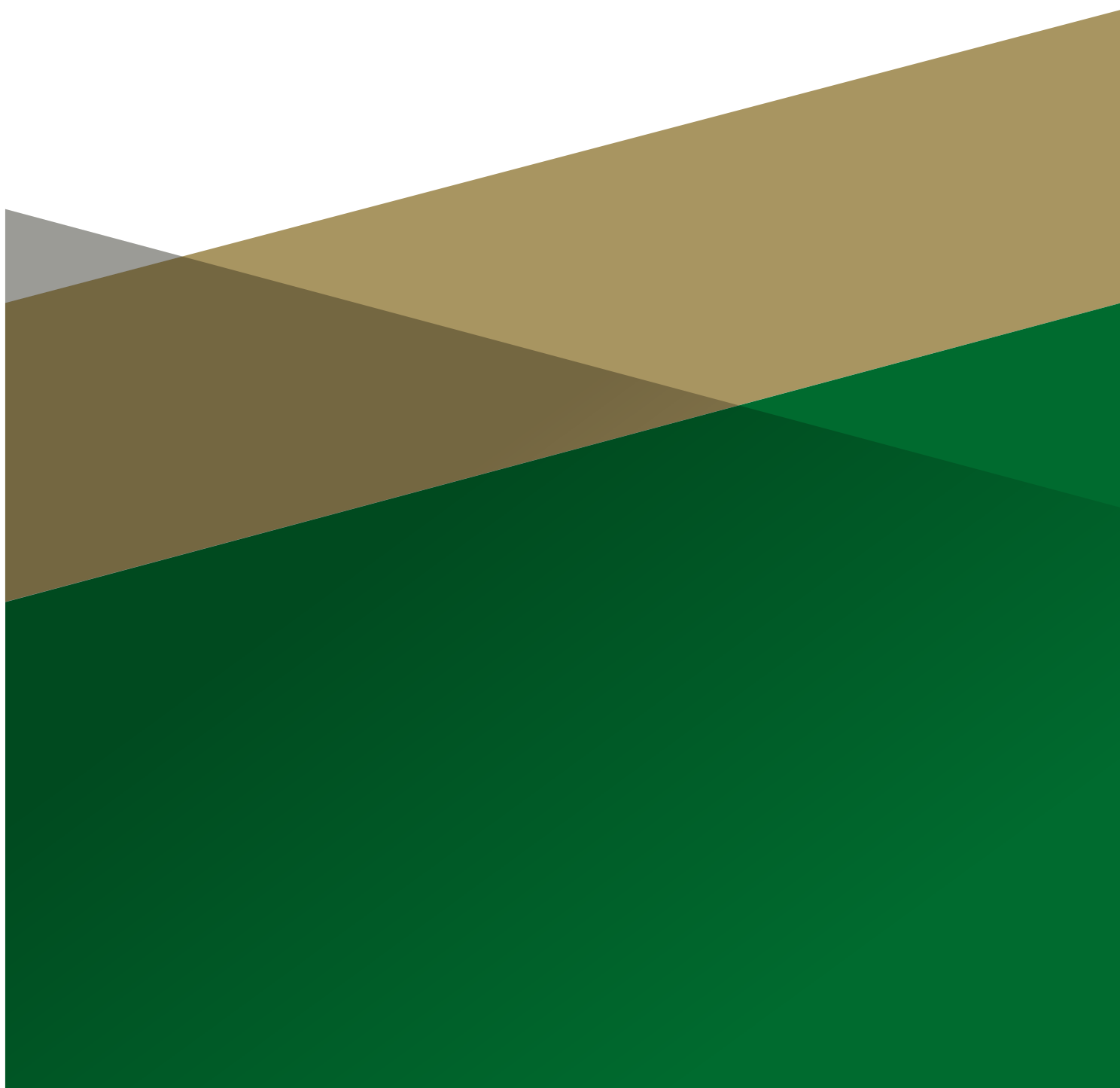




An Roinn Gnóthai Eachtracha
Department of Foreign Affairs

2022 Annual Report



Department of Foreign Affairs

Mission:

The mission of the Department of Foreign Affairs is to serve the Irish people, promote their values and advance their prosperity and interests abroad, and to provide the Government with the capabilities, analysis and influence to ensure that Ireland derives the maximum benefit from all areas of its external engagement.

Values:

The organisational values of the Department of Foreign Affairs are:

- » Diversity;
- » Integrity;
- » Leadership;
- » Service;
- » Excellence.

Foreword

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Micheál Martin T.D.

2022 was a year of marked challenge for Ireland, Europe, and the world. As the world was emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic, Russia's unprovoked and illegal invasion of Ukraine in February undermined the rules based order and triggered further global instability.

In response, Ireland stood with Ukraine. Working with our partners in Europe and at the UN, Ireland provided financial and political support to the Ukrainian government and contributed to international efforts to alleviate the impact of Russia's actions on other countries. At the same time, we worked intensively to get Irish citizens caught up in the conflict to safety, welcomed thousands of Ukrainian refugees to Ireland, and strongly supported the granting of EU candidate status to Ukraine.

Ireland also worked to hold Russia accountable for its actions. We supported the unprecedented sanctions packages adopted by the European Council against the Russian government, and individuals and businesses which support Russia's war. Ireland was one of 43 states who referred Russia to the International Criminal Court. I travelled to Ukraine in July of 2022, visiting three towns which had been the subject of Russian atrocities. It is essential, for the victims of these atrocities, and for all the victims of Russia's aggression, that we as a Department and as a nation continue to support Ukraine.

Our support for Ukraine is shaped by our values, which guide our foreign policy. 2022 marked the second and final year of Ireland's latest term on the United Nations Security Council. During this time, working with the US, we successfully initiated and led negotiations to introduce an exemption from UN sanctions regimes for humanitarian activities ensuring that humanitarian operators can continue their vital work. We led negotiations for the renewal of the mandate of Operation Althea, the UN-backed EU-led military mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and, alongside Norway, we secured the renewal of the Syria humanitarian cross-border resolution. In addition, we continued work on other priorities including mainstreaming the Women, Peace, and Security agenda, demanding accountability in Afghanistan, bringing attention to the conflict in Ethiopia, and putting a spotlight on the targeting of journalists around the world.



Tánaiste, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Micheál Martin TD © DFA

At a critical juncture for the organisation, Ireland also held the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe from May to November 2022, and made a significant contribution including the launch of a High Level Reflection Group that led to only the fourth Summit of Heads of State in the Council's history in Reykjavik in 2023. In 2022 Ireland celebrated the 50th anniversary of its admission to the EU. We marked EU50 with a range of initiatives, including schools outreach, lecture series, exhibitions, and conferences. The programme concluded earlier this year.

On this island, my Department engaged closely with the political parties in the North to restore the institutions of the Good Friday Agreement, after the Northern Ireland Assembly election in May. While political progress was slow, we continued to engage intensively and constructively with community groups in the North, including by providing support through the Shared Island Initiative and the Reconciliation Fund. We also continued to lead at EU level, advancing our values and interests.

Our Passport Service provided outstanding customer service, as it overcame a delayed demand from the pandemic to deliver over 1 million passports in a single year for the first time, and Irish citizens abroad continued to receive exceptional support from our Consular Service.

As challenging as 2022 was, regrettably it foreshadowed further challenges to come in 2023 that we continue to contend with today. I am proud to say, however, that across the world this Department and its staff have served, and continue to serve, with integrity, perseverance, and courage on behalf of Ireland and its citizens.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Micheál Martin".

Micheál Martin T.D.
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Foreword

Secretary General,
Joe Hackett

2022 was a turbulent and challenging year internationally and accordingly for this Department

As we emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic and, together with the rest of the civil service, refined new ways of working, we had to leverage our full organisational capacity to respond to Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine and its many consequences. This meant both assisting Ukraine and ensuring our staff could work effectively and safely in Kyiv. Our team in Kyiv showed great resolve, resilience and compassion assisting Irish citizens in Ukraine and were able to return to Kyiv in August 2022. The same qualities were also demonstrated by colleagues at HQ and across the mission network who assisted with our response to Russia's illegal invasion.

Kyiv is one of the many new missions opened under the Global Ireland strategy. In 2022 we continued to deepen our diplomatic footprint adding three more consulates general - in Lyon, Miami, and Toronto. These new missions will all play crucial roles in developing our relationships, advancing our interests and improving our engagement with Irish communities.

At home, the Passport Service, for the first time in the history of the state, issued over 1 million passports in a single year. This remarkable achievement was made possible by meeting demand delayed by the pandemic with technological and organisational innovation, and above all the hard work of the staff in all our passport offices.



Secretary General, Joe Hackett © DFA

In 2022 we continued efforts to make the Department of Foreign Affairs a great place to work. This year saw the launch of the Department's first Gender, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan. This Action Plan details the actions we are taking to create a Department that is truly representative of the people of Ireland, and to create an environment where everyone is comfortable bringing their authentic selves to work. In 2022, the government appointed a record number of female Heads of Mission; for the first time, the majority of Ireland's Heads of Missions are now women.

The ability to work so effectively in such challenging circumstances demonstrates once more the capacity and dedication of those working for this Department, as well as their families. I am confident that we will continue to make progress in building Ireland's presence on the global stage, and that we will continue promote and protect Irish citizens and Irish interests abroad and respond to crises with fortitude, compassion, and empathy, in the years ahead.

Joe Hackett
Secretary General



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Delivering for Ireland – implementing our Statement of Strategy



The Department's Statement of Strategy 2021-23 focused on how we implement the commitments assigned to us in the Programme for Government: Our Shared Future and meet international challenges. This work is divided across 5 High Level Goals:



OUR PEOPLE:

To serve our people at home and abroad and to promote reconciliation and cooperation



OUR EUROPE:

To advance Ireland's interests, influence and values in our shared Europe



OUR VALUES:

To work for a fairer, just, secure and sustainable world



OUR PROSPERITY:

To advance Ireland's prosperity by extending our influence and promoting our interests internationally



OUR EFFECTIVENESS:

To strengthen our effectiveness and capacity to deliver on our goals

2022 At a Glance

Over
1 million
passports issued



Consular assistance provided to
1,504
people



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

€632 million
managed by Irish Aid



3
new
missions
opened

Ireland's Response to the Invasion of Ukraine



Responding to the Invasion of Ukraine

Following several months of tension caused by a Russian military build-up at Ukraine's borders and in non-Government controlled areas of Ukraine and the occupied peninsula of Crimea, Russian forces launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in the early hours of 24 February 2022. Over the subsequent ten months of 2022, as Ukraine fought to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity, Ireland has consistently called on Russia to uphold its obligations under international law, end its aggression against Ukraine and unconditionally withdraw its forces from within Ukraine's internationally recognised borders. We worked together with EU and UN partners to ensure a robust response to this flagrant violation of the UN Charter. Ireland's support, both bilaterally and through the EU, has been steadfast, unwavering and multifaceted.

Sanctions

Over the course of 2022, the EU adopted an unprecedented range of sanctions in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The restrictive measures introduced included extensive import and export bans, travel bans, asset freezes, transport bans and media restrictions. The sanctions are intended to reduce Russia's economic and industrial base and to limit its ability to fund its illegal activities in Ukraine. Sectors of the Russian economy targeted by sanctions include energy exports and its defence and technology sectors. By the end of December 2022, travel bans and asset freezes had been applied to a total of 1,386 individuals and 172 entities in Russia. These listings included oligarchs, military figures, Russian banks, defence and industrial companies, media groups responsible for disinformation, and political parties and members of the Russian Duma. Ireland froze €1.76 billion of funds belonging to these individuals and entities in that time. Ireland continues to consistently support strong sanctions against Russia that are effectively implemented.



Then Taoiseach Micheál Martin TD, meeting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, July 2022
© Government of Ireland

European Peace Facility

While Ireland is militarily neutral, the Government has been clear that Ireland is not politically neutral in terms of our response to Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war against Ukraine. Together with other EU partners, we remain strongly committed to supporting Ukraine in defence of its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity in the face of ongoing Russian aggression. At EU level, and in this context, we joined other Member States in agreeing approximately €3 billion in support to Ukraine under the European Peace Facility (EPF). In line with the Programme for Government, Ireland's support for Ukraine under the EPF is directly solely towards non-lethal assistance. In this regard, as of 31 December 2022, our contribution now stands at approximately €66 million and helps to supply items such as medical equipment, food, personal protective equipment and fuel. Ireland also joined with other EU Member States in agreeing the establishment of an EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine) to provide specialised training to the Ukrainian Armed Forces and coordinate existing Member State training activities.

Support for Ukraine's candidate status on their path to EU membership

In February 2022, Ukraine applied to become a member of the European Union. In June 2022, the European Council decided to grant candidate status to Ukraine. The Council noted that it would decide on further steps once the conditions specified in the Commission's opinion on the membership application had been fully met. Ireland strongly supported the decision to grant candidate status to Ukraine, which was an important demonstration of the EU's solidarity with Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression, and confirmation that Ukraine's future lies within the EU.

Accountability

Ireland has been at the forefront of international efforts to pursue accountability for breaches of international law arising from Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Ireland was one of 43 states to refer the situation in Ukraine to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2022, enabling the ICC Prosecutor to immediately commence his investigations into alleged crimes on Ukrainian territory. Ireland co-sponsored a UN Human Rights Council resolution establishing an Independent International Commission of Inquiry to investigate violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law in the context of Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

In February 2022, Ukraine instituted proceedings against Russia before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) under the Genocide Convention, claiming that Russia had used a false allegation of genocide as a pretext for its invasion of Ukraine. All states that are parties to the Genocide Convention, including Ireland, were entitled to intervene. Ireland filed an intervention in September 2022, arguing that the ICJ has jurisdiction in the case, and that the use of force by Russia on the pretext of a false allegation of genocide in Ukraine is a serious violation of the Genocide Convention. Thirty-two other states also filed interventions, the highest number of states to join another state's claim in an ICJ case. Ireland's intervention in this case is a demonstration of its determination to ensure accountability for serious breaches of international law, including abuse of the Genocide Convention as a pretext for the illegal use of force against Ukraine, as well as a demonstration of its solidarity with Ukraine. The proceedings continued into 2023.

