work of keeping the administration of the Embassy running, I assisted in the preparations for the St. Patrick's Day Ministerial Visit, the Ministerial Agri-Food Trade Mission in June 2019, and the visit by the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills.



Irish artist Gerard Byrne, painter in residence at the iconic Singapore Botanic Gardens for a four-week period © Agatha Byrne

Cultural Initiatives

New Culture Unit Established

Culture Unit was established in summer 2019, and aims to bring increased strategic coherence, guidance and support to the work of headquarters and our diplomatic missions in the cultural field, including delivery of the ambitious cultural objectives of Global Ireland 2025. The Unit is preparing a new Departmental cultural strategy for 2020-25, and in 2019 began consultations across HQ and the Mission network.

The Unit assisted the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations in New York with the unveiling of John Behan's sculpture, 'Migrant Boat, off Sicily, 2018' by President Higgins during his visit to New York in September 2019. Mr Behan, a sculptor of international acclaim, travelled to New York for this special event.

The Department has a suite of mobile touring exhibitions in English and other languages. Two new exhibitions were launched in 2019 in conjunction with EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum, and curated by Dr Angela Byrne, the Department's Historian-in-Residence at EPIC – 'Across the Waves: The Seafaring Irish,' and 'Building Something Wonderful: Irish Educators Abroad.' Both exhibitions were launched at EPIC before touring embassies worldwide.

In 2019, Missions organised 2,838 events directly, of which 666 (23%) were cultural.

Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris

As part of a weekend of events to celebrate St Patrick's Day 2019, Centre Culturel Irlandais (CCI) co-curated an exhibition of the work of internationally renowned draughtsman and satirist, Tomi Ungerer. Ungerer lived in Ireland for more than forty years until his passing on 8 February 2019. Over his lifetime, he produced more than 140 publications and 40,000 drawings that reflected his 'loathing and abhorrence of violence, prejudice, injustice and fanaticism of any kind' and touched on the themes of politics, religion and the excesses of contemporary lifestyles. The exhibition at CCI was an immediate success with the press and the public, generating over 30 articles and attracting 8,200 visitors over 16 weeks.

Other highlights of the year included a lunchtime recital at CCI, following a presentation in the Irish Embassy the previous evening to lobby for UNESCO World Heritage status for Irish harping. Irish harpists Siobhán Armstrong, Teresa O'Donnell and Séamus Ó Flatharta were introduced by Aibhlín McCrann, Chair of Cruit Éireann, Harp Ireland. In December, the Irish harp was inscribed on the list of UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage.



Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D., CCI Director Nora Hickey M'Sichili, and Minister of State for Training, Skills, Research and Innovation, John Halligan T.D. attending the CCI's Tomi Ungerer exhibition during the Ministers' St Patrick's Day visits to Paris © DFAT

Mission Book Clubs

A number of mission book clubs were established worldwide, dedicated to reading and promoting contemporary Irish literature. From the establishment of the first Embassy book club in Budapest in 2017, the initiative has spread to Brussels, Buenos Aires, Berlin, and Boston. The book clubs leverage the popularity of classical Irish literature (including Joyce, Beckett, Yeats) to build an interest in, and audience for, contemporary Irish literature abroad, reaching beyond the traditional Irish community and academic audiences. They promote the new face of modern, diverse, contemporary Ireland, with a focus on excellence in contemporary Irish literature, and a balance between male and female authors. The book clubs aim to ensure the availability of contemporary Irish literature in English-language bookshops and to encourage translation. The book clubs have proven immensely popular and have greatly enhanced our cultural outreach.

Other Voices Berlin and State Visit to Germany

The importance of shared cultural links was at the heart of the State Visit to Germany by President Michael D. Higgins and Sabina Higgins in early July. President Higgins hosted his German counterpart President Frank-Walter Steinmeier for an intimate and informal concert in Kreuzberg in Berlin. The concert, curated by Other Voices at the request of the Embassy, featured stand out performances by Dermot Kennedy and Lisa Hannigan. Highlighting shared creative links, *stargaze*, the Berlin-based, classically trained collective of European musicians, also participated, performing with Lisa Hannigan as well as Leipzig trained Irish violinist Aoife Ní Bhriain. Speaking from the stage together with President Higgins, President Steinmeier summed up the evening at its close as 'Mission Accomplished'. The concert was live streamed on the German-French television channel Arte and later broadcast on RTÉ.



EUGENE DOWNES
Cultural Director

My Iveagh House office happens to adjoin the room I worked in a quarter of a century ago as a newly recruited Third Secretary in UN Section.

The intervening decades have taken me on a somewhat unexpected journey from a posting in

Moscow, resignation from the Diplomatic Service to pivot into music and opera, onwards into broadcasting, producing the cultural programme for State Visits, global arts promotion with Culture Ireland, directing an international festival – and finally back to the Department this year to take up the new post of Cultural Director.

The role offers a rather unmissable opportunity to mobilise that mix of experience and networks as we set up a new Culture Unit and work with our global network of Missions, our partners across Government and the cultural sector at home and abroad, to reimagine Ireland's cultural diplomacy as part of the ambitious vision of Global Ireland 2025.

