

# POLICY PROPOSAL FOR THE IRISH OVERSEAS AND DIASPORA



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SPOKESPERSON FOR THE IRISH  
OVERSEAS AND DIASPORA



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FRONT COVER:  
THE ORIGINAL JEANIE JOHNSTON  
MADE 16 EMIGRANT JOURNEYS TO  
NORTH AMERICA BETWEEN 1847 AND  
1855, CARRYING OVER 2,500 PEOPLE  
WITH NO LOSS OF LIFE.

THE SHIP IS AN AUTHENTIC REPLICA,  
BUILT IN TRALEE, CO. KERRY. IT HAS  
SAILED TO NORTH AMERICA AND TO  
VARIOUS POINTS IN EUROPE.

## **FOREWORD**

Article 2 of the Constitution of Ireland

***It is the entitlement and birthright of every person born in the island of Ireland, which includes its islands and seas, to be part of the Irish Nation. That is also the entitlement of all persons otherwise qualified in accordance with law to be citizens of Ireland. Furthermore, the Irish nation cherishes its special affinity with people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage.***

Since the Irish Constitution was adopted in 1937, those in the North, the Irish living overseas and the Diaspora have been considered to be an integral part of the Irish Nation.

I am proud to be the first spokesperson for the Irish Overseas and the Diaspora in the history of the Oireachtas. Fianna Fáil was the first party to publish a policy specifically aimed at those Irish Overseas and those of Irish Heritage. This third edition includes new ideas and concepts after widespread consultation with the global Irish.

By addressing issues facing the Irish Overseas and Diaspora, as a country we will enhance the relationship between Ireland and the global Irish community.

The proposals in this paper are designed to greatly enhance the role that our country and government plays in fostering relationships, interacting with and supporting the global Irish community.

## **KEY PROPOSALS FOR THE IRISH OVERSEAS & DIASPORA:**

- ▶ **Minister for Diaspora Affairs:** As the first political party to appoint a spokesperson and subsequently form a policy for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora, Fianna Fail was the first party to call for the Creation of a Ministry for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora. We acknowledge the government's recognition of this important position with the appointment of a dedicated Minister. Our policy is to build on the initiatives outlined below and in doing so engage with the global Irish community and represent their interest in Ireland.
- ▶ **Voting Rights:** A key priority is continue to campaign to extend voting rights to citizens of the Irish Nation outside of the State, which will increase interest in Irish politics across the globe.
- ▶ **Citizenship:** Promote and expand the rights of Irish citizenship to the Irish Overseas and the Diaspora, which will allow the millions of citizens with Irish ancestry to re-establish their ties with their homeland and formally identify themselves as being of Irish Heritage.
- ▶ **Diaspora Direct Investment:** Foster and develop trade links with the Irish Diaspora and encourage global citizens with Irish heritage to invest in their homeland. Identify the next generation of business leaders and opinion formers.
- ▶ **Irish Card:** Introduce an Irish Card, which will provide various benefits for cardholders such as scholarships for international students and visa-free travel for business and tourism.
- ▶ **Honorary Consulars:** Recognise the need to appoint 'Honorary Consulars' across the globe as advocates of Ireland and the global Irish community.
- ▶ **Inter-Parliamentary Relations:** Continue to forge relationships and open channels of communication with other governments whose nations have a strong Irish Diaspora presence.
- ▶ **Education:** Promote Irish educational institutes abroad by increasing access to third-level education in Ireland for passport holders, the Diaspora, and those with an affinity for Ireland.
- ▶ **Birthright Program:** Pursue our proposal now under discussion of an educational travel program to bring young people with Irish heritage to Ireland to experience its culture, history, and environment.
- ▶ **Culture:** Increase support for Irish sport, music, dance and art overseas by encouraging Irish cultural initiatives to spread across the globe.
- ▶ **Tourism:** Promote tourism among the Diaspora by offering educational travel programs for adult Diaspora.

## INTRODUCTION

There are approximately 70 million people of Irish heritage living overseas as well as 1.2 million Irish born citizens living overseas. The issues of the Diaspora are currently handled by the Minister for Diaspora Affairs and Irish Abroad unit in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The Irish Constitution states that:

“...the Irish nation cherishes its special affinity with people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage”,

Fianna Fáil welcomes the appointment of the Minister for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora. In our third policy document, we propose a number of initiatives regarding the Irish Diaspora, the Irish Overseas and the Irish in the North of Ireland.

Recognition of the importance of the appointment of a designated Minister is reflected in a number of statistics regarding the size of the global Irish community.

- Historically For every 2 persons born in Ireland today, 1 emigrated.
- Between 1842 and 1920 the Irish population decreased from 8.2 million to 4.2 million with approximately 3 million people emigrating from Ireland
- Significant waves of emigration in the 1950s and 1980's
- 177,900 Irish emigrants between 2006 and 2012
- 29% increase in number of Irish emigrants every year from 15,300 in 2006 to 46,500 in 2012

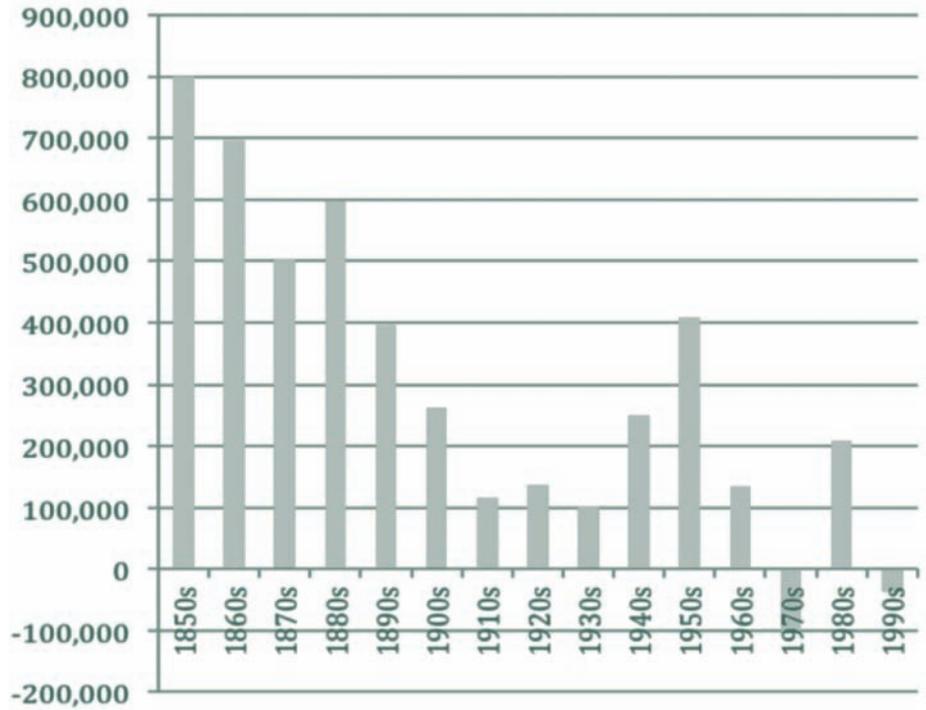


A handwritten signature in green ink, appearing to be 'M. Daly', written in a cursive style.

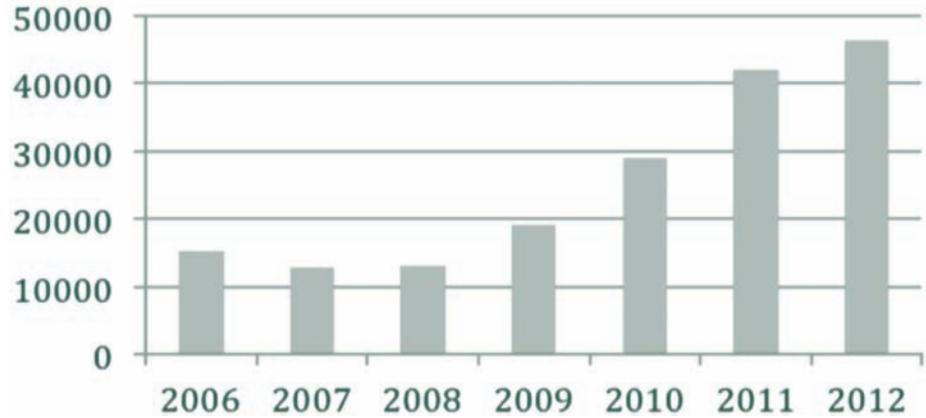
**Senator Mark Daly**

Spokesperson for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora

## NET EMIGRATION FROM IRELAND 1850-1999



## IRISH EMIGRANTS PER YEAR 2006-2012



As displayed by the graphs, significant numbers of Irish citizens have been emigrating for the past three centuries, and while net emigration consistently decreased during the latter part of the 20th century, there has been a sharp increase in emigration over the last 7 years. As a result, Ireland has a diaspora of more than 70 million people and at least 1.2 million Irish born citizens living overseas. If the Irish nation truly “cherishes its special affinity with people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage”.

## **CONSULTATION AND THANKS**

This document is the result of an intensive consultation process. We are grateful for the experience, expertise and ideas shared with us by individuals and organisations that are currently doing excellent work in the field of engaging with the Irish Overseas and Diaspora.

On the 7/8 October 2011, the Fianna Fáil led Government hosted the first Global Irish Economic Forum in Dublin. Ideas from that and the subsequent forums have been incorporated into this document.

On the 14th and 15th of May 2013, Senator Mark Daly attended the European Strand of the Global Diaspora Forum hosted by the Irish International Diaspora Centre Trust. Speakers included Kingsley Aikins—CEO of Diaspora Matters, Kathleen Newland—Co-Founder of Migration Policy Institute, Gidi Mark—CEO of Taglit-Birthright Israel, Tim O'Connor—Chairperson of The Gathering Ireland 2013, Itayi Viriri—International Organisation for Migration and many more. Ideas from that forum have been incorporated into this document as well.

Special thanks to Kingsley Aikins, CEO of Diaspora Matters, for all of his input and contributions to this document.