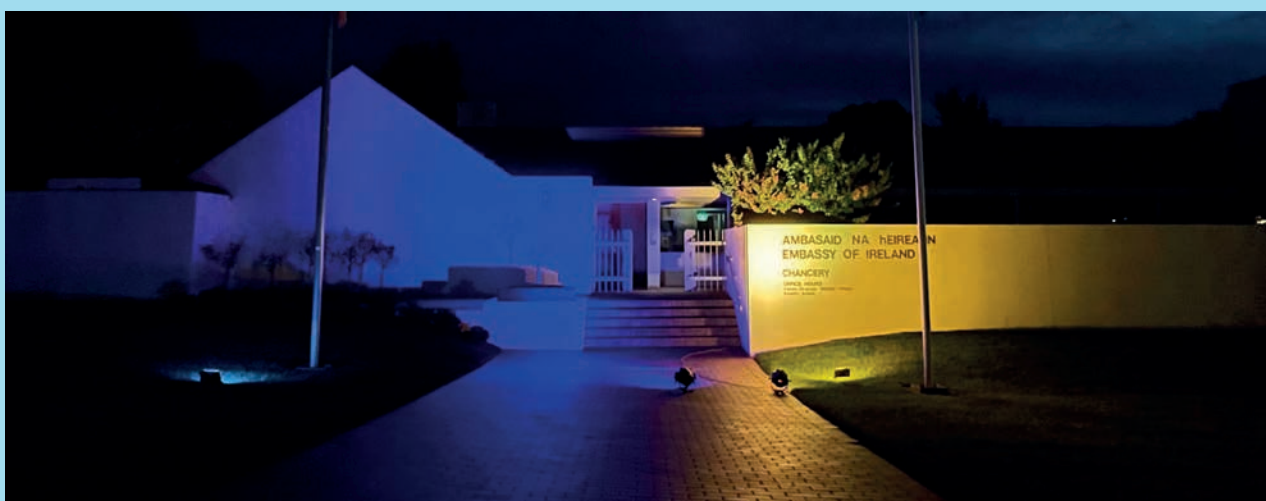


Then Taoiseach Micheál Martin TD visiting Bucha, Ukraine, July 2022
© Government of Ireland

Humanitarian support

Ireland was among the first countries to provide humanitarian support to those fleeing the war, with a significant aid package announced on the first day of the invasion, subsequently increased to €20 million. This package included support for the International Committee of the Red Cross/Crescent and their operations on the ground, funding for the UN's response to the influx of refugees into neighbouring countries, assistance for Irish-based NGOs in partnership with local civil society in Ukraine, support to the WHO to provide critical medical supplies, as well as other key UN actors providing a humanitarian response to the war. In line with Ireland's focus on gender, we also provided funding to UNFPA, focusing on sexual and reproductive health (SRH), including maternal and new-born health, and protection from gender-based violence, predominantly for women and girls, and the most vulnerable.

Ireland worked closely with our partners in the EU to coordinate efforts. The EU and its Member States, including Ireland, collectively provided in-kind assistance worth €527 million through the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM), and €485 million in humanitarian assistance to Ukraine in 2022. This represents the largest ever operation under the UCPM. Ireland's rapid response roster was activated, with eight rapid responders being deployed to work with UN agencies in the region and 5,000 thermal blankets were dispatched to Moldova to support the winterisation response for refugees from Ukraine.



In solidarity with Ukraine, Government Buildings at home and abroad were lit in blue and yellow for St Patrick's Day, 2022. Leinster House and Embassy of Ireland, Canberra are shown above © DFA

Financial support

In addition to humanitarian support, Ireland has also provided financial support to Ukraine both bilaterally and through the EU budget. Additional funding by the Department of Foreign Affairs for Ukraine in 2022 included:

- » €25 million in stabilisation support, consisting of:
 - €20 million to the World Bank Group for the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Co-financing of the Public Expenditures for Administrative Capacity Endurance (PEACE) in Ukraine;
 - €4 million to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Small Business Impact Fund;
 - €1 million to the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) Ukraine Solidarity Fund.
- » €1 million disbursed to the Office of the Prosecutor General of the International Criminal Court, to support ongoing investigations, including with regard to Ukraine. This is part of an overall €3 million commitment by Ireland to the ICC over a number of years;
- » €0.52 million disbursed to NGOs and Regional Organisations working in Ukraine;
- » €0.61 million disbursed in relation to the OSCE programmes in Ukraine;

A variety of in-kind assistance has been provided from across government, including medical supplies such as ambulances, blood bags, and personal protective equipment, ready-to-eat meals, body armour, and energy network items. Ireland also welcomed over 75,000 Ukrainians under the Temporary Protection Directive in 2022.

Return of Embassy staff to Kyiv

The Embassy of Ireland to Ukraine resumed operations in Kyiv in August 2022, having operated remotely since the full-scale invasion in February. A key priority for the Embassy team on their return was to renew and rebuild their network of contacts with Ukrainian government officials, to better inform Ireland's provision of support and assistance to the government and people of Ukraine.

Visits

Then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Simon Coveney T.D. visited Kyiv in April 2022, in the first visit of a Foreign Minister of a UN Security Council member to Ukraine since the invasion. The focus of Minister Coveney's visit was on how Ireland could continue to provide political, security and humanitarian support to Ukraine, and how Ireland could assist Ukraine in its application for EU candidate status. During the visit, and in response to the essential need for accountability for the appalling acts committed during the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Minister Coveney announced €3 million in funding to the International Criminal Court (ICC), €1 million of which was disbursed immediately to the Office of the Prosecutor.

Then Taoiseach Micheál Martin T.D. visited Kyiv in July 2022, the first visit of a Taoiseach since Ireland established diplomatic relations with Ukraine in 1992. While in Kyiv, the Taoiseach met with President Zelenskyy and with Prime Minister Shmyhal, visited three towns that had been the sites of war atrocities by Russian forces, and visited an exhibition depicting the impact of the war on civilians, including children. The Taoiseach placed a wreath at Ukraine's national memorial to its famine of 1932-3 (the Holodomor), and visited a photo exhibition at the Kyiv train station depicting the mass evacuation of people to safety. The Taoiseach also met with members of the Irish community in Kyiv.

Minister Coveney visited Ukraine again in September 2022, when he travelled to Odesa to review the implementation of the Black Sea Grain Initiative ahead of the UN High-Level Week and discussed efforts to export grain and other crops from Ukraine in a bid to ease the global food crisis. Minister Coveney was in Ukraine with his Lithuanian counterpart, Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis and they both took the opportunity to meet with Ukraine's Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba to reiterate continued support for Ukraine and staunch opposition to Russia's illegal invasion.

Action at the UN

At the UN Security Council, and elsewhere, Ireland delivered consistent, principled and powerful criticism of Russia's war, and defence of the UN Charter and the people of Ukraine. In April, Minister Coveney brought eyewitness testimony of massacres in Bucha to the Security Council table. In September, during UN High-Level Week, the Minister underlined the importance of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, following his visit to the port of Odesa with Ukraine's Foreign Minister.

Ireland consistently held Russia to account for their illegal invasion and use of disinformation on the Security Council. Ireland co-sponsored five UN General Assembly resolutions in response to the invasion, condemning Russia's aggression; calling for humanitarian access; voting to exclude Russia from the Human Rights Council; condemning the illegal so-called referendums in the occupied parts of Ukraine and subsequent illegal annexations; and recognising the need for an international mechanism for reparations for Ukraine.

OSCE

Ireland's work at the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 2022 was strongly focused on the response to Russia's full-scale war in Ukraine:

Ireland supported a new OSCE programme in Ukraine addressing the immediate challenges to civilians posed by the war. Ireland also contributed to accountability efforts in respect of Ukraine by invoking, together with other participating States, the OSCE Moscow Mechanism which tasked independent experts with examining and reporting on human rights violations. Other examples of OSCE work supported by Ireland included projects assessing the environmental impacts of the war in Ukraine, combating human trafficking, strengthening gender equality across the OSCE region and the intersections between gender and national minorities.



Minister Simon Coveney TD addresses the UN Security Council meeting on maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine, September 2022 © UN Photo/Loey Felipe

Belarus

Following the fraudulent 2020 elections and the violent suppression of protests, the human rights situation in Belarus continued to deteriorate in 2022. Belarus has also been complicit in Russian military aggression in Ukraine, allowing Russian troops to be stationed and Russian missiles to be fired from its territory. Ireland took an active role in the EU's response to the actions of Alexander Lukashenko's regime in Belarus. This included supporting extensive EU sanctions. The EU introduced further restrictions to the trade of certain goods. The new measures prohibited the export of dual-use goods and technology, or goods and technology which might contribute to Belarus's military, technological, defence and security development. Subsequent measures targeted the Belarusian financial sector and road transport operators. The restrictions also included additional listings of individuals and entities subject to travel bans and asset freezes. The EU also imposed restrictive measures on individuals and entities involved in the ongoing internal repression and human rights abuses in Belarus. The listings included high-ranking state officials, businesspeople and their families, members of the judicial sector, and prominent propagandists.

Ireland has been vocal in condemning the brutal repression and the politically motivated trials aimed at silencing any independent voices and closing all remaining space for democratic debate in Belarus. Across multilateral fora we raised attacks targeting civil society, pro-democratic movements, human rights defenders, journalists, and independent trade unions members as well as violations of the right to a fair trial, the use of torture and numerous acts of intimidation of those in the Belarusian regime's detention.

Ireland has provided support to Belarusian civil society, democratic forces and independent media, including:

- » €150,000 to support the continued operations of Tut.by, formerly the most popular online news portal in Belarus. The portal had its credentials revoked in 2020 as part of Alexander Lukashenko's crackdown on independent journalism;
- » €50,000 to support the work of the International Accountability Platform for Belarus (IAPB) a coalition of independent NGOs working to collect, consolidate, verify, and preserve evidence of human rights violations allegedly perpetrated by the Belarusian authorities.

Moldova

Moldova was significantly affected by the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, with the conflict placing pressure on the finances and resources of the Moldovan Government. Moldova was also the country most affected on a per capita basis by the refugee crisis of any of Ukraine's neighbours and saw a significant influx of Ukrainians enter the country.

Minister Coveney visited Moldova twice, in July and September, when he met with his counterpart, Foreign Minister Popescu. In recognition of the disproportionate adverse effects of Russian military aggression, Ireland in December provided €5 million in support to Moldova to help mitigate the impact of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine on Moldova.

In June 2022, the European Council decided to grant EU Member State candidate status to Moldova (along with Ukraine). The Council stated that it would decide on further steps once Moldova fulfils the conditions outlined in the European Commission's opinion on its EU membership application. As with the decision to grant candidate status to Ukraine, Ireland strongly supported the decision to grant candidate status to Moldova, confirming that its futures lies within the European Union.

Then Minister of State Thomas Byrne T.D. represented Ireland at the Moldova Support Platform Conference in Paris on 21 November 2022. The Conference brought together Ministers and representatives from 36 states and 15 international organisations and the aim was to demonstrate international solidarity with Moldova and to pledge further, specific assistance to help Moldova overcome the immense challenges it faces, particularly in the wake of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. At the Conference, Minister of State Byrne announced the additional €5 million in assistance for Moldova via the World Bank Multi-Donor Trust Fund.

Global Ireland: Ireland's Global Footprint to 2025



Expanding Ireland's footprint overseas

Further progress was made in the expansion of Ireland's footprint overseas in 2022 with the opening of three new missions in Lyon, Miami and Toronto. The Government also approved the opening of missions in Milan, Munich and Islamabad. A core focus for DFA under the Global Ireland strategy has been for missions to adopt an integrated 'Team Ireland' model, working in close cooperation with State Agencies and other Government Departments to strengthen Ireland's international reputation. The expansion of Ireland's mission network has helped the Government assist and provide support to Irish citizens and business interests abroad. For example, the new Consulate General in Lyon hosted the launch of Network Irlande's Lyon branch as well as the AGM of the Association Franco-Irlandaise de Lyon.



Consulate General, Lyon hosted the launch of Network Irlande's Lyon branch © DFA

Global Ireland Schools Project

As part of the Government's Global Ireland Programme, the Department of Foreign Affairs is leading an initiative to bring Irish diplomats and peacekeepers to secondary schools to stimulate debate on Ireland's changing role in the world, highlight the importance of our UN and EU membership, and engage students in a discussion of Ireland in the world.

To mark and celebrate 50 years of EU membership, the 2022 Global Ireland Schools programme adopted an EU focus. For the first time in two years, Heads of Mission from across our European mission network returned to Ireland to engage with students on issues relating to our membership of the European Union and what that means for them as European citizens.



The 2022 Global Ireland Schools programme adopted an EU focus with Heads of Mission from across our European mission network visiting secondary schools to celebrate EU50 © DFA

US & Canada

In 2022, the Department, particularly through its twelve missions across the US and Canada, continued to work on strengthening and deepening the unique and close bilateral relationships with both the US and Canada. In November a mid-term review of Ireland's Strategy for the US & Canada 2019-2025 was brought to Government, noting achievements to date and outlining the direction for the remainder of the strategy.



Increased High Level Visits

Further easing of COVID-19 travel restrictions allowed for an increase in high-level visits both to and from the US and Canada, including the return of a full programme of in-person St. Patrick's Day visits to the US & Canada. In total in 2022, the Taoiseach and seven Ministers travelled to key locations across the US and Canada in March. In Washington D.C. the Taoiseach undertook the traditional St. Patrick's Day programme including a range of high-level political and cultural engagements. In Canada Minister McGrath visited Vancouver for a series of cultural, business and political engagements. Other Ministerial visits to the US in 2022 included Minister Coveney's visit to New York in March for a series of political and UN Security Council engagements, Minister Donohoe's visit to Washington DC in May for a series of political engagements, Minister of State Byrne to New York and Chicago, and Minister of State Chambers to Los Angeles. In August, Minister of State Heydon visited Milwaukee and Chicago for two of the premier cultural events in the US that celebrate our diaspora: the Milwaukee Irish Fest and the US GAA National Finals.