Supporting Ireland's People



Passport Service

Online Passport Renewals

In 2019, Ireland became a member and Chair of the Passport Six Nation Group, an international forum between the passport issuing authorities of Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States to share best practices and innovation in the issuance, development, and management of passports.

2019 proved to be a busy year. The Passport Service issued a record 935,000 passports – 220,000 more than in 2015. During the year, the Passport Online service was further expanded to all applicants in Ireland, Northern Ireland, Great Britain and Europe, overtaking the traditional paper-based application service in popularity. Passport Online had a real impact on the work of our missions in 2019, freeing up over 24,500 hours of staff time for other important work.

Our award winning Customer Service Hub handled up to 10,000 queries per week in 2019, and over 21,000 urgent appointments were facilitated by our offices in Cork, Dublin and London.

Processing of Foreign Birth Registrations (FBR) transferred from the Consular Directorate to the Passport Service during the year, and the team worked with our diplomatic missions to repatriate all FBR processing to Ireland. The Passport Service produced 18,000 FBR certificates in 2019. This integration of FBR into the

Passport Service will allow more efficient processing of entry to the Register and the subsequent issuing of a passport.

The Passport Service continues to lead on new ways of working such as a continuous improvement initiative led by our Executive Officers and Clerical Officers.

Passport Service Awards

In 2019, the Passport Service was awarded:

- » NALA Plain English in Digital Award;
- » Innovation in UX Award;
- » eGov Awards: Promoting Ireland Abroad Award;
- » Irish CX Awards: Team of the Year 2019 Award (Passport Customer Service Hub);
- » Irish CX Awards: Impact in Digital 2019.



The Passport Service Team receives CX Awards in 2019 © DFAT



PETER BYRNE

Passport Office | Mount Street

In September 2018 I was promoted to Executive Officer and I was assigned to the Passport Service on Mount Street where I worked as a supervisor for the Customer Care section. I then joined the Customer Service Hub team in mid-2019 during its early transition into a new section in the Passport Service.

The Customer Care team interacts with the public face-to-face at the counters in Mount Street and offers a range of services including customer assistance, passport collection, emergency passport processing and passport histories. My role as a supervisor was to organise staff between their various roles each day, to provide assistance to the public and staff on difficult cases and to liaise between the Passport Service's different offices and sections.

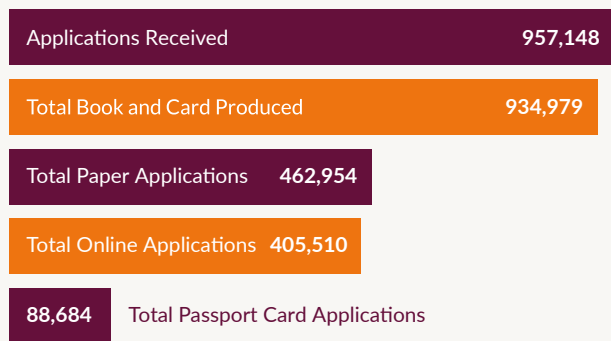
The Customer Service Hub assists the public through its WebChat and phone channels, dealing with a range of public queries. My role involves assisting my team with complex queries. The Customer Service Hub is now an established section in the Passport Service, dealing with up to 10,000 queries a week.



An Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Simon Coveney T.D. with Fiona Penollar, Director of Passport Services and staff in Balbriggan, 2019
© Julien Behal / DFAT

Passport Office 2019

Passport applications received



21,540 Passport Appointments



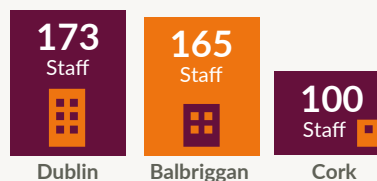
112,905

applications received.

Busiest month of the year: March



Three offices:



1,200 calls handled per day



600 web chats handled per day



Foreign Birth Registration in 2019

31,000 Applications received

18,000 Certificates produced

3,846 applications

received. Busiest month of the year: January



Our Citizens Abroad

Launch of the Consular Strategy

In May 2019, Minister of State for the Diaspora and International Development, Ciarán Cannon T.D., launched the Department's first Consular Strategy, TravelWise: Staying safe and informed while travelling abroad.

The number of Irish people traveling, working and living abroad is at record levels and with this comes an ever-greater demand for consular assistance. The Strategy addresses, and aligns our resources to, emerging travel trends and associated growing demands for consular assistance.

The Strategy sets out how the Department will prioritise modernising and improving the service provided to Irish citizens in distress abroad. It focuses on 4 key goals:

- » **Public Outreach and Communications:** Developing the TravelWise brand and promotion of a safe travel culture through outreach and communications campaigns;
- » **Professionalism:** Ensuring our staff are equipped and trained to assist Irish citizens abroad;
- » **Partnership:** Sets out our aim to work with a range of stakeholders both in Ireland and internationally to inform our work;
- » **Prioritisation:** Targeting our resources better towards those who need our help most

The Strategy is available to download on our website.

Inaugural Honorary Consul Conference

In September 2019, the Department hosted the inaugural Conference of Honorary Consuls of Ireland, bringing together Ireland's network of Honorary Consuls, for the first time ever, for a two-day conference in Farmleigh and Dublin Castle. Our Honorary Consuls are an important element of the Irish State's global engagement and play a vital role in delivering consular services to our citizens abroad, including in crisis situations.