Special thanks to Jean Daly, Grace Coyle, Anne Daly, Greg Malloy, Leanne Connell, Siona Cahill, Jack Lahart for all of their contributions to this policy paper.

Also for his assistance and advice in composing this document I wish to acknowledge former Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr Dermot Ahern.

## **MINISTER FOR DIASPORA AFFAIRS**

Based on the recognition that Ireland's greatest asset is its people, Fianna Fáil will continue to build on its initiative outlined in the first policy paper in which we called for the appointment of a Minister for Diaspora Affairs as part of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

We will promote the affinity those of Irish heritage have for Ireland by protecting and promoting the rights of the Diaspora and the Irish living overseas by stimulating political, economic, educational and cultural interaction between Ireland and the global Irish community.

While many government departments have some engagement with the global Irish community to a degree, we in Fianna Fail were first to recognise the need for a dedicated Minister with the capacity to coordinate policy and action.

**July 2013** Fianna Fail release first Policy on the Irish Overseas and Diaspora

**October 2013** Tainaiste Eamon Gilmore calls on Irish Abroad to be given their own Minister

**March 2014** Sinn Fein released their Policy on the Global Diaspora, they also called for the Appointment of a Minister for the Diaspora.

**July 2014** The Taoiseach appointed the first Minister for Diaspora Affairs

For this reason we particularly welcome this appointment which was one of our key proposals.

The government section dealing with the Irish Overseas and Diaspora in conjunction with the Minister for Diaspora Affairs is the Irish Abroad Unit, which is a small subsection within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. According to a review conducted in 2010 by the International Organization for Migration and the Migration Policy Institute, there are 43 countries with either Ministry-Level or Subministry-Level Diaspora Institutions and "more than 400 institutions in 56 countries that are directly engaging Diasporas through various programs and policies. Of these institutions, 77 were created specifically to engage Diasporas on a formal basis.

At 70 million strong, Ireland has one of the largest Diasporas in the world and we have been a diasporic people for a great part of our history. Previously our emigrants were a sign of our failure they now symbolise our future. We called for the appointment of a Minister for Diaspora Affairs with responsibility for developing and maintaining links with the Diaspora. Our vision was that this Minister would be appointed with the purpose of fostering a mutually beneficial relationship between Ireland and the global Irish community. The Minister for Diaspora Affairs has a total budget allocation of €12,595 million euro funding for Emigrants and the Diaspora for 2015. This figure includes the maintenance of funding for the Emigrant Support Programme at €11.595 in 2015 with an additional €1 million for new diaspora projects and initiatives.

A new National Strategy is under review to ensure a relevant approach to every section of the diaspora and provide an appropriate framework for connecting with them.

Fianna Fail believes The Minister for Diaspora Affairs should be responsible for:

- The work of the Irish Abroad and Global Irish Network Unit and the Promoting Ireland Abroad Division within the Department of Foreign Affairs
- Communicating and coordinating with government departments on matters concerning the Irish Overseas and Diaspora
- Providing aid and assistance to the Irish overseas and Diaspora directly affected by any major disaster
- Offering assistance to the Irish overseas, particularly the youth of Ireland, who have emigrated in recent years
- Creating and regulating a registry containing the Irish Overseas, Irish Diaspora and Irish organisations in every country, state, city and province with an Irish presence to allow for two way communication between those at home and the global Irish community

- ▶ Assisting the more than 100,000 “Forgotten Irish” living in Britain through the support of the Safe Home Programme. This programme which is funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Ireland Funds assists older Irish born emigrants who have been living in rented accommodation abroad, unable to provide accommodation from their own means/savings and capable of independent living to apply for housing, it is also an information and advisory service for anyone considering the move to Ireland and support for those who have moved back and require assistance.
- ▶ Facilitating substantial economic development through direct foreign investment, trade, the selling of diaspora bonds and philanthropy
- ▶ Developing and sustaining trustworthy networks between countries with the intention of encouraging global collaboration
- ▶ Convert “brain drain” into “brain gain” and brain circulation
- ▶ Creating a two-way flow of capital in which both Ireland and the diasporas’ resident countries benefit financially, politically, technologically and culturally
- ▶ Spearheading educational, cultural, and tourism programs for Diaspora
- ▶ Enhancing Ireland’s “Nation Brand” which will encourage Diaspora to return to Ireland, and make the Irish overseas and Diaspora proud to be a part of the global Irish community

***Some examples of other countries’ diaspora strategies are outlined in this paper which highlights different approaches.***

## **INDIA**

One country which has created a successful Diaspora Ministry is India. The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs was established in 2004 with a focus on developing networks with and amongst Overseas Indians with the intent of building partnership with the Diaspora. As a collective Ministry, their mission is to establish a vibrant Institutional framework based on three value propositions:

- ▶ Through multi skilled market driven entities by the Ministry and managed by knowledge partners.
- ▶ Policy coherence in strategic engagement with Overseas Indians.
- ▶ Enlisting the States as partners in emigration management and Overseas Indian related initiatives

**Their Ministry is divided into four separate sections:**

- ▶ Diaspora Services
- ▶ Emigration Services
- ▶ Financial Services
- ▶ Management Services

Together these divisions are able to create programs intended to proactively engage with Overseas Indians to meaningfully serve India. India particularly focuses on creating programs which target the youth Diaspora such as Know India. Know India “is a three-week internship to promote social, economic and cultural awareness of India among the second and subsequent generations of emigrants. Another initiative, the Scholarship Program for Diaspora Children, is designed to assist emigrants in enrolling their children in Indian institutions of higher education. Other activities range from hosting an annual diaspora conference to facilitating diaspora investments.

India’s Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs is a model for Ireland to emulate. Since India established their Diaspora Ministry in 2004, they have actively engaged their diaspora in many initiatives and programs which could easily be replicated by introducing a Minister for Diaspora Affairs. India clearly felt that the establishment of a Diaspora Ministry was a necessity and India has an estimated diaspora of 25 million.



INDIAN MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL  
AFFAIRS SUSHMA SWARAJ

## **ISRAEL**

Israel has a Ministry of Public Diplomacy and the Diaspora, established in March 2009, which has now had its responsibilities transferred to a division directly under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Israel's diaspora is currently estimated at 10 million.

## **LEBANON**

In 2000, Lebanon established the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants to engage their diaspora. Lebanon has an estimated diaspora between 15 and 20 million.

## **PHILIPPINES**

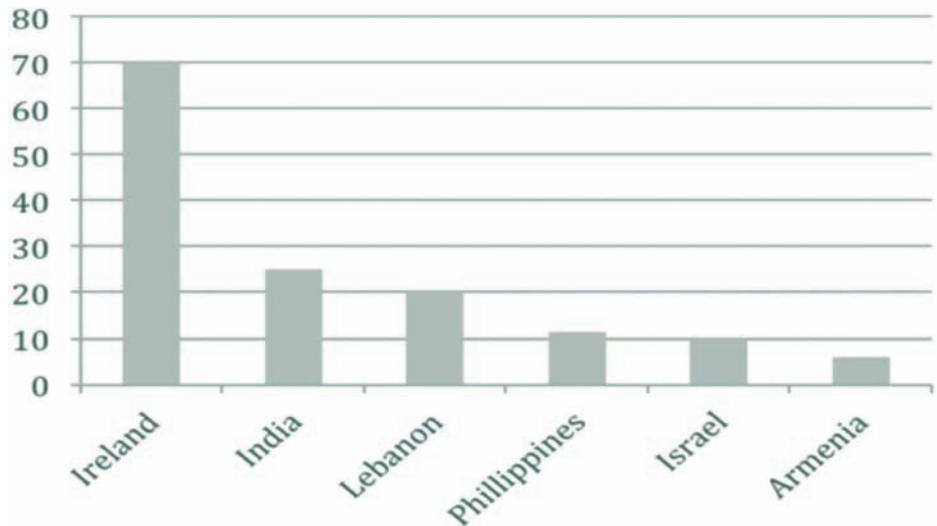
The Philippines have three separate offices devoted to dealing specifically with their diaspora, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration and the Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers' Affairs. The Philippines have an estimated diaspora of 11.3 million.

## **ARMENIA**

Armenia's Ministry of Diaspora was established in October of 2008. Armenia has an estimated diaspora of 6 million.

All of these countries have some form of specific government department devoted specifically to their diaspora. With approximately 70 million Irish Diaspora worldwide, the appointment of a Minister for Diaspora Affairs is an absolutely essential investment for the future of Ireland and the global Irish community. (See below for a complete list of countries with a Ministry or Subministry-Level Diaspora Institution).

## **SIZE OF DIASPORA PER COUNTRY (IN MILLIONS)**



## COUNTRIES WITH MINISTRY-LEVEL DIASPORA INSTITUTIONS

Country	Institution	Stock of Emigrants (2010)	Stock of Emigrants as % of total population (2010)	Top Destination (2010)
Armenia*	Ministry of Diaspora	870,200	28.2	Russian Federation
Algeria	Ministry of National Solidarity, Family and the National Community Abroad	1,211,100	3.4	France
Azerbaijan*	State Committee on Affairs of the Diaspora	1,432,600	16	Russian Federation
Bangladesh*	Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment	5,380,200	3.3	India
Benin	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Integration, the Francophone Community, and the Beninese Abroad	513,600	5.8	Nigeria
Comoros	Ministry of External Relations and Cooperation of the Diaspora	38,600	5.6	France
Dominica	Ministry of Trade, Industry, Consumer and Diaspora Affairs	69,300	104.1%**	United States
Georgia*	State Ministry for Diaspora Issues	1,057,700	25.1	Russian Federation
Haiti*	Ministry of Haitians Living Abroad	1,009,400	9.9	United States
India*	Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs	11,357,500	0.9	United Arab Emirates
Indonesia	Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration	2,502,300	1.1	Malaysia
Iraq	Ministry of Migration and Displaced	1,545,800	4.9	Islamic Republic of Iran
Israel	Ministry of Public Diplomacy and the Diaspora	1,019,900	14	West Bank and Gaza
Lebanon	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants	664,100	15.6	United States
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*	Agency of Emigration	447,100	21.9	Italy
Mali	Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration	1,012,700	7.6	Côte d'Ivoire
Morocco*	Ministry Charged with the Moroccan Community residing abroad	3,106,600	9.3	France
Niger	Ministry of African Integration and Nigerians Abroad	386,900	2.4	Nigeria
Pakistan*	Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis	4,677,000	2.5	India
Senegal*	Ministry of Senegalese Abroad	632,200	4.9	Gambia
Serbia	Ministry of Religion and Diaspora	196,000	2	Austria
Slovenia	Government's Office for Slovenians Abroad	132,000	6.5	Germany
Somalia	Ministry for Diaspora and Community Affairs	812,700	8.7	Ethiopia
Sri Lanka*	Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare	1,847,500	9.1	Saudi Arabia
Syrian Arab Republic	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates	944,600	4.2	Jordan
Tunisia	Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity, and Tunisians Abroad	651,600	6.3	France

\*Ministry dedicated to Diaspora

\*\* According to the World Bank, the stock of emigrants as percentage of population is defined as the ratio of emigrants of a country to the population – not the sum of population and migrants. Because of this definition, this ratio may exceed 100 percent in certain cases.