Inward visits of political leaders from the US also resumed following the lifting of COVID-19 travel restrictions in 2022 including two Congressional Delegations: one led by Representative Richie Neal in May and the other led by Rep. Bill Keating in November. Other US inward visits included the Governors of New Jersey, Maryland, Nebraska and Missouri, and US Senator Baldwin. From Canada we welcomed the Premiers of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador.



Ministers welcomed two US Congressional Delegations to Ireland in 2022 © DFA

Opening of CGs Miami and Toronto

The opening of our new Consulates General in Miami and Toronto, as committed to under Ireland's Strategy for the US & Canada 2019-2025, was a significant achievement in 2022. Established as part of the Government's Global Ireland programme, these two new Consulates bring Ireland's footprint in the US and Canada to twelve diplomatic missions in total, and are intended to contribute to the overall goal of doubling Ireland's impact abroad by 2025. Consulate General Miami will prioritise economic relations with Florida and the fast-growing Southeastern region of the US, as well as the development of Ireland's relationships with Spanish-speaking communities in the region. Support for Ireland's engagement in the Caribbean region will also be based at Consulate General Miami. Our new Consulate in Toronto will allow Ireland to deepen our relationship with Canada's largest province, Ontario, as well as covering Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The Consulate's priorities include servicing Toronto's large and growing Irish diaspora, as well as deepening our economic relationships in the Greater Toronto Area. Consulate General Toronto will also serve as a platform for Ireland's engagement with Toronto as the premier hub for Canadian culture.

People-to-people links

The lifting of US testing requirements in June 2022 opened the door for increased travel between Ireland and US. The US Summer J1 programme returned with high numbers participating, and almost 600 working holiday applications were processed by our missions for those coming to Ireland from both the US and Canada.

Ireland's unique historical connections with Newfoundland, Canada were celebrated by the Tánaiste in September 2022, with the launch of The Mannion Collection website; a digitised collection recording emigration from Ireland's South-East to Canada between 1750 and 1850. This project was supported by the Department's Emigrant Support Programme over 3 years.



The Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean to 2025 was launched in a virtual event broadcast from Iveagh House, February 2022 © DFA

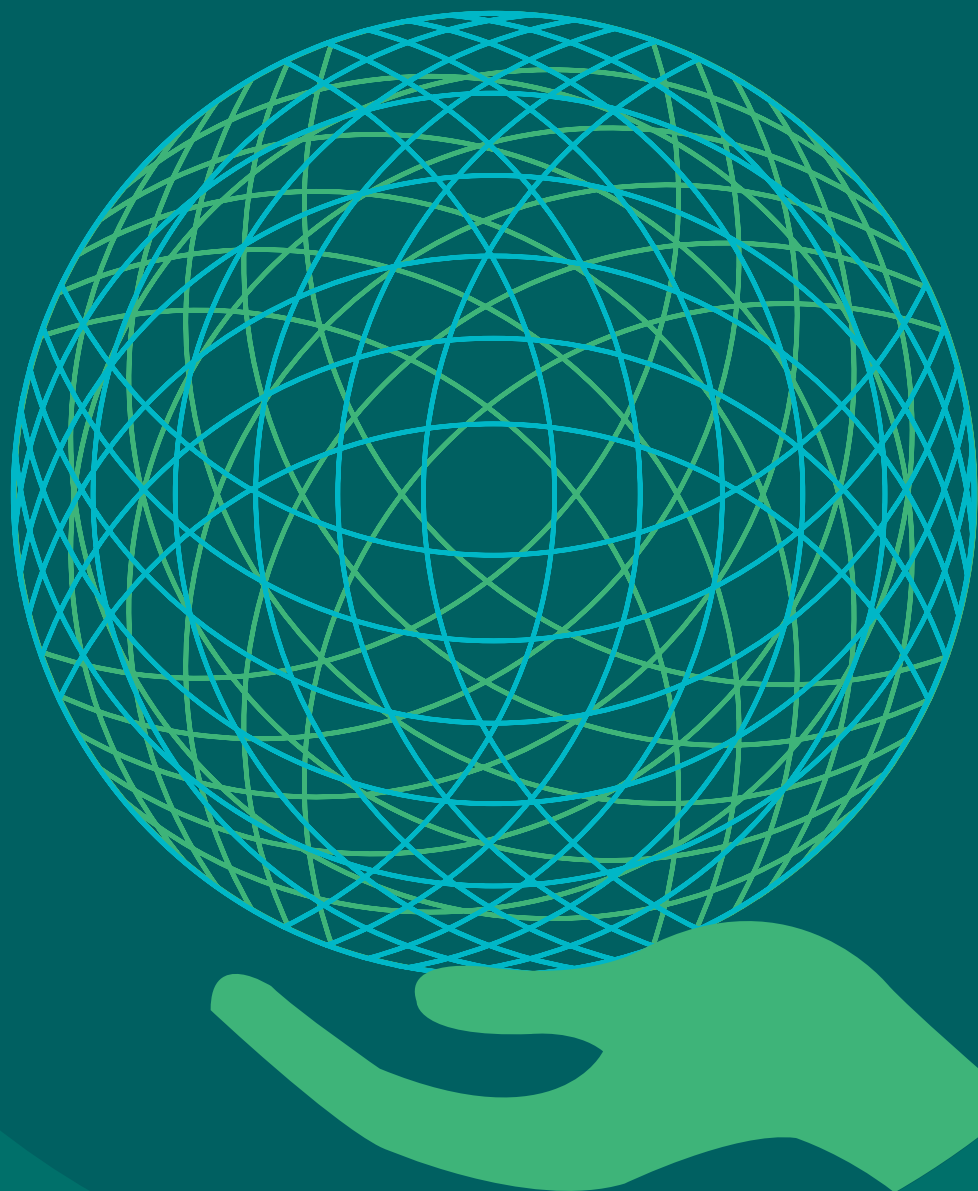
Latin America and the Caribbean Strategy

The Government's first-ever Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean to 2025 was launched in a virtual event broadcast from Iveagh House in Dublin in February 2022.

The Latin America and Caribbean Strategy is a key commitment under the current Programme for Government and the Global Ireland Strategy. It is the first-ever Irish Strategy for this key region, which is home to 650 million people and generates billions of euro per annum in trade with Irish companies. The new Strategy provided a strong framework for deepening our bilateral and multilateral relations with Latin American and Caribbean partners throughout 2022.

Activities under the auspices of the Strategy in 2022 included twelve high-level inward and outward visits to/ from the Latin America and Caribbean region, including then Tánaiste Leo Varadkar's visit to Chile and Colombia for Saint Patrick's Day, and the visit of former Vice President of Colombia, Marta Lucia Ramirez, to Ireland in April 2022. Some other examples of the many initiatives carried out in 2022 under the Strategy include: the granting of Observer Status to Ireland before the Pacific Alliance; the launch and inward visit of the Ireland-Chile Chamber of Commerce; the holding of panel events on rural development/ peacebuilding in Colombia, and the history of Ireland-Argentina relations; the allocation of additional funding through Ireland's Stability Fund to projects in the region; the launch of the Irish Stories in Latin America educational resource pack; the approval of the establishment of regional offices for the Central America and Caribbean regions; the appointment of a Cultural Attaché for the region; the launch of the pilot year of the Irish Aid *Ireland Fellows Programme - Latin America*; and the establishment of the Ireland-Colombia, Ireland-Argentina and the Ireland-Mexico Parliamentary Friendship Groups.

**Goal 1 - Our People:
To serve our people at
home and abroad and to
promote reconciliation
and cooperation**



Advancing North-South and East-West Relations

The Government continued to work towards the goal set out in the Programme for Government, to build on the foundations laid in the Good Friday Agreement to deepen peace and prosperity in Northern Ireland, and to strengthen our bilateral relations with our closest neighbour.

NORTH-SOUTH

In 2022 successful visits to Northern Ireland were made by the Taoiseach, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and other members of the Cabinet. During these visits the Government met with a broad range of partners from civil society, political representatives, and the British Government.

Following the Northern Ireland Assembly election in May 2022, and the failure of the parties to form an Assembly and an Executive, the Department has continued to engage closely with the Northern Ireland parties and the British Government with a view to restoring the institutions of the Good Friday Agreement.

The British Government's Legacy Bill continued to progress through the legislative process in 2022. The Department engaged extensively with victims groups and stakeholders across Northern Ireland. Furthermore, the Department worked to voice the Government's strenuous opposition to the Bill, across the mission network including in Britain and the United States, as well as at multilateral bodies at the Council of Europe.

Ongoing political challenges in Northern Ireland, and the absence for much of the year of the Northern Ireland Executive, prevented any meetings of the North South

Ministerial Council from taking place in 2022. However, meetings between officials, North and South, continued throughout the year, as did the important work of the North South Implementation Bodies, which operate under the auspices of the Council. Practical initiatives previously agreed under the framework of the NSMC also continued to operate and deliver significant benefits for people and communities on both sides of the border throughout 2022.

The Government continued to make progress under the commitments that it made under the New Decade, New Approach agreement. Included among these were increased funding for reconciliation through the Department's Reconciliation Fund to €5 million in 2022, an increase from €2.7 million in previous years.

The Reconciliation Fund's Strategic Partnerships scheme was launched in 2022 to provide multi-annual funding for organisations working to enhance long-term peace-building and reconciliation efforts. Twenty-three organisations were designated as Strategic Partners of the Reconciliation Fund for a 3-year period.

In 2022, the Reconciliation Fund supported over 141 initiatives, across both annual and multi-annual grants.

The Reconciliation Fund Networking Forum returned in 2022, taking place on the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Fund. More than 80 community and voluntary organisations from across the island attended to network and reflect on the future opportunities of peace-building in Northern Ireland.

The Government progressed a wide range of projects through the Shared Island Initiative in 2022, including the development of the Shared Island Civic Society Fund to strengthen cross-border civic engagement across a range of sectors and themes, which was launched in January 2023.



The Reconciliation Fund has supported the Shankill Women's Centre in their work with women in the local community © DFA



Then Taoiseach Micheál Martin TD with Mayor Andy Burnham and Mayor Steve Rotheram © DFA

EAST-WEST

Major outward and inward visits were among the highlights of British Irish Relations in 2022.

During the St Patrick's Day period, the Taoiseach and the Minister for Finance visited London, while the Minister of State for Financial Services travelled to Scotland and the North of England. Later in the year the Tánaiste led an Enterprise Ireland Trade Mission to Farnborough International Air Show and to London. Ireland also welcomed the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall to Tipperary and Waterford and the Mayors of Greater Manchester and the Liverpool City Region to Dublin. The President, the Taoiseach and the Tánaiste conveyed Ireland's condolences on the passing of Queen Elizabeth II on 8 September, and the President and the Taoiseach attended her State funeral. Welsh First Minister, Mark Drakeford, attended the Ireland-Wales Forum in Cork in October.



British Royals, Then Prince Charles and Camilla visit Ireland in 2022 © DFA

Throughout the year, we continued to make full use of East West institutions of the Good Friday Agreement, the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference (BIIGC) and the British-Irish Council (BIC). BIIGC meetings took place in Dublin in March and in London in October, and were co-chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. The Taoiseach attended the British-Irish Council summit in Guernsey in July, and in Blackpool in November, when he also met with the British Prime Minister.

British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly plenary meetings were held in London and Cavan and were especially important for sustaining parliamentary engagement in the immediate post-Brexit period.

Implementation of the bilateral frameworks in place with Scotland and Wales continued apace. Summer 2022 saw a strong focus on cultural outreach in Scotland and a significant Team Ireland approach to showcasing Irish performing arts at the Edinburgh Festivals. Later in the year, the Minister for Foreign Affairs welcomed the First Minister of Wales and other Welsh Ministers to Dublin and Cork for the second Ireland Wales Forum.

Consular Directorate

CONSULAR ASSISTANCE

The Department of Foreign Affairs provided consular assistance in over 1,500 new cases in 2022. These cases included arrest, mental health concerns, death and serious injury. The Department responded to an increase in both the volume and complexity of cases in 2022, particularly given the greater diversity of locations in which Irish citizens are now living and travelling to. There was a 21% increase in new consular cases recorded in 2022 and a 55% increase in deaths abroad. There were also notable increases in forced marriage cases and complications resulting from medical and cosmetic tourism.

The Department also continued to support citizens impacted by consular crises overseas in 2022, by alerting them in a proactive way to risks and by putting in place a dedicated consular crisis response where necessary. In particular, the Department provided significant levels of consular support to citizens impacted by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This included the provision of consular assistance and support to more than 160 citizens as they departed Ukraine in February and March 2022 by the Embassy of Ireland in Kyiv and by our Embassies in neighbouring countries.

New Consular Cases 2022

Arrests	141
Parental Child Abduction	15
Child Welfare	25
Deaths Abroad	340
Deportations	20
Medical	288
Mental Health	57
Missing Person	51
Other	220
Detention	26
Repatriation (Welfare)	13
Victims of Crime	96
Welfare	164
COVID-19 Related Assistance	48
Total	1504



Panel discussion at the DFA Consular Forum 2022 © DFA

CONSULAR SERVICES

Through Consular Services, incorporating the Authentication and Apostille Unit and the Marriages Abroad Unit, essential services are provided to citizens, as well as customers in business, education and legal settings.

Statistics for 2022:

- » Civil letters of freedom issued to citizens marrying abroad: 3,244
- » Apostille and authentication stamps issued: 54,713

Due to the gradual lifting of COVID-19 restrictions throughout 2022, the public office of the Authentications Unit reopened. The success of the postal service continued, with approximately 50% of applications received through the postal service. 2023 expects to see an increase in the number of applicants presenting to the public counters in both Dublin and Cork.