The aim of the conference was to maximise the effectiveness of the Honorary Consul network as a tool for implementation of the Government's strategic objectives, including in the context of Global Ireland 2025, and to foster better engagement with these important partners who deliver services to Irish citizens abroad.

The appointment of an Honorary Consul is an honorary one, unsalaried and non-pensionable. Further details on the Honorary Consul network are available on our website.



*Inaugural Honorary Consuls' Conference Family Photo at Farmleigh House
© Phil Behan / DFAT*



CATHAL GIBBONS
Case Officer | Consular Assistance

The Consular Assistance team provides guidance and support to Irish citizens who find themselves in distress abroad.

My role as a case officer based in Dublin is to liaise with Ireland's network of Embassies and Consulates around the world to help individuals who find

themselves in difficult situations. I also act as a point of contact for families of those in distress.

Having good contacts is an essential component of being effective in this job. Building relationships both at home and abroad with relevant organisations and stakeholders is vital. Gathering clear and concise information is the first step toward making an effective decision on how to assist a citizen.

I am responsible for providing monthly and annual statistics that show the level of support we provide to our citizens. These figures provide the Department with essential data, supporting the implementation of the Consular Strategy, our foundation in how we provide Consular Assistance.

Working for the Diaspora

St Brigid's Day 2019

The celebration of St Brigid's Day is the Department's new and innovative way to show the work of trailblazing, inspirational Irish women. Building on the success of Embassy London's inaugural event in 2018 and coordinated by Irish Abroad Unit, Brigid's Day 2019 saw an expanded programme of events take place internationally over several days, with more than 18 diplomatic missions hosting events to celebrate the pioneering and creative role of Irish women in various aspects of life.

The 2019 programme of international events saw London hosting events over three days, covering art, literature, poetry, history, comedy, politics and theatre. Berlin held a two-day festival of Irish female writers called 'Brigid Meets Berlin'. Across the world, speakers including former Presidents Mary Robinson and Mary McAleese took part in the celebrations.

With the great enthusiasm that St Brigid's Day has inspired so far, Irish Abroad Unit is looking forward to expanding this celebration of women, and bringing Brigid to an even wider range of locations in the coming years.



Diaspora Strategy Consultation

Irish Abroad Unit held a series of public consultations in Ireland and among Irish diaspora communities abroad to assess the effectiveness of Ireland's diaspora policy and gather feedback on how we can improve it.

Over 30 consultation meetings were held in 2019, of which six took place in Ireland. Attendance was diverse, with representation from a range of diaspora organisations and interested members of the public. We received 73 written submissions by email and post from individuals and organisations working with diaspora communities across the globe.

The main outcomes of the consultations showed:

- » Strong support in Ireland for engaging with and supporting our diaspora communities;
- » Agreement that the welfare of the most vulnerable members of our diaspora should remain at the heart of Ireland's diaspora policy;
- » A general conviction that diaspora policy should recognise the diversity of the contemporary diaspora, and should reflect the values of modern Ireland;
- » Recognition of the unifying role of culture, sport, and the Irish language within diaspora communities.

Presidential Distinguished Service Awards

The Presidential Distinguished Service Awards for the Irish Abroad, administered by Irish Abroad Unit, is an expression of the importance placed by Ireland on the Global Irish, their contributions and their achievements.

The Awards are presented by the President every year. They provide recognition by the Irish State of people living abroad who have given sustained and distinguished service to Ireland or to Irish communities abroad, or on a global or international issue of importance.

To date, the Awards have been presented to 83 recipients from diverse locations and backgrounds, who have made their contributions to Ireland in many different ways.

The recipients of the 2019 Awards are as follows:

Arts, Culture and Sport

Ian Gibson, Spain
Charlotte Moore & Ciarán O'Reilly, US

Business and Education

Paul Drechsler, Britain
Michael Kenneally &
Rhona Richman Kenneally, Canada

Charitable Works

Fr. Patrick Clarke, Brazil
Bernárd Lynch, Britain

Irish Community Support

Jackie Donohoe, US

Peace, Reconciliation & Development

Sally O'Neill Sanchez (Deceased), Honduras

Science, Technology & Innovation

Jocelyn Bell Burnell, Britain
William Howlett, Tanzania



Recipients of the 2019 Presidential Distinguished Service Awards © Phil Behan/ DFAT

Sustaining Ireland's Influence



Protocol Division in 2019

We welcomed visitors and organised events

50+

high level visits

to Ireland, including **2 Kings** and **2 Queens**,
4 Presidents and **4 Prime Ministers**