Sources: MPI-IOM Questionnaire, Part I, 2011 for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Benin, Comoros, India, Iraq, Israel, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Slovenia; with author research for the remaining countries; for data on emigrants and their destinations, see World Bank, Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011 (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2011)

## **COUNTRIES WITH SUBMINISTRY-LEVEL DIASPORA INSTITUTIONS**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Institution(s)</b>	<b>Stock of Emigrants (2010)</b>	<b>Stock of Emigrants, as % of Total Population (2010)</b>	<b>Top Destinations (2010)</b>
Albania	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Diaspora Department	1,438,300	45.4	Greece
Brazil	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Undersecretary General for Brazilian Communities Abroad	1,367,100	0.7	United States
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, Department of Diaspora	1,461,000	38.9	Croatia
Burundi	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate of Diaspora	356,000	4.2	United Republic of Tanzania
Chile	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Office for Consular and Immigration services; Office for Chileans Abroad. Ministry of the Interior and Public Security, Department of Immigration and Migration	633,600	3.7	Argentina
Egypt	Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, Emigration Sector	3,739,100	4.4	Saudi Arabia
El Salvador	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vice Ministry for Salvadorans Abroad	1,269,100	20.5	United States
Ethiopia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Diaspora Affairs Directorate General; Ministry of Capacity Building, Diaspora Coordinating Office	620,100	0.7	Sudan
Eritrea	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Eritreans Abroad	941,200	18	Sudan
Germany	German Technical Cooperation, Sector Project on Migration and Development	3,540,600	4.3	United States
Ghana	Ministry of Interior, National Migration Unit	824,900	3.4	Nigeria
Mexico	Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, Sub secretariat for North America; Institute for Mexicans Abroad	11,859,200	10.7	United States
Netherlands	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Migration and Development Division	993,400	6	Germany
Peru	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Undersecretary for Peruvians Abroad	1,090,800	3.7	United States
Philippines	Department of Labor, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration; Department of Labor, Philippine Overseas and Employment Administration; Department of Foreign Affairs, Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs	4,275,200	4.6	United States
Romania	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department for Relations with the Romanians Abroad	2,769,400	13.1	Italy
Uruguay	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate General for Consular Affairs and Expatriate Ties	353,400	10.5	Argentina

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MINISTER

Building on our first policy paper in which we called for the creation of this important ministry, we envisage a number of responsibilities to engage with the Irish Overseas and Diaspora. The primary role is to open a two-way communication between Ireland and the Irish Overseas and Diaspora. This communication is significant because the Diaspora are a national asset and by engaging and interacting with them, the Minister can facilitate global collaboration, improve Ireland's nation brand, increase Ireland's soft power and stimulate two-way flow between Ireland and the Diaspora.

## NATIONAL ASSET

We agree with Kingsley Aikins, author of *Why Diaspora Matters*, when he says that the diaspora are a national asset. He has also identified the concept of 'Diaspora Capital', which refers to the resources available to a country, region, city, organisation or place and is made up of people, networks, financial resources, ideas, attitudes and concerns of those with a shared interest in, or affinity with, their home or ancestral country.

In the past, when highly skilled people emigrated to other countries, it was considered 'brain drain', but in the modern world of technology and international networking, brain drain can be converted into 'brain gain'. The Irish Diaspora are a national asset because there are millions of intelligent, talented, successful people of Irish heritage living around the world who still feel very passionate about their Irish roots. Therefore it is absolutely essential for Ireland to engage the Irish Diaspora and to foster meaningful relationships with them.

## GLOBAL COLLABORATION

When the Irish Overseas and Diaspora are successful and make connections in their resident country, Ireland is presented with an excellent opportunity for international networking and global collaboration. When Ireland is able to engage significant numbers of influential diaspora, we are suddenly presented with a trustworthy network of successful people who are truly concerned with the welfare of Ireland and the Irish people. These diaspora networks also present Ireland with numerous 'natural ambassadors' to the resident countries of the Irish Diaspora, making the Diaspora an asset on not just a commercial level but also on a diplomatic level. The identification and engagement of successful Irish Diaspora around the world will lead to the foundation of a global network in which both Ireland and the resident country of the Irish Diaspora will benefit.

## NATION BRANDING

Nation Branding is described by Gyorgy Szondi, author of *Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding: Conceptual Similarities and Differences*, as "The strategic self-presentation of a country with the aim of creating reputational capital through economic, political and social interest promotion at home and abroad". But according to Kingsley Aikins, "National images are not a function of advertising campaigns and are not created through communications, nor can they be altered by communications. Images are earned rather than manufactured by creative ad agencies". Therefore, the best way to increase the Irish image or 'brand' around the world is to make use of the Irish Diaspora. When we engage the Diaspora and interact favourably with their issues, we earn their trust. When we earn their trust, they speak highly of their Irish roots, and as a result, Ireland's total nation brand increases in the eyes of the resident countries of the Irish diaspora. The stronger Ireland's nation brand is, the more 'soft power' Ireland has.



KINGSLEY AIKINS, CEO OF DIASPORA MATTERS, SPEAKS ABOUT DIASPORA AS A NATIONAL ASSET AT THE GLOBAL DIASPORA FORUM ON MAY 14TH, 2013.

## **SOFT POWER**

Soft power or ‘smart power’ as it is referred to in the United States is a term coined by Harvard professor Joseph Nye which refers to the ability to achieve your desired goals through attraction rather than coercion. It arises from a country’s culture, political ideals and policies. The stronger the Irish image is around the world, the more ‘soft power’ Ireland possesses. As mentioned in Nation Branding, the best way to improve Ireland’s global image and thus increase Ireland’s ‘soft power’, is to actively engage the Irish Diaspora around the world. The Minister for Diaspora Affairs should focus on fostering trusting and meaningful relationships with the Diaspora, and as a result Ireland’s soft power will increase. Soft power leads other countries to desire to do business with Ireland, and consequently, soft power leads to an increase in revenue and two-way flow.

## **TWO-WAY FLOW**

When both Ireland and the resident country of the diaspora are both benefitting, it is referred to as two-way flow. This flow can take shape in many forms such as human, financial, political, social, cultural, and intellectual. By engaging our diaspora, we can significantly increase this “flow” of all forms of capital. A financial flow of capital can be accomplished by selling Diaspora Bonds, Irish Credit Cards, Diaspora Direct Investment and Philanthropy.

## **IRISH OVERSEAS AND DIASPORA REGISTRY**

Fianna Fáil would like to establish a comprehensive and properly maintained registry of our Diaspora and the Irish overseas which would be used to establish a continuous two-way communication. The registry would have a structured list of all organisations associated with Ireland, the Irish overseas and the Irish Diaspora. We would maintain and update this registry.

## **CROWD FUNDING**

Crowd Funding as a form of philanthropy in which a collective group of people pool their money together in order to fund a project in which they all have a mutual interest. Crowd Funding has already begun in Ireland with organisations such as iFund and Fund it. According to Fund it’s Twitter Page, in their first 22 months, they have successfully funded 350 projects by over 25,000 pledges. Fianna Fáil would like to expand Crowd Funding to the global stage by using the Irish Overseas and Diaspora Registry in order to encourage Diaspora from around the world to invest in projects of which they are personally interested. We will accomplish this by first dividing projects into counties and then within the counties, we will divide the projects into different areas of interest. By offering a systemised, accessible list of projects, the Diaspora will be more willing to invest in philanthropic projects.

## **THE IRELAND FUNDS**

The Ireland Funds has proven to be one of the most successful philanthropic diaspora-related networks in the world. The Worldwide Ireland Funds have built a global reach since 1976 that now places their network in 12 countries, and have raised over USD\$480 million for more than 3,000 outstanding organisations.

The philanthropic network supports worthy causes in Ireland and around the world, and has proven to be a valuable asset in connecting people through a dedication to supporting programs of peace and reconciliation, arts and culture, and education and community development throughout the island of Ireland.

Our vision in Fianna Fail is to reach out and support the efforts and connections made through the Ireland Funds in support of Irish People away from home and build further upon its growing success as an organisation of the Irish Diaspora.

## PRESIDENTIAL DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

We welcome the introduction of the Irish Presidential Distinguished Service Award, which seeks to provide recognition by the Irish State for persons living abroad, primarily Irish Citizens, those entitled to Irish Citizenship and those of Irish Descent, who have made a distinguished service to Ireland and/or Irish Communities abroad. The award is intended as a formal recognition of the on-going efforts of Irish Abroad who have actively contributed to Ireland, its international reputation, as well as those who have a record of sustained support and engagement with Ireland and Irish Communities for a minimum period of five years.