A dramatic reduction in turnaround times in the postal service was seen, with a fall from 30 working days to less than 5 working days. The in-person while-you-wait service was successfully relaunched, with excellent customer feedback received from customers and stakeholders alike.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND OUTREACH

With international travel rebounding strongly in 2022, demand for the Department's travel advice (www.dfa.ie/travel) remained high. Throughout the year, our advice for almost 200 countries and territories was continually updated, receiving approximately 5 million visits. The International Travel Unit continued to operate a citizen correspondence service, replying to thousands of phone and email queries from the public in a timely manner.

As restrictions on international travel eased in 2022, the Department executed a summer communications campaign around safe travel, aiming to prepare Irish citizens planning holidays abroad, many for the first time since before the COVID-19 pandemic. The campaign focused around the theme of 'Know Before You Go', encouraging citizens to be aware of our travel advice, COVID-19 entry requirements, the importance of travel insurance, and consular supports available in case of an emergency. Results of the campaign were positive, with a wide reach of 13.7 million impressions.

The International Travel and Outreach Unit expanded its public outreach activities in 2022, representing Consular Directorate at the National Ploughing Championships from 20-22 September as part of the Department's 'Global Ireland' presence. Travel advice was provided to many citizens attending the event and the work of the Department in this area was promoted.

Travel also featured prominently at the Consular Forum in October, with an overarching theme of 'Travelling and Living Overseas in Times of Change'.

4.9 million
visits to the Department's
Travel Advice



3,670
updates to the
Travel Advice

6,015
calls dealt with on
Travel Advice phone line



8,505
emails sent to citizens
from dedicated
Travel Advice mailbox

HONORARY CONSUL NETWORK

Ireland's diplomatic missions were ably assisted by a network of over 90 Honorary Consuls in 2022. Our Honorary Consuls form a core part of Team Ireland abroad, supporting our mission network in delivering consular support to Irish citizens, and in representing Ireland abroad.

While the role and functions performed by Honorary Consuls can vary, they are generally appointed to provide consular services and assistance to Irish citizens in their area of accreditation, including in emergency situations. They act as a focal point for the local Irish community, particularly in countries where there is no resident diplomatic mission. They also support missions and the relevant state agencies in establishing connections to key local stakeholders, in areas such as business, politics, culture and education.

In 2022, a new Honorary Consul was appointed in Barcelona, Spain.

VISA SERVICE

The Department's diplomatic missions play an important role in delivering Ireland's visa services abroad, in partnership with the Department of Justice which has responsibility for visa policy. The visa service is a significant factor in facilitating inward travel to Ireland by citizens of countries deemed to be visa required, for many purposes including tourism, employment, education, business and visiting/joining family members. Having reduced significantly in 2020 and 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic, volumes increased again in 2022 as restrictions eased and global travel resumed, with a total of 127,760 visa applications being decided. This figure represents visa applications processed across the global service in 2022, and include those processed in the Department of Justice Visa Office in Dublin, the vast majority of which also originate abroad via an Irish Embassy or Honorary Consul.

Passport Service

In 2022, the Passport Service encountered a surge in applications, as a result of pent-up demand for travel following two years of pandemic-related restrictions. Despite the high level of demand, the Passport Service restored full, normal service, and regular processing times for passport applications.

The Passport Service reached a significant milestone in 2022, when, for the first time in the history of the State, more than one million passports were issued in a year. Ultimately almost 1.1 million passports were issued in 2022. The previous highest number of passports issued in one year was 935,000 in 2019.

Passport applicants have continued to embrace the Passport Online service. It has become the preferred channel for the vast majority of Irish citizens, with over 90% of all passport applications submitted online in 2022.

In December 2022, the Passport Service launched a successful Digital First media and communications campaign. Through strategic digital, print, and social media advertisements, the campaign encouraged citizens to check their passports before making travel plans and apply online well in advance. This campaign resonated positively with the public, resulting in a surge in online applications in early 2023.

The Passport Service's commitment to providing excellent customer service remained at the forefront of operations. Throughout the year, the Customer Service Hub handled over 414,000 queries by phone and WebChat. The busiest month for phone calls was August, with more than 41,000 calls handled, while July emerged as the peak month for WebChat service, with over 23,000 chats responded to.

To meet increased demand, the Passport Service took strategic actions to strengthen and stabilise its workforce in 2022. Foreign Birth Registration

Applications for Foreign Birth Registration (FBR) were severely impacted by the pandemic and the high demand for passports seen in 2022. During the last quarter of 2022, the Passport Service worked to significantly reduce the processing time for FBR applications – from over two years in September 2022 to 10 months by December 2022. 33,000 FBR applications were processed in 2022.



The Passport Service issued more than one million passports in 2022 © DFA

PASSPORT SIX

The Passport Service hosted the international Passport Six Conference for the first time in May 2022. Leadership from passport services in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and United States convened in Ireland to discuss passport innovation, workforce planning and fraud prevention.

PASSPORT SERVICE REFORM PROGRAMME

2022 also saw the launch of the second iteration of the Passport Service Reform Programme. This programme of work focused on the future of service delivery by continuing to identify and implement projects to enhance the customer experience and provide for business continuity while maintaining the integrity of the Irish passport.

Over the coming years the Passport Service will continue to modernise, improve and protect both the Irish passport as well as the environment and systems that underpin service delivery for our citizens. This work will also encompass the redesign and modernisation of the passport book and card as well as the replacement of existing passport personalisation machinery.

Currently, the Irish passport is ranked fourth in the Henley Passport Index and this high status allows for visa free access to 189 countries. The improvements underway are essential to maintaining the integrity and status of the Irish passport.



Women and The Future of Work, celebrating St Brigid's Day 2022, was held by the Embassy of Ireland, Indonesia © DFA

Diaspora Services

EMIGRANT SUPPORT PROGRAMME

The Emigrant Support Programme (ESP) is a tangible expression of the Government's support of and commitment to the global Irish community. Since 2004, the programme has supported Irish organisations and communities around the world. Grants have ranged from modest amounts for small voluntary groups, to major allocations awarded to community organisations operating on a large scale. In 2022, over €13 million of funding was granted to organisations supporting the welfare of Irish communities abroad, to bodies promoting Irish culture and sports, and to networks connecting Irish business professionals abroad. Through the ESP, the Government provides financial support to organisations engaged in the delivery of frontline advisory services and community care to Irish emigrants. This is particularly important to the more vulnerable and marginalised members of our community abroad, including the elderly. In addition, the ESP facilitates Irish Government investment in a range of cultural heritage, and community projects, which foster a vibrant sense of Irish community and identity, as well as strategic capital projects.

The Emigrant Support Programme (ESP) also funds the Irish Studies Programme (ISP), which promotes and develops an understanding of Irish history and culture across the globe. The impressive programmes across the world deliver multiple activities and events, organise guest lecturers to promote Irish culture, and are key in connecting with the next generation of the diaspora while also establishing a new era of the affinity diaspora through their educational programmes. The popularity and demand for Irish Studies is growing, with funding increasing from €90,000 to €180,000 in 2022, providing support to programmes in countries such as Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Mexico and the United Kingdom.

The celebration of St Brigid's Day, on the 1st February, is a new and innovative way to showcase the work of trailblazing, inspirational Irish women who are making their mark across a range of fields. The day has become a celebration of those who are carrying on Brigid's legacy as a trailblazer, and helps to raise the profile of many extraordinary Irish women around the world. The Irish Abroad Unit piloted this programme across 4 missions in 2019, and since then, interest in Brigid's Day across the mission network has grown exponentially. In 2022 events celebrating St. Brigid's Day took place across 54 missions, with funding of over €150,000 approved to support these events.

GAA

Since 2007, DFA has had a funding partnership arrangement with the GAA that has supported the GAA's international games development programme. In 2012, this evolved into the Global Games Development Fund, which has since provided significant funding for projects worldwide. Funding has helped GAA clubs in Europe, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, Asia, the Middle East, Africa and South America. The Global Games Development Fund gives clubs financial support for equipment and coaching and to facilitate inter-club tournaments. This provides opportunities for the Irish diaspora and other communities abroad to play Gaelic Games in one of the 440 GAA clubs now active outside Ireland. It also serves to strengthen Irish networks and Irish identity internationally and to nurture a sense of Irish community. From supporting 14 projects in 2013, the Global Games Development Fund has grown to contribute funding to 102 different projects across the globe for 2022. Some projects are one-off events; others have activities lasting the course of a year. In 2022 the Department and the GAA both contributed €200,000 each to the Global Games Development Fund.



New York Consul General Helena Nolan with Rockland County Legislator Vincent Tyer (left) and then Assemblyman and future Congressman Mike Lawler (right) on the occasion of 50 Years of Rockland GAA © DFA

COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN (CCÉ)

The Department also collaborates closely with Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann to promote Irish culture worldwide and foster a deeper sense of connection among the Irish diaspora to their roots. With the assistance of funding from the Emigrant Support Programme (ESP), Comhaltas use Irish music to reach younger generations in Irish communities abroad and our affinity diaspora. In 2022, €198,541 was allocated to Comhaltas under the ESP for activities in Britain, South America, Japan, Australia, North American and Canada.

DIASPORA AFFAIRS FUND

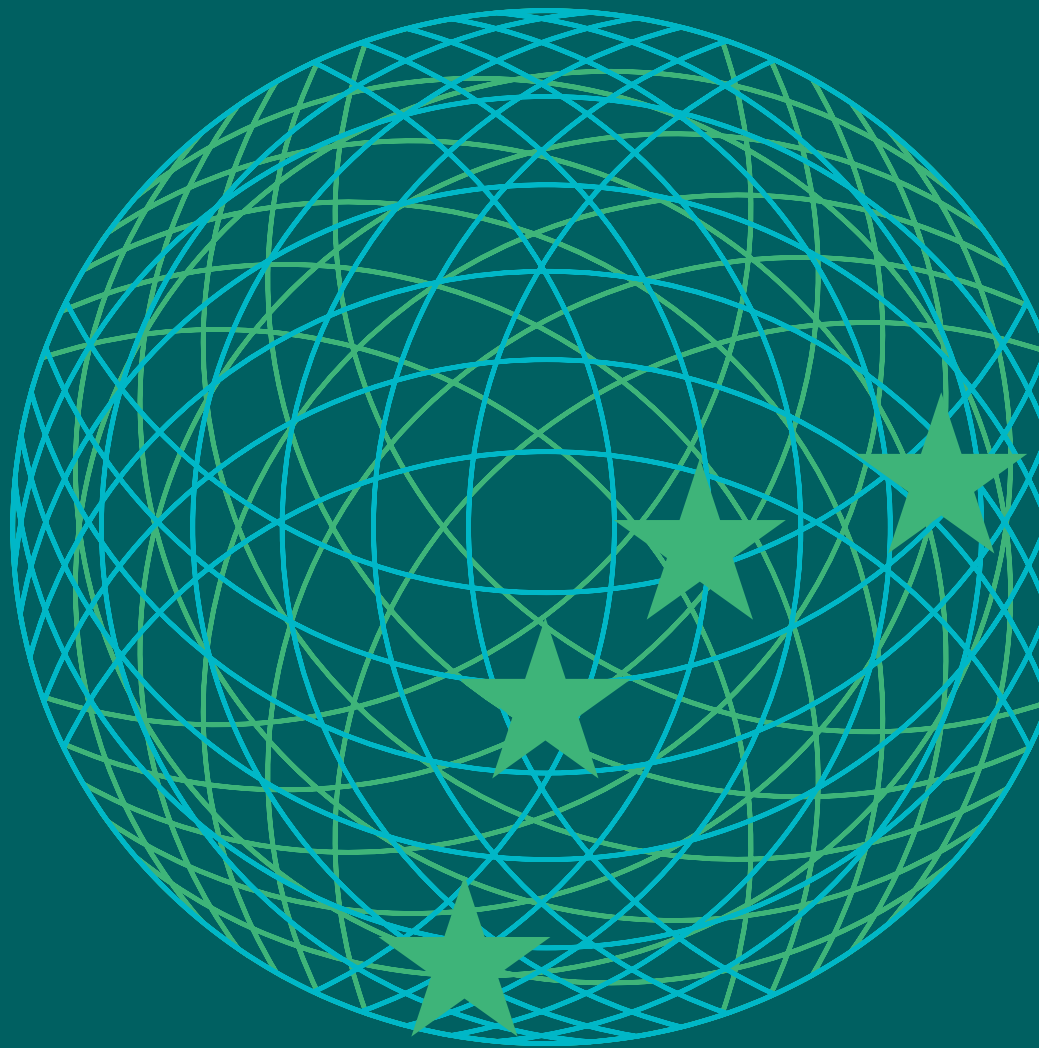
The Department of Foreign Affairs provides funding through the Diaspora Affairs Fund for projects within Ireland to support national Diaspora strategic objectives and strengthen the links between the diaspora and communities in Ireland. In 2022, the Department continued its collaboration with the Citizens Information Board on providing a one-stop information portal (Returning to Ireland) for Irish emigrants and their families looking to return to live and work in Ireland.

In 2022, 'Back for Business', an initiative to help returning migrants start their business back in Ireland, finished its fifth year. This programme supports entrepreneurs recently returned from abroad and those who are planning to return to live in Ireland. The programme links participants with lead entrepreneurs who share experiences of growing successful businesses in Ireland. Forty-five returning entrepreneurs were selected for Back for Business in 2022, of whom thirty-eight completed the cycle.

Funding was also provided to EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum, for a Historian in Residence. The historian created the exhibition Revolutionary Routes: Ireland in the Black Atlantic, and gave several talks on emigrant affairs. Funding was also provided for 'Photo Album of the Irish: Canada'. The DFA-funded exhibition, *Out in the World*, an exhibition created in 2021 telling the story of Ireland's LGBTQ+ diaspora, also continued to tour into 2022.

The Diaspora Affairs Fund supported Fáilte Ireland's development of the Global Irish Festival Series, which aims to reach county diasporas abroad and connect them with their home place, and the initiative *To Be Irish at Christmas*, which helped to bring Irish people across the world together at Christmas.