Hosted **27 events** for high level dignitaries

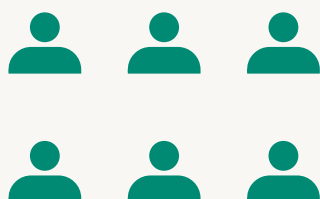


We supported our embassies around the world

31

Ambassadors
presented with credentials

6

**Honorary
Consuls**
appointed

Assisted in **6** overseas
Presidential visits



Organised the attendance of
the **diplomatic corps** at

three

annual events

Organised **161**
events at Iveagh House



Assisted **60+**
missions with over **1200**
staff in Ireland



We support our government

630+
Defence Forces
related clearance requests



59 firearms
and frequency
requests in Ireland



211 diplomatic
car applications



Over **500** overflights and
landing requests



Issued **496**
diplomatic visas
and over **550** diplomatic
ID cards



Processed **2,761**
diplomatic customs
& VAT requests

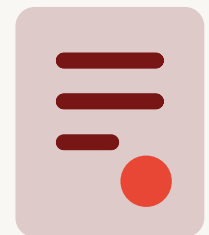


We keep connected with our global world

Sent over **500**
Christmas and
New Year's cards
around the world



Sent
1,300+
Third Party Notes
(TPNs) and received
1,700+ TPNs



Sent **121** National
Day messages



Global Island Policy Series

The Global Island Policy Series is a series of internal talks, each with expert speakers, which are open to all staff of the Department. Topics cover a broad range of issues, and staff are encouraged to participate in question and answer sessions with the speakers, to broaden their

knowledge and deepen their understanding of current foreign policy issues. 2019 saw Policy Planning Unit host 24 of these events, covering each of the substantive policy areas that make up Irish foreign policy.

Series of internal talks to increase understanding of foreign policy issues

1,031 attendees over the year 193 participants joining in online from overseas missions



4 substantive areas of Irish Foreign Policy covered at **24 Events** organised in 2019 with more than **20 expert speakers**



Development Cooperation most frequent topic, featuring in **20%** of all talks



Maintaining relations with other foreign services

10 foreign visits involving meetings with foreign policy planning units and think tanks and attendance at conferences and multilateral events




Social Media and Press Relations in 2019

@DFATIRL

49,500

Followers of our official Departmental Twitter Account @dfatirl

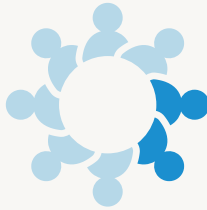
Overall majority are from **Ireland (54%)**, followed by UK 22%; US 13%



97 Twitter accounts with 10 operated by HQ and 87 by missions abroad

533,154 audience across all accounts

21% increase since 2018




@DFATIRELAND

57% increase

in followers since 2018 on the @DFATireland Facebook page

The majority of our followers are **female** within the 35-44 age group



59 accounts with 3 operated from HQ and 56 by missions abroad

236,082 is the size of our audience across all accounts


More than **47,000** new likes



DFAT LINKEDIN

14,781 followers across 5 LinkedIn accounts

48% growth of our network since 2018



Majority of our followers work in **government administration**



Top five locations of DFAT LinkedIn followers

Dublin London Belfast New York Brussels



Press and Media



Over **870** national and international **journalists** facilitated with media centres, press conferences, transport, accreditation to cover visits and events

150 **journalists** accredited to the visit of the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall to Wicklow



A total of **662** **media queries** were handled during 2019



Our Online Presence in 2019

90
Diplomatic
Mission Websites



66 Embassies



16 Consulates



8 Multilateral Organisations & Other



Website Visits:

11,065,625
2018

11,837,147
2019

↑ 7%

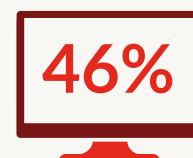


Busiest day of the year

When the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D. announced funding of €6 million to UN Agency for Palestine Refugees



of visitors accessed via mobile/tablet devices



of visitors accessed via desktop

Top five pages accessed

2,929,087



Track your Passport

2,709,072



Passport Online

572,326

Passport Online Photo Guidelines

536,062

Passport Turnaround Times

517,384

Passports & Citizenship

Top ten Irish Embassy websites by number of visitors:

1. **Great Britain**
2. India
3. Russia
4. USA
5. UAE
6. Australia
7. China
8. Canada
9. South Africa
10. Germany



Top ten cities outside the island of Ireland from which our websites were accessed:

1. **London**
2. Chicago
3. New York
4. Sydney
5. Melbourne
6. Edinburgh
7. Manchester
8. Nottingham
9. Glasgow
10. Birmingham