Those recently recognised with a Presidential Award include George Mitchell, Niall O'Dowd and Kevin Cahill (US) for Peace, Reconciliation and Development, Fionnula Flanagan (Arts, Culture and Sport)

The awards are divided into 5 Categories:

1. Irish Community Support
2. Arts, Culture and Sport
3. Charitable Works
4. Business and Education
5. Peace, Reconciliation and Development

## RECOGNITION OF PHILANTHROPISTS

In order to express gratitude for the generosity of the Irish Diaspora who are willing to invest in philanthropic projects involving Ireland as well as to encourage future Diaspora philanthropy, we propose that philanthropists working for the benefit of Ireland be presented with a Certificate of Irish Heritage as acknowledgement of their on-going work. The Ireland Fund is currently funding a philanthropic project targeted at helping the “forgotten Irish.”

## CONNECTIVITY

Working constructively with other government departments both in Ireland and around the world to build a multi layered relationship with the Diaspora has marked us as a role model for many other countries. Fianna Fail will continue to enhance our connections in this modern and globalised world through the use of social media but also open dialogue with governments of the resident countries of the Diaspora. Recognising the importance of two-way communication between Ireland and the Irish Diaspora but also the linkage between the Minister for Diaspora Affairs and the rest of the Irish government. Without support from other sections of the government, it is difficult to properly assist the Irish Overseas and Diaspora. It is also difficult to assist the Irish Overseas and Diaspora if the Minister does not have an open dialogue with the governments of the resident countries of the Diaspora. Therefore, one of the primary responsibilities of the Minister for Diaspora Affairs will be to interact with the heads of other Irish government departments as well as the heads of Ministries around the world.

There are a number of current issues involving cooperation with foreign governments:

- **‘Forgotten Irish’:** The ‘Forgotten Irish’ are Irish emigrants who moved to Britain in the latter half of the twentieth century to find work and send remittances home to their families. There are an estimated 100,000 ‘Forgotten Irish’ living in Britain today with varying levels of need, ranging from homelessness and deprivation to social exclusion, or simply crippling loneliness. We also recommend the enhancement of the Safe Home Ireland programme to assist in rehoming those who qualify and are in need of assistance.



IRISH LOBBY FOR IMMIGRATION REFORM PRESIDENT, CIARAN STAUNTON, IRISH LOBBY FOR IMMIGRATION REFORM FOUNDER NIALL O'DOWD AND FORMER US SECRETARY OF STATE HILLARY CLINTON PROMOTING LEGAL PATHWAY TO CITIZENSHIP FOR 50,000 UNDOCUMENTED IRISH.

- › **Visas for Australia, New Zealand and Canada:** The Minister for Diaspora Affairs should work with the governments of Australia, New Zealand and Canada in order to ensure that Ireland receives a sufficient number of work visas for Irish citizens wishing to emigrate to these countries. 2015 sees changes to the Canadian Visa application system for Irish workers looking at 3 economic immigration programmes Federal Skilled Workers, Federal Skilled Trades and Canadian Experiences Class. This new system does not have a limit on the number of people who can apply and those with the highest score on a number of tests will be allowed a visa. This scoring mechanism allows applications to be processed quickly and we would call on the Government to work with other countries to implement similar processes.
- › **Driver's Licences for Irish Citizens in Canada:** The Canadian Government has implemented a reciprocal agreement which will allow for the official recognition of Irish driver's licenses in the province of Ontario, Canada as well as recognition of Canadian licenses in Ireland.
- › **Undocumented Irish in the United States:** A key priority is immigration reform in the United States. It will be important to maximise the benefit



SENATOR MARK DALY, CONGRESSMAN PAUL RYAN AND CIARAN STAUNTON, ILIR PRESIDENT AT A MEETING TO DISCUSS SUPPORT FOR THE 50,000 UNDOCUMENTED

to undocumented Irish of the measures announced by President Obama in November 2014. Fianna Fail is calling on this government to provide funding for Irish American Organisation throughout the United States, such as the Aisling Center in New York and the Irish Pastoral Centers in Boston, San Francisco and Chicago to help the undocumented who qualify under President Obama's Executive Order to come out of the shadows and work with the US authorities to become legal. Further legislative action in the US Congress will be needed and our public representative need to continue to lobby on the behalf of the Undocumented Irish so as to ensure an eventual resolution for all undocumented Irish in the US as well as provision of a legal path for future Irish immigration.

## DISASTER RELIEF

In the event of a major disaster abroad, and in order to provide assistance to all Irish citizens and Diaspora directly affected by the disaster, Fianna Fail would allocate a portion of the relevant budget specifically for disaster relief and aid for Irish citizens and Diaspora abroad. We would use the registry as a forum for encouraging Irish overseas and Diaspora to offer assistance to Irish overseas and Diaspora who have been directly affected by a major disaster abroad.

## INTER-PARLIAMENTARY RELATIONS - IRISH AMERICA ASSOCIATION

The Ireland America Association has members from all parties and independents in the Dail and the Seanad. It was established in 2013 as a result of the visit to Leinster House by Congressman Bruce Morrison who briefed us on the issue of Immigration Reform that would help 50,000 undocumented Irish currently in the United States. The Association is pleased to have as its honorary Presidents former Ministers for Foreign Affairs, John Bruton, Dick Spring and Dermot Ahern.

**The British-Irish Inter-Parliamentary Body** was established as a part of the Good Friday Agreement, and has since been essential to furthering constructive dialogue between Ireland and England. The Houses of Parliament and the Houses of Oireachtas have increased understanding of their respective nation's goals and policy aims through bi-annual plenary sessions that cover topics ranging from sovereign matters and European affairs to economic stability and environmental protection. Fianna Fail believes that Ireland should replicate this model of inter-parliamentary relations with the United States, where there are 40 million Irish Americans. The Irish government must cultivate its relationship with the United States by encouraging bi-partisan discussions with Members of Congress on issues such as trade and immigration reform. In addition to strengthening relations with the United States, the Irish government should reach out to other nations that have a strong Irish presence.



ALL PARTY REPRESENTATIVES ON THE IRELAND AMERICA ASSOCIATION

## ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON IRISH IN BRITAIN

With over 100 MPs and Peers signed up this group is active in raising awareness of issues affecting the Irish community in Britain at a parliamentary level. This group hold many events and symposium including a symposium on Irish Diaspora: Global Markets in 2013.

## CONGRESSIONAL FRIENDS OF THE IRISH NATIONAL CAUCUS

The Congressional Friends of Ireland, is a bipartisan group of senators and representatives in the United States Congress that was founded in 1981 by Irish-American politicians Senator Ted Kennedy, Senator Daniel Moynihan and House Speaker Tip O'Neill to support initiatives for peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland.

## VOTING RIGHTS

We are disappointed the government will not fulfil their promise to grant voting rights to the Irish Overseas and Diaspora.

### Article 2

***It is the entitlement and birthright of every person born in the island of Ireland, which includes its islands and seas, to be part of the Irish Nation. That is also the entitlement of all persons otherwise qualified in accordance with law to be citizens of Ireland. Furthermore, the Irish nation cherishes its special affinity with people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage.***

### Article 3

1. It is the firm will of the Irish Nation, in harmony and friendship, to unite all the people who share the territory of the island of Ireland, in all the diversity of their identities and traditions, recognising that a united Ireland shall be brought about only by peaceful means with the consent of a majority of the people, democratically expressed, in both jurisdictions in the island. Until then, the laws enacted by the Parliament established by this Constitution shall have the like area and extent of application as the laws enacted by the Parliament that existed immediately before the coming into operation of this Constitution.
2. Institutions with executive powers and functions that are shared between those jurisdictions may be established by their respective responsible authorities for stated purposes and may exercise powers and functions in respect of all or any part of the island.

By virtue of Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution anyone of the 1.8 million people born in the North of Ireland are entitled to Irish citizenship, yet they are not allowed to vote in any Irish election. The 1.2 million Irish born citizens living overseas are also not allowed to vote.

More than 120 countries around the world have provisions for their citizens abroad to cast a ballot, but Ireland continues to disenfranchise people who by virtue of article 2 and 3 of our constitution are either Irish citizens or are entitled to be citizens.

Most countries extend the right to vote to all of their citizens living abroad but usually with a few stipulations such as:

- The United States, Italy, Portugal, Canada, Spain and the United Kingdom allow citizens living abroad to cast an absentee vote in the mail.
- Poland, Japan, Russia, Sweden, France, Lithuania, Ukraine, Venezuela, Spain, the Dominican Republic, Colombia and Peru allow citizens living abroad to vote at embassies and consulates in their resident country.
- France, Colombia, Algeria, Italy, Portugal, Croatia and Cape Verde reserve separate representation for their citizens living abroad in their national legislatures.
- Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Germany allow citizens living abroad to vote for a certain number of years before their eligibility expires if they do not return home. New Zealand grants 3 years while the



FORMER PRESIDENT OF IRELAND MARY MCALEESE WAS NOT ALLOWED TO VOTE IN THE 1997 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION BECAUSE SHE WAS BORN AND LIVED IN BELFAST.

UK grants 15 years.

- ▶ Israel, Slovakia, Taiwan and El Salvador will allow citizens living abroad to vote but only if they return home to cast their vote.
- ▶ The Philippines will allow their citizens living abroad to vote but only if they legally declare their intention to return home permanently within three years.
- ▶ (See below for a list of all countries with External Voting Provisions)

Only four out of the 33 members in the Council of Europe—Malta, Cyprus, Greece and Ireland—do not afford their citizens living abroad the right to participate in elections at home. Over 120 of the 196 nations in the world have enfranchised their citizens living abroad. Ireland is at a point in time when we must fulfil the democratic aspirations of all of our citizens. As a first step we must allow all Irish citizens the right to vote in our presidential elections including Irish citizens in the North of Ireland.

Secondly, we should follow the example of our European colleagues and allow citizens living abroad some form of parliamentary representation. Portugal, for example, where 20% of the electorate live overseas, allows its citizens living abroad to vote in the Assembly of the Republic elections. However, these voters are confined to voting for just 4 of the 230 seats. In the French Senate there are 12 senators elected to represent French nationals living abroad. In an Irish context a reformed Irish Senate is one possible and practicable option that would ensure that Irish citizens who live abroad and in the North of Ireland have a voice in Leinster House.