**Goal 2 - Our Europe:
To advance Ireland's
interests, influence and
values in our shared Europe**



Council of Europe Presidency

Ireland held the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CoE) for the first time in over 20 years from May to November 2022. The Council of Europe is an international organisation which promotes human rights, rule of law and democracy throughout its 46 member states. Ireland's term began at a critical juncture in the institution's 73-year history, as the Council sought to respond to the immediate consequences of the war in Ukraine and adjust to the expulsion of Russia, while continuing to promote and defend the European Court of Human Rights and its judgements and to address democratic backsliding and challenges to human rights across the continent. During our six-month term, the Irish Presidency organised 44 policy-oriented conferences, seminars and roundtables in Strasbourg, Ireland, and across Europe, as well as 21 cultural events in Strasbourg. This included eight outward visits to Strasbourg by President Higgins, the Taoiseach, Minister Coveney, Minister Byrne and Minister Burke.

The Presidency delivered multiple notable achievements, including the appointment of a High Level Reflection Group chaired by former President Mary Robinson, and on foot of its report, agreement from the 46 member states to convene the fourth Summit of Heads of State in the CoE's history in 2023 in Reykjavik. The Summit would aim to see member states agreeing to the establishment of a Register of Damage caused by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, recommitting to the core values of the CoE through the Reykjavik Principles of Democracy and a series of other commitments.



President Michael D. Higgins and Sabina Higgins with Marija Pejcinovic Buric, secretary general of the Council of Europe, and Minister Thomas Byrne, TD, in Strasbourg during Ireland's Council of Europe Presidency © Council of Europe

Other notable achievements during Ireland's CoE Presidency included a range of measures to support Ukraine, including fast tracking its membership of the CoE Development Bank, increasing funding for the CoE Action Plan for Ukraine, and agreeing a statement among Ambassadors offering political support for Ukraine's efforts to secure accountability for crimes committed by Russia. The Presidency secured agreement to establish a new Contact Group to formalise CoE cooperation with democratic opposition in Belarus. The negotiation of two Dublin Declarations - one by Ministers for Justice of the Council of Europe chaired by Minister Helen McEntee T.D. on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and another on Global Education, were also key outcomes.

A record number of Irish citizens were appointed to senior positions in the Council throughout our Presidency term, including Judge Síofra O'Leary as President of the European Court of Human Rights. Following the successful Presidency and these appointments, Ireland has never had a higher profile at the Council of Europe.



Minister Simon Coveney TD addresses the Council of Europe during Ireland's Presidency © DFA



As part of the EU50 programme, primary and secondary school students met President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen in Government Buildings, December 2022 © DFA

EU50

In 2022, Ireland marked its 50th year of EU membership. On 24th January 2022 the then Taoiseach Micheál Martin T.D. was joined by Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media of Ireland Catherine Martin T.D. and then Minister of State for European Affairs Thomas Byrne T.D. in visiting the National Archives to inspect Ireland's Treaty of Accession to join the European Communities.

The treaty was signed 50 years previously on 22 January 1972, at the Palais d'Egmont in Brussels, by the then Taoiseach Jack Lynch T.D. and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Patrick Hillery T.D. The treaty was later ratified by a referendum in which over 83% of the population voted to endorse the treaty and accede to the EC.



EU50 celebrations at Embassy of Ireland, Paris © Government of Ireland

The treaty marks the first step in Ireland's journey in Europe and represents a significant milestone in the political, economic and social development of the country.

The archive visit to commemorate this important moment in Irish history also marked the beginning of the government's EU50 programme. EU50 was an 18 month series of events to mark Ireland's 50 years in Europe, including over 30 distinct DFA events.

These included in 2022, amongst other initiatives, a MYEU50 primary and post primary competition; an EU50 Iveagh House lecture series; a nationwide Europe Day/Week schools outreach involving Government Ministers and EU Ambassadors; a Government of Ireland EU50 *Ireland in the Single Market* Conference; the EU50 exhibition, *Into Europe*, in partnership with the Royal Irish Academy which subsequently went on display in public libraries and other venues across Ireland and in over 30 countries worldwide (through the mission network).

A key aim of the programme was youth and in order to engage younger generations a bespoke MyEU50 competition was held over autumn 2022. The winning schools met the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen at Government Buildings on 1st December 2022.

Brexit

The Department continued to coordinate the whole-of-Government response to Brexit throughout 2022 through ongoing engagement with domestic, EU, and international stakeholders. Our teams in Ireland and abroad continued to support the engagement of the Taoiseach and Ministers on this significant national priority.

Work continued in 2022 on the implementation of the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement and the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA). Each of the 18 Specialised Committees under the Trade and Cooperation Agreement met at least once during 2022. The EU-UK Parliamentary Partnership Assembly, attended by UK MPs and MEPs from all EU Member States, met twice in 2022 with a spirit of positive cooperation. The first meeting of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement Civil Society Forum also took place in October 2022, bringing together representatives from civil society to discuss a number of issues, including trade and energy cooperation.

The Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee and the Specialised Committee on the implementation of the Protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland each met once - in February and March 2022 respectively.

EU Member State support for the EU Commission approach to finding solutions around the implementation of the Protocol remained unwavering through 2022.

In April 2022, the EU amended its laws to provide for permanent solutions for the continued long-term supply of medicines from Great Britain to Northern Ireland and address supply concerns in Cyprus, Ireland and Malta. Furthermore, to ensure continuity of supplies of veterinary medicines from the United Kingdom, the Commission extended the derogation from the Union's veterinary medicines acquis to Cyprus, Ireland, Malta and Northern Ireland until 31 December 2025.

Building on their October 2021 proposals, the Commission published further information in June 2022 on how the customs and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) elements of their approach could be implemented. Technical talks around the implementation of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland resumed in early October and continued up to the end of the year.

The Government welcomed the more positive trajectory and stressed the importance of agreeing a comprehensive package of jointly agreed EU-UK solutions that would address the genuine challenges faced by business and citizens in Northern Ireland and provide a framework for strengthening the wider EU-UK relationship.

Conference on the Future of Europe

The Conference on the Future of Europe, a one-year long initiative which was the European Union's largest exercise in participative democracy to date, published its final report on 9 May 2022, outlining 49 proposals. Ireland's national report on the Conference was launched by then Minister of State for European Affairs, Thomas Byrne T.D., on 19 July 2022. Minister Byrne was joined at the launch by two of Ireland's four national parliament representatives to the Conference's Plenaries, Senator Alice-Mary Higgins and Neale Richmond T.D., in addition to national citizen representatives, Noelle O'Connell and Emmy Coffey Nguyen.

Citizens from across Europe engaged in the discussion on the future of Europe, with 6,600 events held throughout the Union complemented by the almost 19,000 ideas from over 53,000 participants shared on the Conference's multilingual digital platform. Ireland has a proud history of citizens' assemblies, and fully supported the Conference. Events were organised by local community groups, which ensured voices from all areas of Irish society had the opportunity to be heard. There were over 70 Irish events which saw participation from young people, LGBTQI+ organisations, Gaeltacht communities, Traveller community organisations, residents of Ireland's offshore islands, inner-city community organisations and migrant communities, among others. On 02 December 2022, the European Parliament hosted a feedback event with representatives from all of the EU institutions and 500 citizen participants, including Irish representatives.

Communicating Europe Initiative 2022

The **Communicating Europe Initiative (CEI)** was established in 1995 to raise awareness about the European Union and to improve the quality and accessibility of public information on European issues. Projects should seek to communicate European issues, the role of the European Union and Ireland's place in Europe.

For 2022, applicants were asked to submit project ideas that focused on Ireland's 50th anniversary of EU membership (EU50), the Conference on the Future of Europe or the European Year of Youth 2022. The total amount of funding available was €100,000. 21 organisations were funded as follows –

Organisation	Project	Grant
Audrey Galvin, University of Limerick	Reflecting on Ireland EU50 a multi platform media project	€2,500
Claremorris Community Radio	Youth Talk Europe	€2,500
Corran College	Caoga Bliain ag Fás	€3,000
Crooked House Theatre Company	DeisÓige Workshop Programme	€5,000
DCU Brexit Institute	AMPLIFY	€5,000
Donegal County Council	Donegal's AER Summer Academy 2022 'A Europe for the Next Generation'.	€5,000
Dublin City FM	EU: How & When? – Series 2	€3,000
Duhill Community Council	50 Years of agriculture within the EU	€1,000
European Youth Parliament Ireland	European Youth Parliament Ireland Debate Conferences	€15,000
IRD Duhallow	EU 50 – Communicating five decades of Irish Membership	€2,000
Irish Centre for European Law - TCD	Brexit Seminar Series	€1,500
Centre for European Studies, University of Limerick	The European Dimension in Irish Education after Brexit: A National Symposium	€10,000
Junior Achievement Ireland	Europe4U 2022	€10,000
KCLR	EU and Us	€4,000
National College of Art and Design	Care and Creativity: Parenthood and Arts Practice in the EU symposium	€2,000
Our Lady's Secondary School	How the European Union works- A Schools Conference	€4,000
Radio Kerry	EU 50 – the EU and Me	€5,000
SLi Waterford	The Youth Voice	€4,000
The European Network	Ireland 50	€2,000
Trinity Long Room Hub	'Visions of Europe in Irish Cultural Debate since 1940'	€2,000
Twilight	Our Past, Present and Prospects of the EU Years of Ireland.	€3,000

Two examples of 2022 CEI projects are Junior Achievement Ireland and the European Youth Parliament Ireland.

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT IRELAND

More than students from 14 Second Level schools across Ireland had a unique chance to interact with their local MEPs during the six 'A conversation with your MEP' events, held as part of Europe4U 2022.

MEP's Maria Walsh from the Midlands North West constituency, Ciarán Cuffe & Frances Fitzgerald from the Dublin constituency and Billy Kelleher & Grace O'Sullivan from the South Constituency, took a variety of questions from the highly engaged students, and spoke about their role as MEPs, the role that the European Union plays in their daily lives, the advantages of being EU citizens, the rights that come with EU citizenship and Ireland's place in Europe.

EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT IRELAND

The EYP Summer Academy in Cork City in August 2022 was the first 'international' EYP event to be held in Ireland since 2016. The theme of the Dublin Regional session in March 2022 session was "Emergence: Finding Healthy Positivity, Post-Pandemic", a fitting beginning to EYP's first fully-physical year of events since 2020. The session saw the participation of 100 students, with 40% taking part from DEIS schools through an expanded DEIS sponsorship programme. The Connacht-Ulster Regional Session in Sligo in November 2022 was notable for being the first to involve delegates from Northern Ireland, as well as the first to have an Irish-language component. The session engaged with almost 70 delegates. The Munster Regional Session 2023 took place from the 11th to 14th February in Cork. The theme of the session was 'Trans European Truth', an especially poignant theme given recent European developments. The Munster Regional Session was the largest event in the network.



MEPs visited local secondary schools as part of Europe4U 2022 © Junior Achievement Ireland

EYP in 25 Things

...an exploration of how particular objects & things have had a significant impact on the shaping of EYP over the past 25 years...

CORK 2022
25TH NATIONAL SESSION OF EYP IRELAND

BY DANIEL O'BRIEN (IE)

25TH NATIONAL SESSION

State visit to Malta

President Michael D. Higgins and Sabina Higgins visited Malta from 11 - 14 May 2022, in the first State Visit to Malta from Ireland since 2006. The President was accompanied on the visit by the Minister for Social Protection and Minister for Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys T.D. The atmosphere in the engagements between President Higgins and President Vella was warm and friendly, with many areas of shared interest and cooperation noted between Ireland and Malta.

Maltese President Vella and Mrs Vella hosted a State Dinner in honour of the President and Mrs Higgins. President Higgins also received courtesy calls from the Leader of the Opposition, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Prime Minister of Malta. The President later paid a visit to the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) Headquarters and took part in a wider cultural programme, including an Irish community reception. The State Visit gave a great momentum to the Embassy's work across all priority areas and provided a platform for further progress and cooperation between Ireland and Malta.

Increased engagement with the Western Balkans

In 2022, Ireland increased engagement with the countries of the Western Balkans, reflecting the region's geo-strategic importance at the heart of Europe. In July, Minister of State Byrne undertook a three-country visit, along with his Finnish counterpart, Ms. Tytti Tuppurainen. The Ministers met with Prime Minister Kurti in Kosovo, President Pendarovski in North Macedonia, and Foreign Minister Xhaçka in Albania, where they discussed European security, European integration of the Western Balkans, and bilateral cooperation. In December, then Taoiseach Martin attended the EU-Western Balkans summit, which was held in Tirana, Albania, where he communicated Ireland's strong support for the EU perspectives of the Western Balkans countries, and for their aspirations to join the EU family.



President Higgins meets Maltese President Vella on the State Visit in May 2022
© Áras an Uachtaráin



(L-R) Stephen Hynes, NUI Galway, John Connelly, Trinity College Dublin, Audrey Morley, NARI & NUI Galway, Kevin Fitzgibbon, Munster Technological University, Tom Barry University of Akureyri, Olive Hempenstall, Department of Foreign Affairs © DFA

Ireland at the Arctic Circle Assembly, Reykjavik, 2022

As Ireland deepens its engagement with the Arctic region, including through our Nordic Strategy, October 2022 saw Ireland host its first panel discussion at The Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavik, the largest Arctic conference attracting government, indigenous and scientific representatives from around the world. Participation in the Assembly was a valuable platform for both the Department and the Irish scientific representatives to showcase Ireland's expertise and ambitions in the Arctic.

The panel '*Irish Expertise for Arctic Challenges*' was moderated by Dr Tom Barry from the University of Akureyri, Iceland, then Executive Secretary of the Arctic

Council Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna working group. There were contributions from Dr Audrey Morley, University of Galway, President of the Network of Arctic Researchers in Ireland (NARI), who highlighted Irish research in marine environments; Dr John Connelly from Trinity College Dublin, who shared his expertise in remote sensing to map and understand Arctic terrestrial environments; Professor Stephen Hynes, NUI Galway, who discussed Ireland's leadership in socio-economic marine research in relation to Arctic inhabitants and indigenous peoples; and Kevin Fitzgibbon from Munster Technological University, who spoke on Ireland's strengths and cooperation in the field of maritime navigation and search and rescue in the Arctic. Participation at the event was funded by the Marine Institute and the Department of Foreign Affairs.