Average amount of time spent on the website



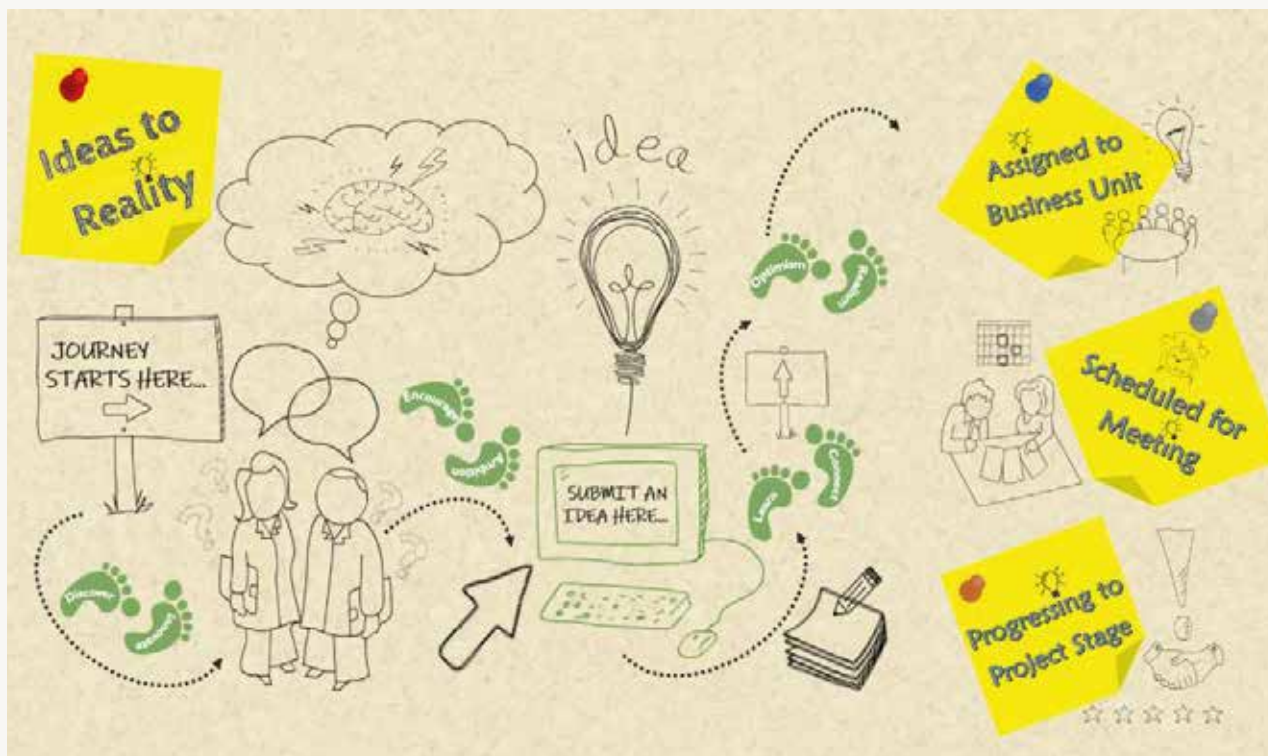
2.72 Average amount of pages per session

Ideas to Reality Initiative

The Ideas to Reality Initiative was launched in May 2019. Over the course of 2019, the project delivered a programme of communications and events to raise awareness and build engagement among staff in relation to innovation, particularly innovation in the public service.

With the help of ICT, the project delivered an Ideas Bank which facilitates staff to submit their ideas for positive change within the Department. The Ideas Bank has been successful so far in generating interest and ideas.

In addition, Secretary General, Niall Burgess, on behalf of the Department, signed the Declaration on Public Sector Innovation, which is a commitment to continue to support and foster innovation within the Department.



The Department's Ideas to Reality Initiative © DFAT

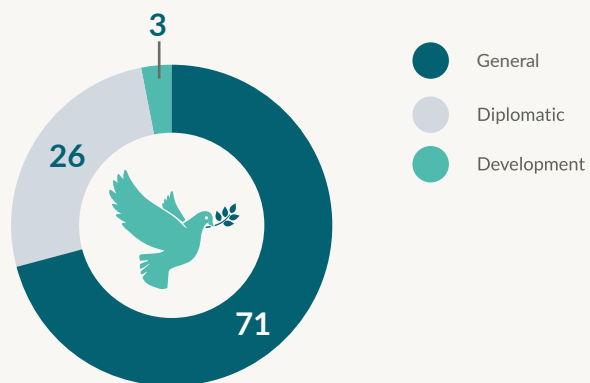
Managing the Department's Human Resources

1,975

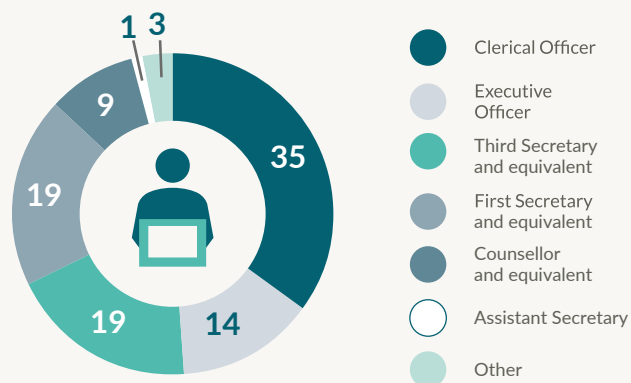
staff members in 2019



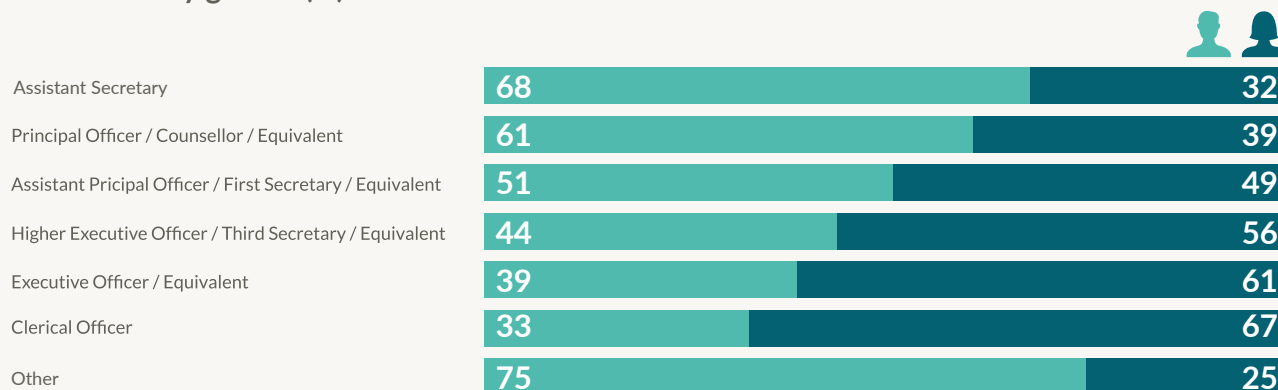
Breakdown by stream (%)