- ▶ 184 years after Daniel O’Connell, the Great Emancipator, secured the right to vote for Catholics
- ▶ 95 years after the franchise was extended to women
- ▶ 45 years after nationalists marched in Derry for ‘One Man One Vote’

Ireland must not continue to disenfranchise millions of people who are entitled to be citizens. It is time to grant Irish citizens living abroad and those in the North of Ireland who wish to vote, the right that they are entitled to as members of the Irish Nation according to the Irish Constitution.

## **CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION**

The European Commission said that Ireland was “disenfranchising” its citizens living in other EU Member States by not providing them voting rights. “Such disenfranchisement practices can negatively affect EU free movement rights”.

At a Constitutional Convention held in September 2013, 78 of 100 members voted in favour of extending the vote to the Irish abroad, (including Northern Ireland) for Presidential elections.

Fianna Fail are calling on the government to extend the vote to include Seanad elections similar to the French model where seats are reserved in parliament for nationals living abroad is also under review.

The public consultation on Ireland’s diaspora policy will help guide further development. Two themes emerge however,

- 1.** The Irish diaspora wish to have their voices heard at home and
- 2.** They wish to remain connected to Ireland.

We believe that a referendum should be held to allow at the very least a vote in Presidential Elections but we would push for representation in Leinster House for our Diaspora through seats in the Seanad. This could be achieved by changing existing legislation.

The right to vote is a fundamental cornerstone of any democracy.

## **COUNTRIES WITH EXTERNAL VOTING PROVISIONS, BY REGION**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Country/Territory</b>
Africa (28)	Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Zimbabwe
Americas (16)	Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Canada, Columbia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Falkland Islands, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, United States, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Asia (20)	Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Yemen
Western, Central and Eastern Europe (41)	Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Guernsey, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jersey, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Isle of Man, Republic of Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom
Pacific (10)	Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Pitcairn Islands, Vanuatu
<b>Total</b>	<b>115</b>

Source: International IDEA, Voting from Abroad: The International IDEA Handbook (Stockholm: Trydells Tryckeri, 2006)



35TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY (1917-1963) HAD EIGHT GREAT-GRANDPARENTS BORN IN IRELAND.

## **CITIZENSHIP**

Under the current Foreign Births Registration Requirements, it is quite difficult for persons of Irish descent and heritage to become citizens of Ireland. We propose legislation which will simplify the citizenship process for the Irish Diaspora who merit citizenship.

## **IRISH HERITAGE**

The Irish diaspora is quite staggering in size and depth with 70 million people claiming Irish heritage including:

- › 34.7 million Irish Americans according to the 2010 US census
- › 10 million Irish Americans under the age of 18
- › 3,143,906 who claimed to be Scots Irish in the 2010 US census
- › 6 million people in Britain who claim Irish ancestry
- › 4,544,900 Irish Canadians according to the 2011 Canadian census,
- › 2,087,800 Irish Australians according to the 2011 Australian census
- › 500,000 Argentineans of Irish heritage.

## **IRISH CITIZENS**

- › 3.1 million Irish citizens living outside the country
- › 1.2 million Irish-born people living overseas including
- › 372,000 Irish-born people living in England and Wales according to the 2011 Census
- › 144,588 Irish-born naturalised US residents according to the 2010 US Census
- › 76,590 Irish-born people living in Australia according to the 2011 Australian Census
- › 28,035 Irish-born people living in Canada according to the 2011 Canadian Census.

Although Ireland itself has only a population of approximately 4.58 million according to the 2011 Irish Census which constitutes just 1 per cent of the total population of the EU, when looking through the lens of the diaspora, we are in fact a highly globalised country with over 70 million members in our transnational community.



ADMIRAL WILLIAM BROWN (1777-1857) WAS AN IRISH-BORN ARGENTINIAN ADMIRAL OFTEN CONSIDERED "FATHER OF THE ARGENTINE NAVY"

## **CITIZENSHIP THROUGH DESCENT FROM IRISH GRANDPARENTS**

This would be an opportune time to amend the Foreign Births Registration Requirement which has made it very difficult for third generation Irish to become citizens. According to the current Foreign Births Registration Requirement, a child born outside of Ireland is entitled to Irish citizenship if they have Irish grandparents, but only if the parents of the child have registered for Irish citizenship prior to the birth of their child.



40TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES RONALD REAGAN WAS FOURTH GENERATION IRISH FROM COUNTY TIPPERARY



24TH PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA, PAUL JOHN KEATING, IS OF IRISH CATHOLIC DESCENT



FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM TONY BLAIR (1997-2007) WAS BORN TO AN IRISH MOTHER.



18TH PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA, BRIAN MULRONEY, WAS BORN TO IRISH CANADIAN PARENTS

This law prevents many persons of Irish heritage from being able to claim Irish citizenship. In order for Ireland to interact favourably and beneficially with the diaspora, the Foreign Births Registration citizenship law needs to be amended to allow third generation Irish to claim citizenship through their grandparents regardless of whether or not their parents claimed citizenship prior to the birth of their child.

## **CERTIFICATE OF IRISH HERITAGE**

Engagement and discussion initiated by Senator Mark Daly with the Irish Abroad Unit led to the introduction of the Certificate of Irish Heritage by Micheal Martin in September 2011. The Certificate of Irish Heritage represents an acknowledgment and appreciation by the Irish State of the strong and enduring connection to Ireland felt by millions of people around the world. The Certificate recognises descendants of previous generations of Irish citizens and is a practical expression of the sense of Irish identity felt by many around the world. The Certificate is available upon application for anyone who can prove an ancestral connection to Ireland and their Irish roots.

The Certificate of Irish Heritage is also sometimes presented by government officials to Irish Diaspora in various fields as a means of strengthening the bond between Ireland and the Irish Diaspora. Fianna Fáil would like to increase the number of Certificates of Irish Heritage presented annually to members of the Irish Diaspora in various government, business and cultural contexts as a means of showing the Diaspora how deeply we value their connection to Ireland.



SENATOR MARK DALY PRESENTS CONGRESSMAN JOSEPH KENNEDY WITH A CERTIFICATE OF IRISH HERITAGE

**POLICY PROPOSAL FOR THE IRISH OVERSEAS AND DIASPORA**



CHRIS MATTHEWS OF MSNBC WAS PRESENTED WITH A CERTIFICATE OF IRISH HERITAGE



PRESIDENT OBAMA RECEIVED HIS CERTIFICATE OF IRISH HERITAGE ON SAINT PATRICKS DAY 2012



SENATOR MARK DALY PRESENTING GOVERNOR OF MONTANA BRIAN SCHWEITZER WITH A CERTIFICATE OF IRISH HERITAGE



NOTRE DAME COACH KELLY WAS THE 3RD PERSON EVER TO RECEIVE A CERTIFICATE OF IRISH HERITAGE



TONY AWARD WINNING ACTOR BRIAN DENNEHY RECEIVING HIS CERTIFICATE OF IRISH HERITAGE FROM SENATOR MARK DALY



SENATOR MARK DALY WITH AMBASSADOR DAN ROONEY AND AMERICAN ROSES



SENATOR MARK DALY PRESENTS CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, GENERAL MARTIN DEMPSEY, WITH A CERTIFICATE OF IRISH HERITAGE

## **IRISH CARD**

Fianna Fáil would propose to expand the connection between Ireland and the Irish Diaspora by offering an 'Irish Card' to any person of Irish heritage. This would afford an opportunity to those of Irish heritage to be officially recognised by the Irish State. A number of countries have successfully implemented similar cards:

- ▶ Poland has developed a similar system in which individuals with a “passive understanding of the Polish language and documented proof of Polish roots or a connection with Polish culture” can acquire a ‘Poles Card’ or a Karta Polska. The Karta Polska is distributed at consulates and allows holders to work in Poland without applying for a work permit; set up a company on the same basis as citizens of Poland; study; undertake a doctorate, or participate in other forms of education; and participate in research and development work. Interestingly, the holder also retains the right to various types of benefits from access to scholarships and health care services to stiff discounts on public transportation and free admission to state museums.
- ▶ India recently created the Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) card which makes it significantly easier for Indian Diaspora to return to India. The OCI does not provide dual citizenship, but it is offered to Indian emigrants (as well as second and third generation diaspora) who have established residence in a foreign country other than Pakistan or Bangladesh. The OCI provides permanent visa-free travel which benefits the diaspora by expediting travel to India which in turn provides numerous economic, intellectual, technological and cultural benefits to India.
- ▶ India also offers a Persons of Indian Origin (POI) card which provides visa-free travel for a fifteen year period for any diaspora within four generations of former Indian citizenship.

The implementation of an Irish Card with elements of the Karta Polska, the OCI, and the POI in Ireland would be an ideal way of fostering meaningful relationships between Ireland and the Irish diaspora. The Irish Card could provide cardholders with a number of benefits such as:

- ▶ Separate immigration counters at Irish airports which will allow for shorter lines and quicker travel
- ▶ Scholarships and reduced tuition for international students
- ▶ Discounts for airfare, hotels, car rentals, and other travel-related expenses
- ▶ Visa-free travel for business and tourism

The Irish Card will also provide immeasurable financial, cultural and political benefits for Ireland as well as for the Irish Diaspora. Poland and India have been very successful in increasing the influx of international students and working professionals from their respective diaspora as a result of the introduction of such cards. Both countries have seen significantly improved relations with their diaspora as a result of the introduction of schemes such as citizenship cards. With approximately 70 million Irish diaspora, it would certainly pay dividends for Ireland and the global Irish community if we were to explore the introduction of an Irish Card in Ireland similar to that of the Polish Karta Polska or the Indian OCI.

## **INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION**

Many countries have recognised the major asset of returning diaspora. A great way to encourage diaspora to return to their home country is to use third level education to offer students the opportunity to travel, to gain an education and to form invaluable connections which will benefit their homeland. According to Kingsley Aikins, author of *Why Diaspora Matters*, 'migration patterns are changing and efforts are being made to track the increasing trend of immigrants subsequently re-migrating to another country. This has also given rise to 'affinity' diasporas, for example Indians or Chinese who spent time overseas, possibly in education, and then return to their home countries but retain an affinity and affection for the country they spent time in'. 'Half a million western-educated Chinese people have gone back to China. Known as 'sea turtles' they have brought back what they have learnt overseas and played an important role in China's recent growth. The great thing about migrants is that they allow host countries to tap into a vast web of global contacts and networks where ties of kin, clan, and sometimes, dialect, help build trust'. China, India, Scotland and Poland have been very successful in using foreign education and returning diaspora to stimulate economic growth by fostering global relationships. Ireland should take advantage of both the prestigious third-level education we can offer to international students at home, as well as to use Irish networks to send our students abroad to get an education.