80th Anniversary of Diplomatic relations with Portugal: State Visit to Ireland by President Rebelo de Sousa

2022 saw the 80th anniversary of bilateral relations between Ireland and Portugal. Embassy Lisbon marked this milestone with a programme of events held throughout the year which highlighted economic, cultural, political, people-to-people and other connections between our two countries.

The highlight of the year was the State Visit by H.E. President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa to Ireland on 18-20 October. President Rebelo de Sousa's programme included bilateral meetings with President Higgins and the Taoiseach, as well as visits to the Houses of the Oireachtas, Museum of Literature Ireland, the Marine Institute's new research vessel Tom Crean, Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation and UCD, where President Rebelo de Sousa received an honorary degree.

Other events organised by Embassy Lisbon throughout the year included a St. Brigid's Day Concert and an open-air St. Patrick's Day family event which attracted over 700 attendees. The Embassy also facilitated several high-level visits to Portugal, including by Minister of State Ossian Smyth T.D. for a programme of St. Patrick's Day-related activities, by Minister of State Robert Troy T.D. for a successful Enterprise Ireland trade mission in collaboration with the Ireland Portugal Business Network, and by Minister of State Malcolm Noonan T.D. for the UN Ocean Conference which also incorporated a visit to Lisbon by the Irish Naval Service vessel L.E. George Bernard Shaw.

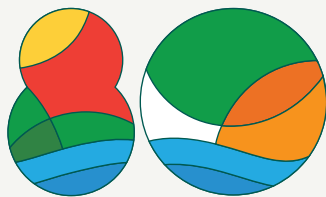


President Michael D. Higgins and Sabina Higgins welcome the President of the Portuguese Republic, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, marking the beginning of his State Visit to Ireland © DFA

High level visits

There was a high level of engagement with European institutions in 2022. The Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, Ms Marija Pejčinović Burić, visited in May, with President Higgins paying a visit to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg five months later, in October 2022. These were followed by visits from the European Central Bank and European Commission Presidents, Christine Lagarde and Ursula Von der Leyen, respectively, in October and December 2022.

ÉIRE-AN PHORTAINGÉIL
IRELAND-PORTUGAL
IRLANDA-PORTUGAL



**Goal 3 - Our Values:
To work for a fairer,
just, secure and
sustainable world**





Then Taoiseach Micheál Martin TD with UN Secretary General António Guterres at UN High Level Week 2022 © DFA

Ireland on the United Nations Security Council

Throughout 2022, the second year of our term on the United Nations Security Council, Ireland's approach continued to be guided by three principles: Building Peace, Strengthening Conflict Prevention, and Ensuring Accountability. We believe these principles are central to the Security Council's mandate to maintain international peace and security.

RESOLUTION 2664 - CARVING OUT SPACE FOR HUMANITARIAN ACTION ACROSS ALL UN SANCTIONS REGIMES

The protection of the humanitarian space was a priority for Ireland throughout our term on the Security Council. Working with the US, we initiated and led negotiations to introduce an exemption for humanitarian activities from all UN sanctions regimes, Resolution 2664.

The landmark Resolution was adopted in December 2022, with the support of 14 of the 15 members of the Security Council and with co-sponsorship by over 40 other States. Resolution 2664 saw Ireland using our role as an elected member to deliver on one of the longstanding demands of the humanitarian community, ensuring that humanitarians can work in some of the most complex environments, without fear of inadvertently falling foul of UN sanctions regimes. The resolution allows the Council to focus on targeted sanctions as an effective tool for dealing with serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights, while ensuring that humanitarian actors can continue their vital work unimpeded.

RENEWAL OF CROSS-BORDER RESOLUTION WHICH IS VITAL TO PROVIDING LIFESAVING HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN SYRIA

In 2021 and 2022, Ireland and Norway successfully led negotiations on the renewal of the vital Syria Humanitarian cross-border resolution. Navigating challenging political dynamics, finding agreement on this file at the Council was a considerable diplomatic achievement. The renewal in 2022 allowed for life-saving humanitarian aid to continue to reach over four million Syrians in need and provided much-needed certainty to humanitarian actors.

STANDING WITH UKRAINE

At the Security Council, and elsewhere, Ireland delivered consistent and principled criticism of Russia's war of aggression, and defence of the UN Charter and the people of Ukraine.

In April, Minister Coveney brought eyewitness testimony of massacres in Bucha to the Security Council table.

In September the Minister underlined the importance of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, following his visit to the port of Odesa with Ukraine's Foreign Minister. Ireland has stood by Ukraine, consistently holding Russia to account for their illegal invasion and countering Russian disinformation on the Security Council.

MAINSTREAMING THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY (WPS) AGENDA

Mainstreaming the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda has ran through all of Ireland's work on the Council. Ireland co-chaired the informal expert group on WPS and led the first WPS field visit, to Lebanon. Ireland also pushed for the inclusion of women civil society voices at the Council table.

Ireland pioneered monthly commitments on women, peace and security, which have since been adopted by 14 Council Members. These commitments aim to close the gap between rhetoric and reality, and to make WPS a concrete, tangible and ongoing priority for Security Council Presidencies.

NEGOTIATION AND RENEWAL OF EU-LED CRISIS MANAGEMENT MISSION IN THE WESTERN BALKANS, OPERATION ALTHEA

Launched in 2004, EUFOR Operation Althea is a UN-authorized, EU-led military mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Operation Althea continues to play a vital role in overseeing the implementation of the Dayton Agreement, which brought about the end of the war in BiH in 1995, and safeguarding peace and security in BiH. As penholder on the UN Security Council for this file in October 2022, Ireland led the negotiations to secure the renewal of the mandate for Operation Althea. After consultations with all members of the Security Council, we proposed a technical rollover of the mandate. The Security Council voted unanimously to renew the mandate on 2 November 2022 for a further twelve months along these lines, with then Minister of State Byrne attending and speaking on Ireland's behalf during the debate.

Ireland knows from experience that conflict resolution is a long and complex process, which requires consistent and determined commitment. The renewal of Operation Althea's mandate sent a strong signal of support for the security and stability of BiH and the wider Western Balkans region.

In 2022 there were five members of the Defence Forces deployed to Operation Althea's headquarters in Sarajevo and a sixth member in its Operational Headquarters in Belgium.

DEMANDING ACCOUNTABILITY IN AFGHANISTAN

Since the Taliban takeover of Kabul, Ireland has pushed for accountability for the actions of the Taliban. Our leadership on Afghanistan, including in ensuring that the mandate for the UN mission in Afghanistan had a strong human rights and women's participation perspective, was directly informed by the courageous activism of these and many other Afghan women.

We also maintained constant contact with Afghan women leaders on what they wanted to see from Council engagement.

Ireland blocked the rollover of an exemption to the regime that previously allowed sanctioned Taliban leaders to travel freely.

BRINGING INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION TO THE CRISIS IN ETHIOPIA

During our time on the Council, Ireland sought to highlight the dire security and humanitarian situation in Ethiopia. Our leadership on this issue maintained a focus and political pressure on the parties and the region. This complemented the diplomatic pressure which eventually contributed to a ceasefire and peace agreement.

ORGANISATION OF THE ARRIA FORMULA MEETING TO SHINE A LIGHT ON THE PROTECTION OF JOURNALISTS AFTER THE KILLING OF SHIREEN ABU AKLEH

When Shireen Abu Akleh was killed in Jenin in the West Bank, Ireland decided to highlight the issue of the protection of journalists.

We convened an Arria formula meeting within a few days of her death, allowing the Council to be briefed by members of the media about the dangers they face every day in the field.

Al Jazeera spoke out on Shireen Abu Akleh's killing, along with other briefers, who also highlighted the killing of Pierre Zakrzewski in Ukraine, and the many other journalists killed in conflict zones around the world.

Ireland drew global attention to the targeting of journalists in this way, and to the active responsibility of the Security Council to protect them.

1
Security Council
Presidency 

1,187
meeting
hours 

151
VC
meetings 

5 Irish led
resolutions adopted


194
Closed
Consultations

456
Formal
meetings 


111
Resolutions
adopted 


171
Civil
Society Briefers



Women Political Leadership Candidates Dialogue hosted by UN Women, in partnership with Embassy of Ireland in Kenya, with support from Irish Aid © UN Women

Irish Aid

The Government's Official Development Assistance (ODA) programme works with a range of international, national and local partners to deliver vital support and services to vulnerable communities in over 130 countries. In 2022, Ireland's total ODA amounted to €2.291 billion, representing 0.63 % of GNI. Excluding the eligible exceptional costs relating to services for Ukrainian refugees in Ireland, the figure for 2022 ODA is €1.411 billion, representing 0.39% of GNI. Of this, the Department managed €632 million through Vote 27, with the balance accounted for by other government departments and Ireland's contribution to the EU development cooperation budget.

All of our activities are informed by Ireland's whole-of-government policy on international development *A Better World*, which sets out four key international development priorities under the overarching frame of reaching those furthest behind first. These are:

- » Reducing humanitarian need
- » Supporting climate action
- » Promoting gender equality
- » Strengthening governance



32-year old, mother of 5, Amal is a recipient of the joint Irish Aid and Save the Children Cash Social Programme in the Somali Region of Ethiopia © DFA

Development progress has stalled over recent years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict and climate change. Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine also had a negative impact on some of the poorest countries in 2022. Throughout 2022, Ireland worked internationally to address these challenges and build renewed momentum towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As a long-standing champion of efforts to eradicate hunger and malnutrition, we continued to respond to the immense challenges of global food and nutrition insecurity. In 2022, Ireland pledged €50 million to combat child wasting over three years (2022-2024), building on a commitment made in 2021 to provide €800 million over five years to nutrition programming. We also provided €100 million in assistance for communities in Horn of Africa, affected by drought and conflict.

In 2022, the Government published [Ireland's International Climate Finance Roadmap](#). The Roadmap outlines Ireland's plans for scaling up its international climate finance to meet the target to provide at least €225 million per year by 2025, as announced by the Taoiseach at the UN Climate Conference, COP26, in Glasgow in November 2021.

The Roadmap is aligned with Ireland's international development priority to target the furthest behind first, guided by the principles of climate justice and gender equality. It commits to maintain a focus on climate adaptation and resilience in some of the most climate-vulnerable countries around the world, particularly Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States.

Ireland also continued to support a wide range of other programmes. On strengthening governance, we support programmes that promote democracy and inclusive governance, support accountability and transparency, strengthen domestic resource mobilisation, and enable a healthy civil society space. An overarching focus on women and girls is also central to Ireland's development work and essential to the achievement of the SDGs.

In 2022, Ireland responded to record levels of global humanitarian need. Our humanitarian spend reached over €280 million – an increase of 20% on 2021. Ireland targeted the most severe crises: large-scale emergencies such as Ukraine, protracted crises such as Yemen and Somalia, and 'forgotten crises' such as in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Support was channelled through trusted and experienced partners – UN agencies, the European Union, NGOs and the Red Cross family.

We were among the first humanitarian donors to respond to the crisis in Ukraine, with the announcement of a significant package on the first day of the Russian invasion that subsequently increased to €20 million. In 2022, Ireland also provided additional emergency funding of €30 million to stave off impending famine in the Horn of Africa region. In each response we provided dedicated funding to address the specific needs of women and girls.

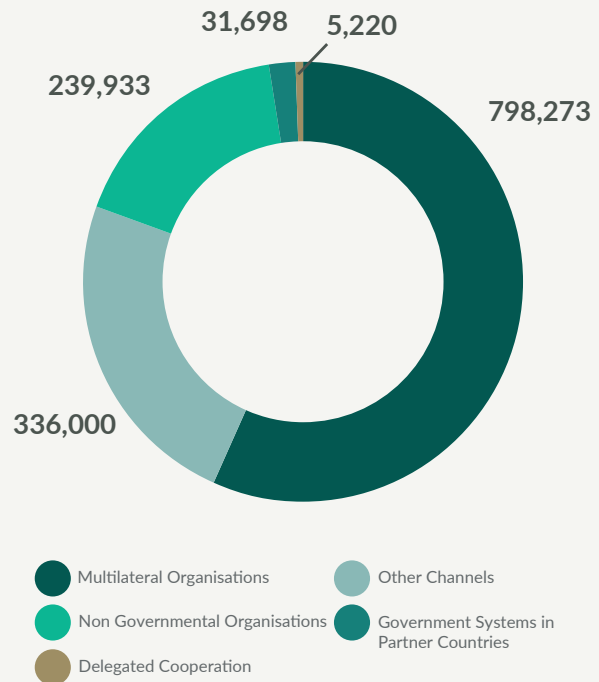
In 2022, the Department worked in partnership with a wide range of national and international development NGOs to enable long-term development of communities across a range of sectors including human rights, health services, education, livelihoods, food security and nutrition, and emergency response. In December, we launched Ireland's Civil Society Partnership for a Better World (2023-2027), a major innovative funding scheme for key Irish international NGOs, which integrates three current civil society schemes for development and humanitarian programmes.



Training session for the Women in Leadership Training by the Social Change Assistance Trust (SCAT), South Africa © DFA

Total Irish ODA by Channel of Delivery - 2022

Sector	€000's	%
Multilateral Organisations	798,273	57%
Other Channels	336,000	24%
Non-Governmental Organisations	239,933	17%
Government Systems in Partner Countries	31,698	2%
Delegated Cooperation	5,220	<1%
Subtotal	1,411,124	100%
Ukrainian refugee assistance costs in Ireland	880,002	
Grand Total	2,291,126	



The majority of our bilateral ODA is concentrated in nine key partner countries - Ethiopia, Malawi, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Vietnam, and Zambia. Embassies in these countries manage a range of programmes targeting our four key priority areas. We also have ODA programmes in Liberia, Palestine, Senegal, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Ireland maintains a strong partnership with multiple multilateral institutions, including the United Nations and International Financial Institutions. In 2022, Ireland provided core funding to a number of United Nations agencies. This core funding is used across a variety of programmes including the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), UN Women and the UN Peacebuilding Fund. Ireland also provided €352 million as our contribution to the EU development cooperation budget.