Breakdown by grade (%)



Breakdown by gender (%)



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Department's work on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion continued apace in 2019 through the parallel strands of the HR Strategy 2019-2022 and the Management Board Sub-Committee for Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI). Our HR Strategy has a strong focus on equality, diversity and inclusion as one of its seven key priorities. As part of the Strategy, the Department appointed a Lead for GEDI in 2019 to coordinate between the HR teams and the Management Board Sub-Committee, and develop an evidence-based approach to GEDI internally.

The Sub-Committee continues to act as the governance structure for the consideration of equality and diversity issues. In December 2019, the Management Board endorsed the formal expansion of this structure to include the six voluntary staff Working Groups – on Gender, LGBT+, Social Inclusion, Disability, New Irish & Ethnic and Parents & Carers – accountable to the Sub-Committee. The Working Groups build on the previous Action Plans for Gender Equality and for Equality & Inclusion and empower all colleagues to contribute to this agenda.

2019 marked the first year the Department participated with other Government departments in the Dublin Pride Parade and saw a series of staff seminars on GEDI issues, such as 'Women in Diplomacy' seminars and initiatives to mark Black History month and 'International Day of Persons with Disabilities'. As a supporter of the Willing, Able, Mentoring (WAM) programme, the Department offered two paid work placements to graduates with disabilities.

The Department works closely with the Civil Service Management Board to develop new approaches to gender equality, producing an annual report on the gender pay gap. It is also represented on the committees of The 30% Club (public sector branch) and the recently established Civil Service Women's Network.



CAROLINE PIERCE

Lead for Gender, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

I joined the Department in July 2019 with several years' experience in Diversity and Inclusion. As the Lead for Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI), I work in Corporate Services alongside HR colleagues and act as Secretariat to the Management Board Sub-Committee for GEDI.

I coordinate with the Human Resources Strategy team to implement our GEDI actions and provide support to the voluntary GEDI working groups. I could be advising on an initiative to mark International Women's Day or Pride, researching people policies, delivering training or meeting with colleagues from other Government departments or Foreign Ministries: true diversity!

A highlight has been engaging with our mission network to apply an equality lens to our outreach work and to deliver equality awareness training for posted and local colleagues. Providing briefings and background notes to colleagues overseas as they prepare for diversity events ensures that, wherever feasible, our values of diversity and equality are promoted internationally.



Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade colleagues participating in the Dublin Pride Parade, June 2019 © DFAT



Councillor Yemi Adenuga speaking at an event in Iveagh House to mark Black History Month, October 2019 © Phil Behan / DFAT



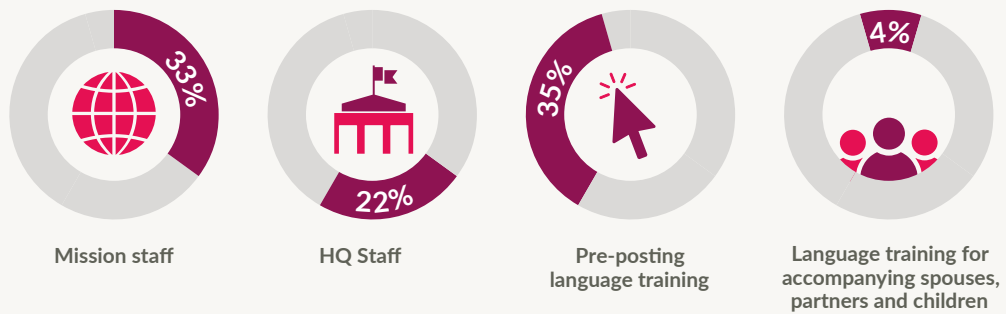
Adam Harris (AslAm Autism Awareness), Ailbhe Keane (Izzy Wheels), Fiona Delahoyde (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Disability Liaison Officer) and Barbara Brennan (See Change) presenting at an event in Iveagh House to mark International Day of Persons with Disabilities, 3 December 2019 © Phil Behan / DFAT

OneLearning

In 2019, Training & Development Unit inducted 190 new colleagues into the Department, delivered an in-house new managers' induction across our offices in Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Balbriggan, provided sanction for over 200 group language classes to colleagues, and supported 18 officers through the Refund of Fees scheme at an approximate cost of €59,000.

The highlight of 2019 was the rollout of the OneLearning Learning Management System (LMS), an online portal launched in October, which allows access to a suite of internal and external training courses, with a key focus on continued professional development. In 2019 there were 731 OneLearning courses completed by 424 colleagues, accounting for over a third of staff at HQ.