## **IRISH UNIVERSITIES ASSOCIATION AND EDUCATION IN IRELAND**

Irish Universities Association and Education in Ireland are two organisations which specialise in promoting Irish higher education institutions abroad. These organisations actively seek out and recruit international students around the world. The Minister for Diaspora Affairs should make it a priority to assist organisations such as Irish Universities Association and Education in Ireland in promoting Irish higher education institutions abroad. The Minister will be able to use the Irish Overseas and Diaspora Registry as well as his contacts in foreign governments around the world to promote Irish education and recruit international students.

## **ATTRACTING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Attracting international students has been a forte of the Scottish for a long time and it is an essential component of their economy. According to the UK Council for International Student Affairs, in 2011-2012 there were 45,980 total international students studying in Scotland comprising 21% of the total student population in Scotland. In comparison, Education of Ireland states that there were approximately 32,000 international students studying in Ireland in 2011-2012. This was a 2% increase in total from 2010-2011, but there was an alarming 10% decrease in Chinese students studying Ireland in the past year. International education is already very important to the economy in Ireland with a revenue of approximately €1 billion in this

sector in 2011-2012. There are steps which could be taken in order to attract even more international students to a level similar to that of the Scottish.

To begin with we need to put more of an emphasis on improving the global image of our universities. All 7 Irish Universities are ranked in the top 3% of institutions worldwide with many research fields in the top 1% in the world. While this statistic is promising, there is still a lot of work to be done. According to a study done by Thomson Reuters in 2012-2013, Scotland has five universities in the top 200 in the world whereas Ireland only has two, and Scotland's top university, University of Edinburgh is ranked 32nd in the world whereas Ireland's top university, Trinity College Dublin is ranked 61th in the world. One way of attracting students is to utilise social media. Education in Ireland has increased social media promotions of Irish universities from 30,000 in 2011 to 400,000 in 2012. It would be great to see this trend continue by using Irish Diaspora networking sites such as IrishAbroad.com and WorldIrish.com as a forum for promoting educational opportunities for international students in Ireland.

Fianna Fáil would also like to expand the Ireland Homecoming Study Programme. The current Ireland Homecoming Study Programme offers a 40% reduced 'Irish Diaspora tuition fee' to non-European Union resident Irish Diaspora to study at Irish Institutes of Technology. We also propose to offer the programme at Universities and Colleges. This reduced Irish Diaspora tuition fee will be offered to all students eligible for an Irish Card.

## **EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL PROGRAMS**

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade provides support to Irish Studies programmes at universities worldwide, while the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is supporting the development of Irish languages courses in third level institutions overseas.

Farmleigh Fellowships has provided scholarships in Asia worth €30,000 to 65 young Irish to promote trade, investment and talent connections between Ireland and Asia.

Educational travel programs are a fantastic way of encouraging young diaspora to fully immerse themselves in the culture of the home country. As mentioned earlier, India has been very successful in creating two such programs: "Know India" and the "Scholarship Program for Diaspora Children". Another great example of an educational travel program is Taglit-Birthright Israel. This program provides free 'educational trips to Israel for Jewish young adults ages 18 to 26 from around the world'. Their mission is for 'young Jewish people to come to Israel, see it, experience it, talk about it, and think about what Israel means for them and the Jewish people'.

The Cultural Section of the Promoting Ireland Abroad Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs currently works with the Department of Education and Science to promote educational exchanges in foreign countries as well as with the Fulbright Commission to promote educational exchange between Ireland and the US, but it would be very beneficial to create travel programs based on experiencing culture like programmes in India and Israel.

## **BIRTHRIGHT PROGRAM**

Ministerial discussion has taken place on this issue and an initial proposal has been outlined whereby US-Irish students may get Birthright style free educational trips to Ireland. With 70 million people claiming Irish heritage worldwide, it is vital that Ireland reaches out and incorporates its vast overseas network into its present-day society. Fianna Fáil believes that encouraging young diaspora to fully immerse themselves in their home nation's culture is necessary to promoting interest in Ireland. We welcome the educational travel program that brings young men and women of Irish heritage back to Ireland. The Birthright Israel Foundation, which provides an opportunity for young Jewish adults to visit Israel and experience its history and culture, is an example that Ireland should mirror. Just as people with a Jewish background seek out their Jewish heritage in Israel, individuals with an Irish background should be given the chance to explore the many facets of Ireland. This educational trip can last anywhere from 10 days to 3 weeks, and will provide young adults of Irish heritage with an all-encompassing view of Ireland's history, culture, and environment. Such a program will not only heighten interest in Ireland's history, but also in its present existence. Engaging young people who have Irish ties from across the globe will lead to further investment in Ireland's future.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **GLOBAL IRISH ECONOMIC FORUM**

The “new look” 2013 Forum was devised following extensive consultations with members of the Global Irish Network and its Advisory Board. The Network is composed of more than 300 of the most influential Irish and Irish connected individuals in almost 40 countries who share their expertise and knowledge.

The first forum was held in 2009, and was hosted by the Fianna Fáil led Government in Dublin. The Forum was organised in order to address 3 main concerns regarding economic development and the Diaspora:

- › Engage fully with the Irish Diaspora in developing Ireland’s global business and trade relations
- › Discuss face-to-face the Government’s priorities for economic renewal with key members of the international business community;
- › Strengthen ties with the Irish Diaspora as a key part of the Government’s efforts to restore Ireland’s international reputation abroad

The Forum was a huge success, and has resulted in a second in 2011 and a third in 2013. The next Global Irish Economic Forum will take place in Dublin from the 19th to 21st of November 2015.

## **FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT**

Ireland attracts more investment per capita than most other developed countries. In 2013 it was ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in terms of FDI project inflows globally and benefits from its strong relationship with the US and continues to be successful in attracting mobile investments from the States. The Minister should engage foreign governments in order to facilitate Foreign and Diaspora Direct investment.

## **DIASPORA DIRECT INVESTMENT**

Diaspora Direct Investment is a major form of capital flow for the economic development of a large number of countries. According to Nielsen and Riddle, “Some diaspora members are interested in investing in their homeland because they expect a financial return; others are driven by the possibility of social recognition from within their diaspora communities and organizations. The investment interest of other diaspora members may be motivated by the potential emotional satisfaction they will receive when investing in their homelands”. As Nielsen and Riddle acknowledge, the motivations for diaspora direct investment are vast, but the end result is what matters. It must be a priority of ours to engage the diaspora and encourage them to want to invest in the economic development of Ireland. The following are significant in this field.

Irish Networks USA. Based in US cities, Irish Networks connect newly arrived professionals with the Irish community. Through mentoring, members “develop relationships that will foster success”

WildGeese Network of Irish Scientists. Established in 2011 to connect Irish scientists living abroad.

Irish Technology Leadership Group. A non-profit body based in Silicon Valley of Irish or Irish American global technology leaders. Their Diaspora 2016 project aims to list 100 business leaders who wish to help Ireland’s economic recovery.

Irish International Business Network, its headquarters are in London with chapters in New York and Ireland, it aims to “connect Irish entrepreneurs and business people globally”. The Future Leaders mentoring programme matches diaspora members with executives and entrepreneurs.

Global Irish Network formed in 2010, GIN is made up of 350 influential Irish and Irish connected people in over 40 countries who provide Ireland with international expertise, focusing on economic development.

Network Irlande A business network established in 2010 for French and Irish people, enabling them to share knowledge and ideas, create opportunities and communicate interests.

Northern Irish Connections, forges connections for Northern Ireland across the globe in the areas of investment, innovation, education, tourism and digital marketing.

Linked Finance, An Irish crowd-funding company that focuses on lending money to SMEs in Ireland. Members of the Irish Diaspora are encouraged to fund companies from Ireland.

Ireland INC, hosts events to promote Irish business interests worldwide in financial services, energy, telecoms, technology, food and beverage, life sciences, tourism and service.

Ireland Funds which has raised USD\$480 million in 12 countries for more than 3,000 Irish non-profit organizations.

## CONNECT IRELAND

Connect Ireland is an innovative organisation which creates new jobs in Ireland. Their mission is to attract foreign companies that are expanding internationally to Ireland through ordinary people – creating jobs and securing the future of the Irish economy. The Irish Government then financially rewards those that attract new, sustainable jobs into Ireland. Innovations such as Connect Ireland should be encouraged as part of Ireland's Foreign Direct Investment and Diaspora Direct Investment. Connect Ireland has reached its 1,000 jobs milestone and continues to work on attracting small business to Ireland and rewarding people for introducing new connections. Connect Ireland aims to create 5,000 jobs within the next two to three years.



L TO R: MICHAEL MCLOUGHLIN CEO, TERRY CLUNE CHAIRMAN, WILBUR ROSS AND TIM O'CONNOR THE GATHERING 2013 AT THE CONNECTIRELAND NEW YORK BRIEFING

## CHILE GLOBAL

Chile Global is an excellent example of the type of organization which our registry would use to engage diaspora. Chile Global is a network of successful Chilean entrepreneurs and executives living and working abroad, with the aim of mitigating the effects of the 'brain drain' by linking them to businesses and entrepreneurs in Chile. They promote direct diaspora investment and the mentoring of new businesses.

## GLOBAL SCOT

Another diaspora direct investment organization which we could use as a model is Global Scot. Global Scot is a network of successful business leaders from Scotland or with a connection to Scotland living and working around the world. Their goal is to support ambitious Scottish companies to compete within the global marketplace, to help build Scotland's competitive sectors and to directly benefit the Scottish economy.