For a deeper insight into the full range of all of our work, Irish Aid Annual Reports are available on the [Irish Aid website](#).

Top 30 Recipient Countries of Ireland's Bilateral ODA 2022

Recipient Country	€000s
Ukraine	52,874
Ethiopia	41,189
Mozambique	27,302
Tanzania	24,996
Uganda	24,352
Malawi	22,537
Sierra Leone	18,356
occupied Palestinian territory	17,027*
Somalia	16,499
South Sudan	13,142
Kenya	11,434
Zimbabwe	11,360
Sudan	9,297
Democratic Republic of the Congo	7,486
Liberia	6,560
Yemen	6,400
Zambia	6,123
Afghanistan	5,698
Syrian Arab Republic	5,697
Lebanon	5,678
Moldova	5,095
Central African Republic	4,725
Viet Nam	4,399
Niger	4,214
South Africa	4,048
Myanmar	2,996
Jordan	2,873
Haiti	2,846
Türkiye	2,789
Colombia	2,781

Please note that in the case of countries with major humanitarian crises, funding may be allocated to neighbouring countries or on a non-country specific basis.

* This figure represents the overall support to the Palestinian People across the Middle East region. This includes €8 million in support through UNWRA, who directly support Palestine refugees in five locations across the region: the West Bank, Gaza, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan.

EWIPA Dublin Conference 2022

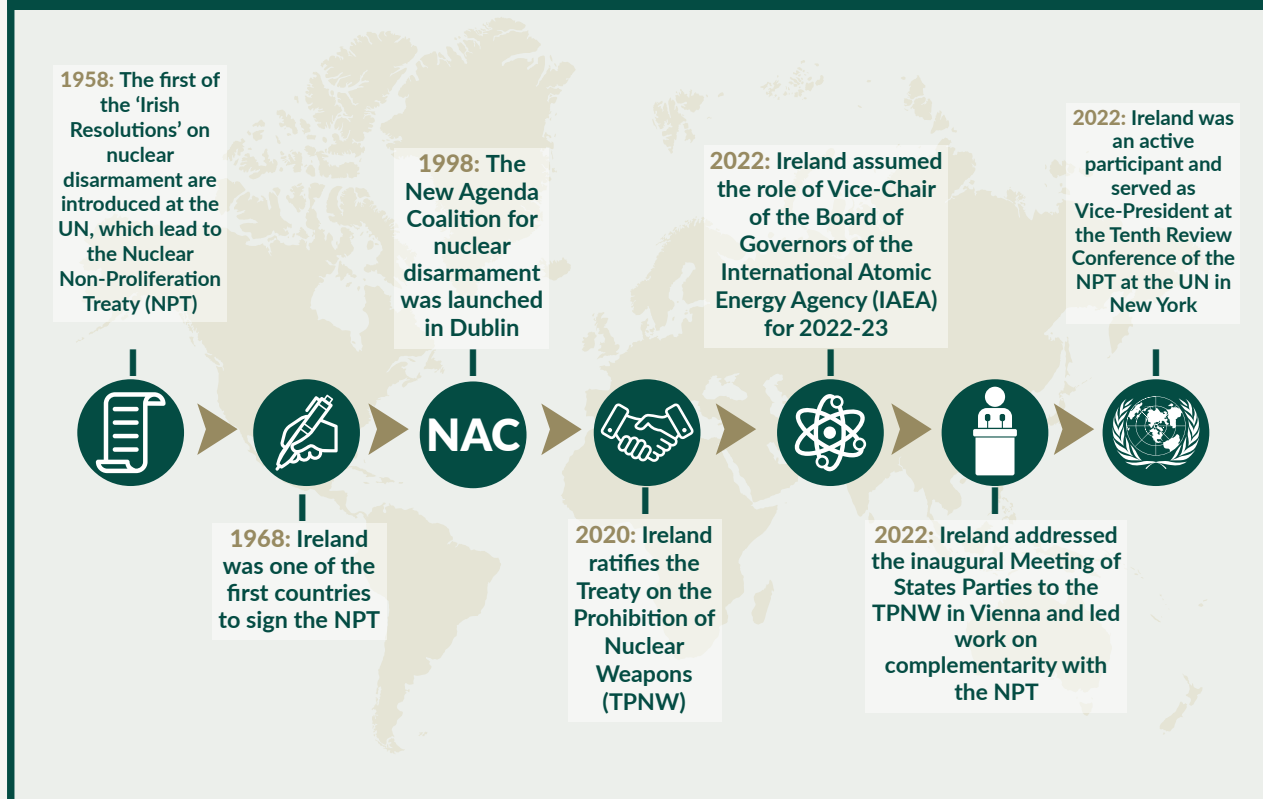
In November 2022, Ireland welcomed delegates from across the world to a high-level international conference in Dublin to adopt the Political Declaration on strengthening the protection of civilians from the humanitarian consequences arising from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA). The declaration marked the culmination of almost three years of consultations led by Ireland involving Member States, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and civil-society organizations. The declaration's focus is to address the devastating and long-lasting humanitarian impact of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. The successful conference saw the Political Declaration formally adopted by **83 countries** – a milestone achievement for the world of disarmament and Ireland's foreign policy, more broadly.

Being the first of its kind, the Political Declaration clearly recognises the unacceptable humanitarian consequences currently resulting from the use of EWIPA. It reinforces the obligation to comply with international humanitarian law and strengthens its implementation. It sets out actions to be taken in military operations to strengthen the protection of civilians. Its implementation will change how militaries operate in populated areas including a commitment around restricting or refraining from the use of explosive weapons, when their use may be expected to cause harm to civilians or civilian objects.



DFA staff at the EWIPA Conference in Dublin, November 2022 © DFA

In 2022, Ireland Continued Our Strong Support for Nuclear Disarmament



Nuclear diplomacy and Vienna spotlight

Ireland's longstanding proactive commitment to further nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation continued in 2022, and remains as important now as ever. Ireland was an active participant in key nuclear negotiations including the Review Conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as well as the inaugural meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) – a momentous achievement in nuclear disarmament and a longstanding foreign policy priority for Ireland. In 2022 Ireland assumed the role of Vice-Chair of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Ireland also chaired the meeting of the Wassenaar Arrangement, a multilateral export control regime, which has come under threat due to the Russian Federation's aggression in Ukraine. Ireland's able chairing of the Wassenaar Arrangement was highly commended by its membership for our ability to ensure the regime continued to function despite the war in Ukraine.

Ireland's Review by the Human Rights Committee (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights)

Ireland's fifth review by the Human Rights Committee on implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights took place in July 2022. The delegation was headed by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Roderic O'Gorman T.D., who reiterated Ireland's strong support to UN human rights monitoring mechanisms. Minister O'Gorman responded to questions raised by the Human Rights Committee on a range of civil and political rights issues, and outlined progress made domestically. While welcoming progress made in the implementation of the Covenant, the Human Rights Committee also provided a number of recommendations on areas for improvement.

Human Rights Council

The UN Human Rights Council held three regular sessions in 2022. Ireland was active during each of these sessions, delivering a total of 74 national statements and hosting a side event on Civil Society Space with the Acting High Commissioner for Human Rights. This event brought together actors from the health and human rights spheres to discuss the role of diverse civil society actors in policy-making and implementation to ensure an inclusive and human rights-based response to health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ireland supported all efforts at the Council to draw attention to the human rights situation in Ukraine, as a result of Russia's aggression, including support to an Urgent Debate in March, a Special Session in May and the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry. Ireland was also a member of the core group that delivered a resolution mandating a Special Rapporteur to monitor the human rights situation in Russia. Ireland also actively participated in a Special Session to address the human rights situation in Iran, and an Urgent Debate on the situation of Women and Girls in Afghanistan.

Building on the success of Ireland's term on the UN Security Council, Ireland announced our intention to run for a seat on the Human Rights Council for the 2027-2029 term.

UN Third Committee

Ireland led on a Joint Statement on Reprisals at the 77th Session of the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly, which garnered a great deal of cross regional support, with 80 states as well as the EU member states signing on in support. At Third Committee, Ireland also hosted side events with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of Human Rights Defenders, and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Voluntary Contributions to the International Criminal Court

Ireland underlined its deep commitment to international criminal justice by making a voluntary contribution of €3 million to the International Criminal Court (ICC). The contribution was announced during Minister Coveney's visit to Bucha, Ukraine in April 2022. This funding was in addition to Ireland's annual assessed contribution to the ICC, which was €1.2 million in 2022.

The funding was allocated to a number of trust funds which provide support to auxiliary functions of the Court in implementation of its mandate to end impunity for the most serious international crimes. €1 million was immediately transferred to the Prosecutor's Trust Fund, in response to his request for additional resources following the opening of his investigation into the situation in Ukraine. Although precipitated by the situation in Ukraine, this funding is available to be used for all situations under investigation by the Court.

In furtherance of Ireland's long standing support for victims and survivors, €1.5 million was allocated to the ICC Trust Fund for Victims to assist individuals and communities who have suffered harm resulting from crimes under the jurisdiction of the Court. €300,000 was disbursed to the Court's Special Fund for Relocations, €150,000 to the Trust Fund for the Development of Interns and Visiting Professionals, and the remaining €50,000 to the Trust Fund for Family Visits. The contributions to these four trust funds cover the period of 2022 to 2024.

European security and defence

The Strategic Compass, an important policy document for the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), was approved by the Foreign Affairs Council and endorsed by the European Council in March 2022. The Compass set out the reality of the current European security environment, notably in the context of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It proposes a series of actions and deliverables in areas such as crisis management, resilience, capability development and partnerships with key international actors, including the UN.

Implementation progressed rapidly in a number of areas, notably in relation to cyber and hybrid threats. The Strategic Compass also provides for the creation of a 5,000 strong force, ready to deploy to complex crises across the globe, in the form of a new Rapid Deployment Capacity. Ireland fully supports the implementation of the Strategic Compass, and has engaged constructively across all areas of activity, ensuring that our approach reflects both our core interests and our policy of military neutrality.

During 2022, Ireland continued to be an active participant in both civilian and military CSDP missions and operations. As of 31 December 2022, 21 National Experts were serving in six of the EU's civilian CSDP missions in Europe and the Caucasus (Georgia, Kosovo and Ukraine), the Middle East (Iraq), and Africa (Libya and Somalia). In addition, 22 members of the Defence Forces were serving in three UN-mandated EU military missions and operations: the EU Training Mission in Mali, EUFOR Operation Althea, and Operation Iriini's Operational Headquarters in Rome.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has led to the unprecedented mobilisation of the European Peace Facility (EPF), as detailed elsewhere in this report. In addition to the support provided to Ukraine, in 2022 EU Foreign Ministers also adopted eleven other assistance measures in support of countries in the Middle East and in Sub-Saharan Africa totalling €319 million. In line with commitments in the Programme for Government, Ireland's contributions are being directed exclusively towards non-lethal support. In December, EU Foreign Ministers agreed an increase of €2 billion to the overall ceiling of the EPF, with a view to ensuring that the EU can continue to provide support to Ukraine and maintain the overall level of ambition of the Facility in Africa and other parts of the globe.

Cyber Diplomacy, Hybrid and Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference

Ireland joined the European Center of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats in January 2023, becoming its 33rd member. The Centre of Excellence is an autonomous, network-based international organisation countering hybrid threats, based in Helsinki. Joining the organisation has supported the further development of our national capacity to detect, protect against and mitigate the harmful effects of hybrid threats, and share our expertise with like-minded partners.

Malicious cyber activity continues to feature prominently in the international security landscape. During 2022, there continued to be a focus on improving awareness of the threat landscape in cyber-space. The EU's 2017 Cyber Diplomacy Toolbox was updated in June. The revised Toolbox includes measures to further enhance situational awareness, ensure a strategic approach to persistent cyber threat actors, provides additional response measures, and further enables appropriately swift decision-making and stronger cooperation with partners.

In June, EU Foreign Ministers agreed Council Conclusions on Digital Diplomacy. The Conclusions recognise the increasing focus on technology in geopolitics and underline the need for a stronger, more strategic, coherent, and effective EU policy and action in global digital affairs, and set a series of priority actions.

High level visits

DFA supported strong engagement with multilateral organisations in 2022, with the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Amina J. Mohammed, visiting in February, as well as the Secretary-General of the OECD, Mathias Cormann, visiting in April. Other notable visits in 2022 included that of the Director-General of the International Labour Organisation, Guy Ryder, who visited in April to present on 'The Future of Work in a Post-COVID World' at the Edward Phelan Lecture in the National University of Ireland, Galway, as well as UN FAO Director General, Qu Dongyu, who visited in June to give the opening address of the World Potato Congress at the RDS, and to meet various stakeholders in the Irish agricultural sector, including Bord Bia, Teagasc, and FoodCloud. These visits were followed by that of the President of the African Development Bank, Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, in July, a visit which centred on an interest in increasing economic ties with Africa, on food security, and climate adaptation. In October Protocol facilitated the visit of President to Malta for the 2022 Meeting of the Arraiolos Group.



President Higgins receives Ms. Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations © Áras an Uachtaráin

Bilateral relations were strengthened by outward state visits of the President to Austria in April and to Malta in May. In addition to this, a number of key inward visits by Heads of State and Government were facilitated, including that of the Crown Prince of Luxembourg in April, the Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Mark Rutte, in May, the Ukraine Deputy Prime Minister, Olha Stefanishyna, in June, and the President of the Republic of Fiji, Ratu Wiliame Maivalili Katonivere, in July to celebrate 20 years of Fijian-Irish diplomatic relations. These were followed by the visit of the Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas, in September, during which Ireland pledged €2 million in additional support for the Palestinian people, and the visit of the President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, in October.