Language Costs by Area in 2019



Breakdown of staff who undertook courses:



Global medical and security advice

In assessing personal safety and security risks, the Department identified a need for an accurate and up-to-the minute global medical and security advice service. Led by HR, the Department procured a global medical and security advice service in 2019 to commence in 2020. While particularly important in higher risk locations, medical and security advice can be accessed in any location

globally 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The necessary medical and travel security advice is available to officers and family members posted abroad as well as to staff travelling abroad on official business. The information required including guidance on existing or developing health risks or on current or emerging security threats in any location can be accessed in a number of ways including over the telephone, through the web or via app.

ICT in numbers

The Department received

12 million
emails



and sent **4.5 million**
emails



10,601
Video Conferences



32TB
Data used in 2019



400,000
Remote Access



24/7 ICT
on call support for Missions



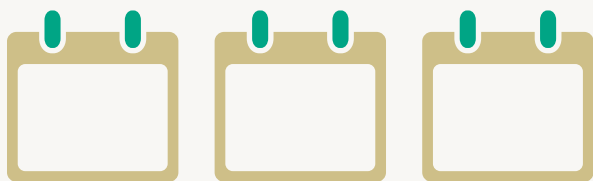
Evaluation and Audit

Evaluation and Audit is an important part of the Department's corporate governance structure. We are an independent Unit that reports directly to the Secretary General, and our work is overseen by an independent Audit Committee, which publishes a report each year. Our mission is to support, protect and enhance the delivery of the Department's mission by providing objective assessment, oversight assurance, advice and insight regarding corporate performance, governance, risk management and internal control.

Evaluation of Ireland's Embassy in Ethiopia

A key piece of work completed in 2019 was the Evaluation of Embassy Addis Ababa's approach to resilience in terms of the Country Strategy Paper 2014-2018. The purpose of this work was to provide an independent, evidence-based assessment of the Embassy's performance specifically regarding resilience with a view to providing accountability to the peoples of Ireland and Ethiopia, identify lessons learned and inform the decision making and planning process of the 2019-2023 mission strategy.

Participation in **3** mid-term reviews



5 internal & **9** external mission audits



Ethiopia evaluation



Readiness assessment of Property Management Unit



Commercial attaché review



Publication of 2020-2023 Evaluations and Audit Strategy



Fraud desk established



Peer review of **evaluation** function



Audit of **humanitarian** assistance



Joint audit with the Department of Justice and Equality of **visa services**



2 seminars and presentations at Evalnet



Strategy planning support



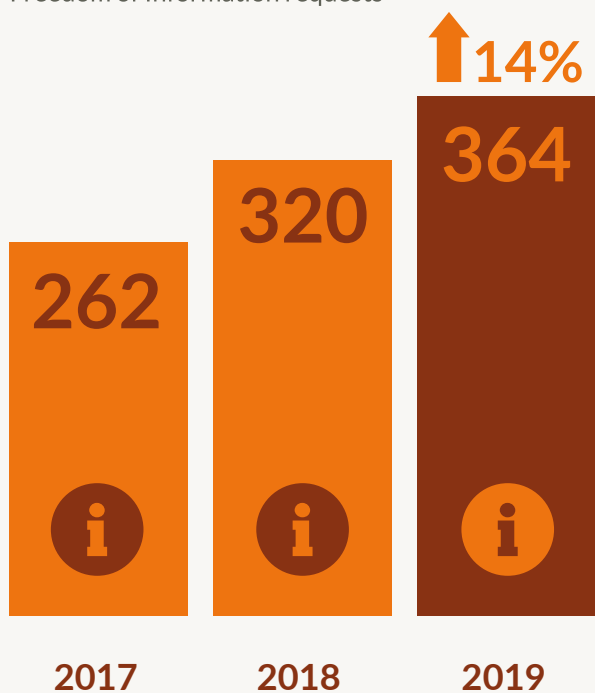
Evaluations of Missions' Visa Services

In terms of audit, 17 assignments were completed. Evaluation and Audit Unit worked with the Department of Justice and Equality to conduct an audit of the governance arrangements for the provision of the visa service at Ireland's diplomatic missions abroad. The primary objective of this audit was to provide assurance to the Accounting Officers (Secretary Generals) of both Departments on the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance and oversight arrangements in place for the delivery of visa services through the mission network and management of related key risks.

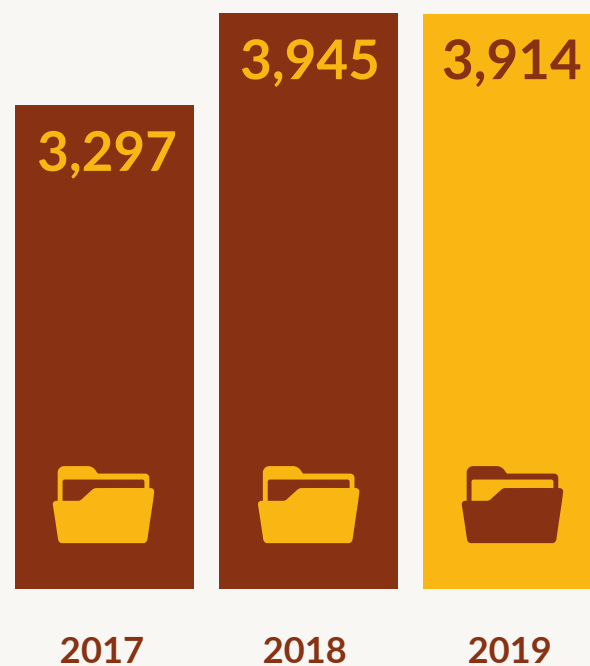
Other Unit achievements include the publication of our strategy for 2020-2023, the establishment of a Fraud Desk and participation in a peer review of the evaluation function along with Finland and Switzerland. The Unit continues to act as the Department's focal point to the Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service (IGEES) and will partner with them to conduct two spending reviews in 2020.