## DIASPORA BONDS

In 2010, Minister for Finance, Brian Lenihan T.D. announced the introduction of National Solidarity Bonds in Ireland. The National Solidarity Bonds are regulated by The National Treasury Management Agency and they are offered as four year and ten year bonds. National Solidarity Bonds are offered by the Government of Ireland to make it easy for residents of Ireland to help fund the Government's capital investment programme, develop important infrastructure, stimulate economic recovery and create employment. In 2011, the selling of National Solidarity Bonds raised a net revenue of €265 million.

The selling of National Solidarity Bonds is clearly a substantial source of revenue. National Solidarity Bonds are limited to residents of Ireland however. We would like to expand on the selling of National Solidarity Bonds to include the Diaspora as well. Diaspora bonds are a viable option for economic recovery as Ireland has a very large, very successful diaspora, many of whom would be interested in investing in the future of Ireland. Selling diaspora bonds to the Irish Overseas and the Diaspora is one way of increasing capital flow into Ireland.

According to Ketkar and Dilip, editors of Innovative Financing for Development, "The rationale behind diaspora bonds is twofold. For the countries, diaspora



MINISTER FOR FINANCE BRIAN LENIHAN T.D. ANNOUNCES THE LAUNCH OF THE NATIONAL SOLIDARITY BOND AT HIS 2010 BUDGET SPEECH



FIANNA FÁIL LEADER  
MICHAEL MARTIN ORGANISED  
THE FIRST GLOBAL IRISH  
ECONOMIC FORUM IN 2011

bonds represent a stable and cheap source of external finance, especially in times of financial stress. For investors, diaspora bonds offer the opportunity to display patriotism by helping their country of origin”.

The issuance of diaspora bonds is a form of innovative financing that can help developing countries support infrastructure projects. Issuers of diaspora bonds gain access to fixed-term funding, often at discounted interest rates due to a ‘patriotic discount’. The larger advantage of issuing diaspora bonds is that they can mobilize relatively small amount of funds from the diaspora into substantial resources for development. A number of governments have issued bonds to raise capital among their diasporas. Israel has issued diaspora bonds annually since 1951 through the Development Corporation to raise long-term infrastructure investment capital. Egypt reportedly issued bonds to Egyptian workers in the Middle East in the late 1970s. India issued diaspora bonds in 1991, 1998, and 2000 to avoid balance-of-payments crises and to shore up international confidence in India’s financial system during times of financial sanctions or special needs.

## IRISH CREDIT CARD

In a similar manner, Ireland could introduce an Irish Credit Card for the Diaspora, an idea which was first proposed in India’s 2002 Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora. A token sum for each transaction made through the card could be credited to the account of selected national projects, thus creating a sense of identification with nation-building efforts.

## IRISH CULTURE ABROAD

Some of the strongest affinities are those created through culture and sport, such as more recently the GAA with 439 clubs outside Ireland and Riverdance which has performed worldwide for over 20 years.

In order to attract Diaspora to Ireland, it is important to increase global support for Irish culture, sports, music, dance and art overseas. The Cultural Section of the Promoting Ireland Abroad Division within the Department of Foreign Affairs along with the national Culture Ireland agency have organized Irish cultural experiences around the world in the past such as a traveling James Joyce Exhibition in 2004, a traveling Samuel Beckett Exhibition in 2006 and a series of events commemorating the 50th anniversary of the opening of diplomatic relationships between Ireland and Japan in 2007. These are exactly the type of Irish cultural experiences we want to share with the Irish Diaspora around the world, but we would like to see it done more frequently and in more diverse forms.

In the immediate future the Embassy network will work closely with Culture Ireland and the Design and Crafts Council to bring events such as Yeats 2015 and the Year of Irish Design 2015 to the attention of audiences worldwide. Ireland’s Embassies and Consulates are also helping to develop and support a vibrant international dimension to the Decade of Commemorations, including a Festival of Irish Culture at the Kennedy Centre in Washington DC in 2016 entitled “Proclaiming Ireland”.

**The Minister for Diaspora Affairs** has responsibility for the Promoting Ireland Abroad Division within the Department of Foreign Affairs. Therefore, his remit is to promote Irish art, Irish sport, Irish music, Irish dance and other forms of Irish culture abroad. Examples of Diaspora organisations dealing with promoting culture are abundant around the world, such as the Diasporic Vietnamese Artists Network and the Global Society for Latvian Art. According to the Diasporic Vietnamese Artists Network’s Mission Statement, they have an advisory board and an advisory committee both at home in Vietnam and abroad in the United States. They provide resources and promote Vietnamese artists in all countries with a large Vietnamese population as well as diaspora artists who have returned home. The Cultural Section of the Promoting Ireland Abroad Division of the DFA operates purely from Ireland in conjunction with Irish embassies in foreign countries.

One Irish organisation which has a global reach is the Gaelic Athletic Association in Europe, Australia, Asia and North America, providing social,

emotional and sporting connections. The North American Gaelic Athletic Association is responsible for promoting Hurling, Gaelic Football and Camogie in the United States. They are responsible for establishing 112 adult clubs and 15 youth clubs in all of 50 states of the US.

Another Irish organisation which already exists is the Irish Cultural Centre in the UK which is responsible for scheduling and promoting Irish film nights, Irish literary events, Irish theatre and art shows as well as live Irish music. These are excellent examples of organisations that promote Irish culture, sport, music, dance and art and provide social, emotional and sporting connection to Ireland

## 2016 COMMEMORATION PROGRAMME.

Marking significant events such as the centenary of the Easter Rising in 2016 will provide opportunities to explore our shared and divided histories on an inclusive and respectful basis. A major documentary on 1916 is currently under preparation at Notre Dame University. Plans are being developed for a three week festival at the Kennedy Centre in Washington DC in May/June 2016. The Centre is Planning a "Proclaiming Ireland" festival.

## THE GARDENS OF REMEMBRANCE GLÓR NA CÁSCA INITIATIVE

Glór na Cásca 1916 Centenary Celebrations Initiative has been formed under a common objective to celebrate The Easter Rising of 1916 and honour those who fought in the cause of Irish freedom. Glór na Cásca includes political, trade union, cultural and Irish language representatives and descendants of the men and women who participated in the Easter Rising.

Glór na Cásca has been engaged in a consultative process with the relevant Government and Oireachtas authorities. We were pleased with the endorsement of the Minister for Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht when we presented our initiative to the All Party Consultation Group on Commemoration.

It is expected that Glór na Cásca will have a resonance not only with people in Ireland but also with the Irish Diaspora. Glór na Cásca is inclusive of all of those who wish to commemorate and celebrate Easter 1916. Diaspora Gardens of Remembrance

The Diaspora Gardens are based on the larger County Gardens and would be located in countries which have a large Irish community. Irish organisations in Philadelphia and St Louis have expressed strong interest in this project and the Glór na Cásca initiative will work with the Irish Consular network in the United States along with Irish communities throughout Europe and the wider world to build a network of Gardens of Remembrance throughout the globe.

## COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann is an example of a global Irish cultural organisation. Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann is the largest group involved in the preservation and promotion of Irish traditional music. Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann has hundreds of locations servicing tens of thousands of members around the world including Ireland, Britain, the United States, Canada, Argentina, Australia, Finland, France, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg and Chile. The Minister for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora will reach out to Diaspora around the world and identify potential opportunities for investing in cultural initiatives and organisations such as Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann. It is important for the country that we share with the rest of the world the wonderful culture and arts that thrive here in Ireland.



15 YEAR OLD TWINS ALVA AND NIAMH CASEY JOINED 67 YEAR OLD EDDY O'KELLY AND SENATOR LABHRÁS Ó MURCHÚ DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN FOR AN IMPROMPTU MUSIC SESSION IN KILDARE ST DUBLIN TO COMMEMORATE THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN

## DIASPORA MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS.

**Today's Ireland** television channel was launched in Washington on Saint Patricks Day in 2013.

The channel is part of MHz network which reaches 38 million American viewers.

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FRED THOMAS FOUNDER AND CEO OF MHZ SPEAKS AT THE LAUNCH OF TODAY'S IRELAND IN LEINSTER HOUSE

Today's Ireland broadcasts a blend of news, current affairs, politics, economy, business, education, tourism, culture, drama, sports and entertainment. The all-island content is cooperatively provided by television broadcasters and film producers who share a common desire to promote better understanding of Ireland to internationally minded American viewers of 'Today's Ireland' throughout the US.

**Irish TV** has a global audience broadcast 24 hours daily, its objective is to connect Irish communities all over the world and bolster Irish business everywhere, while also promoting Ireland as a place to live in and visit. RTE radio is transmitted across Europe via the Astra satellite and the Galaxy satellite in North America. There are almost three billion internet users today. Technological innovation is reshaping our world and the way we experience it. On line platforms such as The Irish Times "Generation Emigration" and Irish Central (the largest website in the US, Irish Voice (NY) Irish Post (UK) keep the global community connected as never before. The number of mobile phone subscriptions is approaching the number of people on earth. Skype connects from all corners of the globe.



MICHAEL FLATLEY, SUPPORTER OF THE GATHERING 2013, PRESENTS TAOISEACH ENDA KENNY WITH A PAINTING OF THE VICTIMS OF THE FAMINE ENTITLED 'THE WALKING DEAD' IN HONOR OF THE GATHERING

## TOURISM

The power of the personal invitation from people in Ireland to friends, relatives and groups abroad should be harnessed and developed. Welcoming the Diaspora home to Ireland for tourism is important on so many levels. It is of course an especially significant source of revenue, as The Gathering 2013 exceeded its revenue target bringing in €170 million boost to the economy and more than 325,000 additional tourists throughout the year.

A new community tourism initiative for the Diaspora, its objective being to foster the growth of strong county diaspora networks on the basis that diaspora relationships are rooted in people and place and build on the legacy of The Gathering 2013 has been launched in 2014. The joint partnership between Bord Failte, IPB Insurance and 34 local authorities will provide an annual fund of over €1 million over the next three years to support up to 700 local community based events and festivals. Diaspora tourism could also be offered for educational travel programmes for adult diaspora as well as for students. The programmes could be for cultural training, language training or even business training. In a similar manner, we could also hold conferences specifically for Irish Diaspora in a particular field.

Adult educational travel programmes and conferences would be organised and facilitated by the Minister for Diaspora Affairs who will be able to fund conferences and programmes by engaging diaspora who are willing to promote Ireland.

## IRELAND REACHING OUT

Ireland Reaching Out is an excellent example of a grass roots organisation which can make a huge impact on reaching our global Diaspora. Such initiatives would be encouraged by the Minister for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora.



HENRY HEALY, COMMUNITY ACTIVATION LEADER OF IRELAND REACHING OUT, WITH DISTANT COUSIN, UNITED STATES PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

## HONORARY CONSULARS

Honorary Consulars should be appointed globally as advocates for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora in every country, state, city and province with an Irish presence.

All the Irish Overseas and Diaspora deserve equal representation regardless of what country they reside in or the number of Irish residing in their country. Representation of the Irish Overseas and Diaspora is currently handled by the Department of Foreign Affairs, and the representation of the global Irish community is far from equal.

However, the network of 100 Honorary Consuls worldwide has recently been renewed and expanded to help address the needs of Irish citizens in Western Australia and Canada. The network has also been expanded and augmented in the US, Asia and Australia and will need to be kept under review in light of consular needs.

## DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIR'S EMIGRANT SUPPORT PROGRAMME

The Irish Government Emigrant Support Programme is focused on supporting Irish communities overseas by funding non-profit organizations and projects. Its purpose is to develop more strategic links with the global Irish and to support frontline welfare services that help the most vulnerable members of our overseas communities. In the ten years leading up to 2014, the Emigrant Support Programme assisted over 400 organizations in 26 countries with grants totalling over €114m. This programme also invests in a range of cultural, community and heritage projects to foster a vibrant sense of Irish community and identity as well as strategic capital projects.

Ireland's diplomatic network currently comprises of 61 Embassies, 7 multilateral missions and 12 Consulates General and other offices. Through them, Ireland maintains diplomatic relations with 178 states. The need for equal representation for the global Irish community to lobby, influence and negotiate on their behalf is recognised by the appointment of a designated Minister, Fianna Fail recommends that the Minister set a deadline to ensure Honorary Consulars are appointed in areas Ireland does not have representation currently or locations with an expanding Irish presence.



IRISH HONORARY CONSUL GENERAL TO NEW ZEALAND, RODNEY WALSH (PICTURED RIGHT) AND ENTERPRISE IRELAND'S DIRECTOR PAUL BURFIELD, SHOW OFF INNOVATIONS FROM THE EMERALD ISLE TO PROMOTE TRADE BETWEEN IRELAND AND NEW ZEALAND.

## REPRESENTATION ABROAD:

Embassies					
Argentina	Australia (Canberra)	Austria	Belgium	Brazil	Bulgaria
Canada	China (Beijing)	Croatia	Cyprus	Czech Republic	Denmark
Egypt	Estonia	Ethiopia	Finland	France	Germany, Federal Republic of
Greece	Hungary	Holy See	India	Indonesia	Israel
Italy	Japan	Kenya	Korea, Republic of	Latvia	Lithuania
Luxembourg	Malawi	Malaysia	Malta	Mexico	Mozambique
Netherlands	Nigeria	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Romania
Russian Federation	Saudi Arabia	Sierra Leone	Slovak Republic	Slovenia, Republic of	South Africa
Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	Tanzania	Thailand	Turkey
Uganda	United Arab Emirates	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	United States of America	Vietnam	Zambia

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<b>Consulates</b>		
Australia (Sydney)	China (Shanghai)	Lesotho (Maseru)
Scotland (Edinburgh)	USA (Atlanta)	USA (Austin)
USA (Boston)	USA (Chicago)	USA (New York)
USA (San Francisco)		

<b>Honorary Consulates</b>					
Armenia	Australia	Bahrain	Belgium	Bermuda	Bolivia
Botswana	Brazil (2)	Canada (6)	Channel Islands (vacant)	Chile	China
Colombia	Croatia	Ecuador	Egypt	El Salvador	Finland
France (3)	Georgia	Germany, Federal Republic of (5)	Ghana	Greece (3)	Guatemala
Guyana	Hong Kong	Iceland	India (3)	Indonesia	Italy
Japan (vacant)	Jordan	Kenya	Korea	Lebanon	Malawi
Mexico	Monaco	Morocco (2)	New Zealand	Nigeria	Oman, Sultanate of
Pakistan	Panama	Peru	Philippines	Poland	Russian Federation
Serbia	Spain (10)	Sri Lanka	Sudan	Switzerland	Syrian Arab Republic
Thailand (2)	Trinidad and Tobago	Tunisia	Turkey	Ukraine	United States of America (12)
Venezuela (vacant)	Zimbabwe				

Honorary Consulates would be a fiscally viable investment, as the cost of establishing the Honorary Consulates will be insignificant in comparison to the return from engaging with the Irish community around the world.

Many countries with Ministry Level Diaspora Institutions have expanded their diplomatic presence in places with large diaspora populations. Mexico, for example, has had numerous consulates throughout the US for two centuries, but they have continued to add consulates between 2000 and 2009 in places like Austin TX , Kansas City, Missouri; Omaha, Nebraska; St. Paul, Minnesota; Boise, Idaho; Raleigh, North Carolina; and Indianapolis, Indiana to accommodate the growing Mexican population in those regions. As of mid-2009, Mexico had 50 consulates throughout the United States. Similarly, the Philippines has opened four diplomatic posts since 2008 to reflect the increasing presence of Filipinos in Ireland, the Syrian Arab Republic, and China.

There are currently Irish overseas and Diaspora residing in more than 100 countries around the world. There are a significant number of countries and locations where Ireland has no diplomatic presence or are serviced by a distant embassy or consulate. With more and more Irish citizens emigrating to new locations each year, as well as 70 million Diaspora around the world, it would be important to appoint Honorary Consulars in every location with an Irish presence in order to provide support for our Irish overseas and Diaspora.

## CONCLUSION

*We are disappointed that the Governments Diaspora Strategy launched in March 2015 does not go into greater detail and outline more specific proposals to expand our relationship with our Irish overseas and Diaspora. However we are delighted that a Minister for Diaspora Affairs has been appointed, this will ensure greater engagement with the Global Irish Community. As the first political party to appoint a spokesperson for the Irish Overseas and Diaspora, Fianna Fáil is proud to have been the first political party to form a policy on the Irish Overseas and Diaspora and call for a Minister. This third policy paper proves that the 70 million Diaspora and the 1.2 million Irish born citizens living overseas deserve a government who will actively engage with them and take their needs and opinions into consideration. From expanding voting rights to the Diaspora and Irish Overseas, to attracting tourism and strengthening global economic ties, there are many measures that can be taken to include the Diaspora in Ireland's economy, politics, and culture. All of the Irish Overseas and Diaspora should have the chance to voice their concerns and aspirations for Ireland, and they must be able to exercise their right to vote for leaders who will impact the future of our country. While these 70 million Diaspora are spread throughout the globe, their Irish heritage is the thread that unifies them. The Irish Overseas and Diaspora are an essential part of our nation's identity and cultural fabric, and we need to implement policies that prove our dedication to them.*

## GLOSSARY

*Theirealndfunds.org*: Philanthropic association dedicated to supporting programmes of peace and reconciliation, arts and culture, education and community development". It has raised over USD\$480 million in 12 countries for more than 3,000 Irish non-profit organisations

*Connectireland.com* Established as part of the Government's action plan for jobs in 2012 to motivate people to recommend Ireland to companies. "Connectors" are rewarded with €1,000-€2,500 for each sustainable job created. More than 30,000 connectors are registered

*Irishnetwork-nyc.com* Based in US cities, Irish Networks connect newly arrived professionals with the Irish community. Through mentoring, members "develop relationships that will foster success".

*WGNIS: wildgeesenetwork.org*: To connect Irish Scientists living abroad to highlight achievements, job and funding information, and facilitates mentoring.

*ITLG.ORG*: Irish Technology Leadership Group, a non-profit body based in Silicon Valley of Irish or Irish-American global technology leaders. Their Diaspora 2016 project aims to list 100 business leaders who wish to help Ireland's economic recovery. *itlg.org*

*Uversity* Universities, institutes of technology and independent colleges across Ireland founded Uversity for the study of heritage, arts and culture. *uversity.org*

*IIBN.COM*: Irish International Business Network, headquartered in London with chapters in New York and Ireland. Aim to "connect Irish entrepreneurs and business people globally". The Future Leaders mentoring programme matches diaspora members with executives and entrepreneurs. *iibn.com*

*Irish Abroad Unit*, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, established in 2004 to support both vulnerable and successful Irish emigrants:

*Emigrant Support Programme (ESP)* The ESP has provided €114 million to non-profit organisations and projects supporting Irish communities abroad in the last decade. Most funding is allocated to frontline welfare services.

*GIN*: Global Irish Network (formed 2010) made up of 350 influential Irish and Irish-connected people in over 40 countries, who provide Ireland with international expertise, focusing on economic development. *globalirishforum.ie*

*farmleighfellowship.com* Farmleigh Fellowships Now in its fourth year, the Farmleigh Fellowship has provided scholarships in Asia worth €30,000 to 65 young Irish people to promote greater trade, investment and talent connections between Ireland and Asia.

*heritagecertificate.com*, certificate of Irish Heritage a Government initiative to recognise "the enduring emotional ties and sense of identity bestowed by Irish ancestry" grants certificates to people with Irish connections.

*ITLG.org*: Irish Technology Leadership Group (Non-profit body based in Silicon Valley for Irish or Irish/American global

technology leaders, whose 2016 project aims to list 100 business leaders who wish to help Ireland economic recovery (*Limerick.ie/gln*) County diaspora groups: New regional platforms are connecting with members of the diaspora from a specific place, similar to the county associations in the US. For example, the Kerry Diaspora Business Network encourages Kerry people abroad to promote their county. Similar examples include the Cork Foundation (*corkfoundation.com*) and Global Limerick Network

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