Freedom of Information and Archives in 2019





Freedom of Information requests



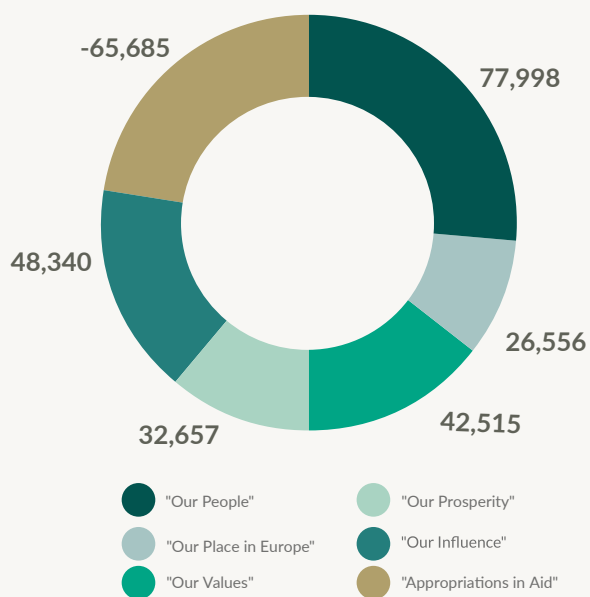
Files transferred to National Archives



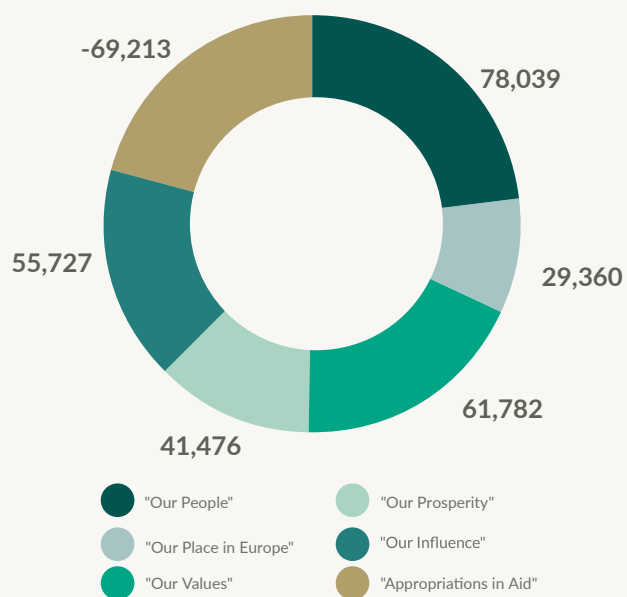
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Accounts- Vote 28

Programmes	Outturn 2018	Provisional Outturn 2019
A  "Our People"	€77,998m	€78,039m
B  "Our Place in Europe"	€26,556m	€29,360m
C  "Our Values"	€42,515m	€61,782m
D  "Our Prosperity"	€32,657m	€41,476m
E  "Our Influence"	€48,340m	€55,727m
Total Expenditure	€228,066m	€266,384m
F Appropriations in Aid	€65,685m	€69,213m
	€162,381m	€197,171m

Outturn 2018 (€m)



Provisional Outturn 2019 (€m)



Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Accounts Vote 27: International Cooperation

Ireland's Official Development Assistance	€ Millions 2019	€ Millions 2018
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - Vote 27	546.18	514.82
Other Government Departments and Contributions to the EU Development Cooperation Budget	323.69	276.81
Total ODA	869.87	791.63
GNP	274,330	253,050
ODA as a % of GNP	0.32%	0.31%
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Vote 27 as a % of Total ODA	63%	65%
Other Government Departments and Contributions to the EU Development Cooperation Budget as a % of Total ODA	37%	35%

Bilateral / Multilateral Analysis	€ Millions 2019	€ Millions 2018
Bilateral ODA		
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - Vote 27	431.40	391.32
Other Government Departments and Contributions to the EU Development Cooperation Budget	81.04	58.11
Total Bilateral ODA	512.44	449.43
Multilateral ODA		
Department of Foreign Affairs And Trade - Vote 27	114.78	123.50
Other Government Departments and Contributions to the EU Development Cooperation Budget	242.66	218.70
Total Multilateral ODA	357.44	342.20
Total ODA	869.87	791.63
Bilateral ODA as a % of Total ODA	59%	57%
Multilateral ODA as a % of Total ODA	41%	43%

* These annexes use the OECD definitions for Bilateral and Multilateral Aid





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