Ireland also received a number of Foreign Ministers including from the Vice President and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Ms. Marta Lucía Ramírez, in April, the Luxembourg Foreign Minister, Jean Asselborn, in September, and the German Foreign Minister, Annalena Baerbock, in December.



President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority visited Ireland, September 2022 © Government Information Service

Support provided to the diplomatic corps:

Provided assistance to



1 New resident diplomatic mission opened in Ireland in 2022 (Luxembourg)

11

Credentials ceremonies arranged



32 Ambassadors presented credentials

137

National Day messages issued



588 ID cards issued to accredited officials

335 Visas processed for accredited officials



2 New Honorary Consuls Appointed

2,275

duties/tax exemption requests processed

230 Diplomatic vehicles processed



21 Certificates of exemption for work permit issued

1,486

Incoming diplomatic clearance requests processed



788

Outgoing diplomatic clearance requests processed



51

Letters of Credence prepared for Irish Ambassadors abroad



6

Consular Commissions prepared for Consuls General abroad



**Goal 4 - Our Prosperity:
To advance Ireland's
prosperity by extending our
influence and promoting
our interests internationally**

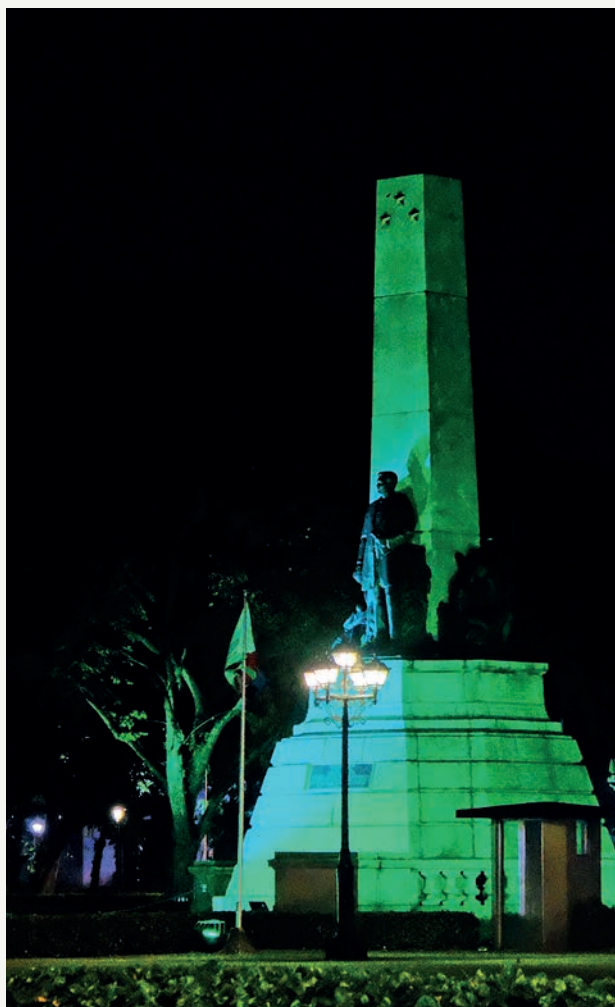


Saint Patrick's Day

The St Patrick's Day programme for 2022 delivered strongly on the Government's objective of re-engaging with the Irish abroad and our key partners and friends, expressing solidarity with the people of Ukraine, and reaffirming Ireland's dedication to democratic and humanitarian values.

For the first time since 2019, members of the government travelled abroad to undertake ambitious programmes of engagements to deliver on these objectives and promote Ireland as a great place in which to live, work or study; to invest in, or to visit.

The Taoiseach, Tánaiste, the Attorney General and 29 Ministers/Ministers of State carried out 41 programmes, in 64 cities, across 30 countries (in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Asia), the first visit beginning on 8 March and the last visit concluding on 21 March.



Rizal Park Monument in the Philippines lit in green to celebrate St Patrick's Day, 2022 © Jo Ocampo

Inward Media Visit

In November 2022, the Department arranged a visit for fourteen European based international economics journalists, with the support of a range of other Government Departments and State Agencies. The visit was aimed at explaining Ireland's economic model, and what is, and continues to be, critical to our prosperity. It included technical briefings, site visits, and meetings with key economic and political stakeholders. The programme highlighted how resilient the Irish economy had been during the pandemic, how well the economy continues to perform, and the key strengths of our economic model including our highly educated and skilled workforce, membership of the EU, and a stable economic and political environment.

Expo

In March 2022, Ireland concluded a very successful participation in Expo 2020 Dubai (delayed due to COVID). A three-day St Patrick's Day Festival was held culminating in a gala concert at the incredible Al Wasl Dome in Dubai on 17 March. The Government was represented by Minister Darragh O'Brien T.D. The concert was staged in conjunction with the National Concert Hall and curated by world renowned musician Martin Hayes. The event showcased Ireland's finest performers to the audience in the UAE and around the world on a livestream.

Following on from the success of Expo Dubai, in April 2022, the Government approved Ireland's participation in Expo 2025, to be held in Osaka, Japan from April to October 2025. Participation will be managed through a 'Team Ireland' approach and will strengthen Ireland's bilateral relationship with Japan. It will highlight Irish innovation, support trade, investment, and tourism opportunities driving awareness of Ireland's attractiveness as a place to live, visit, study, and work and do business.



The St Patrick's Day Gala Concert at Expo © Expo 2020

Bloomsday and Ulysses100

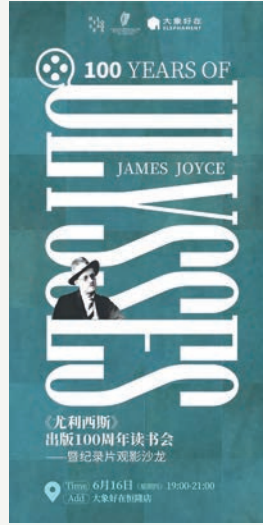
Global celebrations of Bloomsday were amplified in 2022 to mark Ulysses100, the centenary of the publication of James Joyce's *Ulysses*.

DFA partnered with Museum of Literature Ireland (MoLI) to produce *Hold to the Now*, a short film created in collaboration with Irish Embassies and Consulates worldwide. Filming took place in 36 locations across five continents, with performers including actors Stephen Fry and Glenn Keogh, acclaimed Irish performance artist Amanda Coogan, and one of the world's most eminent Joyceans, 94-year-old Dr Fritz Senn, President of the James Joyce Foundation in Zurich. With an original score by concertina master Cormac Begley, *Hold to the Now* was viewed over 11.5 million times across social media.

Irish Embassies and Consulates organised a second annual Global Joycean Book Giveaway, distributing over 3,500 copies of Joyce's works across four continents, in 12 languages ranging from Vietnamese, Indonesian and Japanese to Portuguese, Hungarian and Croatian. The initiative was delivered in partnership with libraries, schools, universities, bookshops, literary cafés and cultural centres, including remote libraries in the Australian outback and street cafés in Indonesia.

The diplomatic network organised a rich diversity of events in collaboration with local partners, including an isiZulu performance of Molly Bloom's soliloquy in Johannesburg, a Vietnamese version of *Dubliners* in Hanoi, newly commissioned *Ulysses* murals by acclaimed Irish artist Aideen Barry in Hungary and by 18 universities across Brazil, and a jazz-inflected Joycean song cycle in San Francisco.

DFA licensed the major RTÉ documentary, *100 Years of Ulysses* for global presentation, with screenings held in Athens, Kunming, Hanoi, Hong Kong, Mainz, Manila, Riga, Sao Paulo, Sarajevo and Wellington.



Global celebrations for Ulysses100 included: Embassy Beijing, with Yunnan Art Critics Association, hosted a Bloomsday screening of the RTÉ documentary, *100 Years of Ulysses*; Embassy Budapest partnered on a newly commissioned mural by leading Irish artist Aideen Barry in Szombathely; the 'Proteus' mural by William Lacerda Reis Galdino Soares and Luis Arthur Santos, in partnership with Embassy of Ireland, Brazil © DFA

Centenary Programme: States of Modernity

As part of the Decade of Centenaries, an ambitious series of interlinked events and exhibitions took place in the Midwest US, Ireland, and European capitals in 2022. DFA partnered with institutions on both sides of the Atlantic to explore the forging of modern Ireland and Irish identity, including Trinity College Dublin, the Centre Culturel Irlandais (Paris), the Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies and the Snite Museum of Art (both at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana).

Expansion of specialist Cultural Officer network

As a flagship initiative of the Global Ireland strategy, and in partnership with Culture Ireland, seven specialist Cultural Officer posts have been created since 2021 to widen and deepen our global cultural engagement in specific locations, namely Beijing, Berlin, London, Los Angeles, New York, Paris and Sao Paulo. The posts for Western US (based in Los Angeles) and Latin America and Caribbean (based in Sao Paulo) were filled in 2022, enhancing Ireland's visibility, influence and reputation, and deepening bilateral and regional cultural relations.

Asia-Pacific

2022 saw a significant increase in Government engagement in the Asia Pacific region, although Covid-19 restrictions remained in place for some countries, including China. Ireland's engagement included the visit by the Taoiseach to Japan and Singapore for political and economic engagements. In Tokyo, the Taoiseach signed a Joint Leaders' Statement with Prime Minister Kishida, setting an ambitious framework for bilateral relations for the next decade. The Taoiseach also broke ground on Ireland House Tokyo. Building works are now underway and the facility is expected to be fully operational by 2025. The Tánaiste and the Minister of Agriculture, Food and the Marine visited Singapore and Minister of State Troy visited India. Further Ministerial visits took place to Australia, Japan, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Thailand and Vietnam.

Trade with the Asia Pacific region continued to increase; the Government target of achieving €100 billion in two-way trade with the region was achieved and surpassed. During the second year of our term on the United Nations Security Council, Ireland was actively engaged in the Council's response to Afghanistan, DPRK, and Myanmar. In December 2022, the Council adopted Resolution 2669, calling for an end to violence in Myanmar. Ireland contributed to growing the EU's relationship with Asia, including in advance of Summits with ASEAN, Japan and China.

Building on the recent opening of Irish diplomatic missions in Manila, Mumbai and Wellington, a Government decision was taken to open a new Embassy in Islamabad by 2025. The Asian Gaelic Games resumed in Kuala Lumpur in October 2022, with support from Ireland's diplomatic network. DFA's Asia Pacific Regional Fund directed over €350,000 to enable strategic projects by Embassies and Consulates General promoting Ireland's values, as well as our political and economic interests, across the region.

Local Market Teams

Ireland's overseas network of embassies, consulates and state agencies have worked together collaboratively as Local Market Teams (LMTs) in key markets and geographical regions across the globe since 2010. LMTs, convened and chaired by embassies, are the embodiment of Team Ireland cooperation, as envisaged in the *Global Ireland 2025 Strategy*, and a key delivery mechanism for the realisation of the ambition to double Ireland's impact in the world. Implementation of the *Global Ireland Strategy* has seen the significant expansion of the Team Ireland footprint overseas. This means that enhanced and strengthened LMTs are now coordinating activity in 30+ markets, within the framework of the Government's *Trade & Investment Strategy 2022-2026: Value for Ireland, Values for the World*. The Review of LMTs, a priority action under this Strategy, reaffirmed the role and real value of LMTs. The implementation of the recommendations of the LMT Review, already well underway, will ensure Team Ireland overseas is best placed, and supported, to deliver for Ireland and Irish interests into the future.

Local Market Team Activity in 2022 Key Statistics



No. of Team Meetings –

Over 100

meetings in 2022



No. of Team Reports –

26

covering 30 markets



St Patrick's Day –

Hundreds

of events designed and delivered by all Local Market Teams



LMTs present in all of the world's biggest economies, covering approximately

80%

of the world's GDP and over 4 billion people



Since 2011, over

320

LMT plans have been implemented around the world.

Goal 5 - Our Effectiveness: To strengthen our effectiveness and capacity to deliver on our goals



DFA Communications in 2022

The Communications team leads across four key strands

- » Press Office
- » Multimedia and Digital
- » Public Diplomacy & Content
- » Irish Aid

In 2022, the press office dealt with more than 850 media queries covering major stories like the invasion of Ukraine, political challenges posed by Brexit, and the surge in applications for passports which led to extensive media scrutiny. The press team supported a high-level visit by the then Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall involving over 110 media.

The press office also drove a number of proactive campaigns including national consular support and a national passports campaign involving radio, digital, press and outdoor.

A particular target was to increase coverage of Irish Aid. Proactive media engagement throughout 2022 resulted in 158 national media reports featuring Irish Aid. This included a successful ministerial visit to the Horn of Africa with RTÉ.

Comms Unit supported major initiatives to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Ireland joining the EEC/EU including Ministers and EU Ambassadors visiting schools on Europe Day, the EU50 Single Market Conference, the EU50 Iveagh House Lecture Series. A video produced for Europe Day was viewed almost one million times on Twitter.



French Minister of State for European Affairs, Laurence Boone, speaking at the EU50 Single Market Conference © DFA



Visitors enjoy the Global Ireland Marquee at the National Ploughing Championships 2022 © DFA

DFA undertook a strategic and targeted use of social media, creating video assets for St. Patrick's Day, Bloomsday and the conclusion of our role on the UN Security Council. These campaigns led to significant increases in engagement -- approximately 56 million impressions and over 700,000 engagements across Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. A video created for St. Patrick's Day was viewed almost 9 million times. We greatly improved engagement with embassy accounts with 167 Twitter accounts and a combined following of 922,000.

There were 17.4 million visits to DFA websites. The development of ireland.ie commenced in 2022. The platform is part of the Government's Global Ireland 2025 Strategy which aims to develop ireland.ie as a central digital hub for information and showcases Ireland by engaging with specific targeted international audiences on tourism, trade, education and cultural promotion, the diaspora, Ireland's foreign policy and international development priorities.

The Comms team led the Department's presence at the Electric Picnic festival and the National Ploughing Championships, where an average of 6,000 visitors per day attended the Global Ireland Marquee.

The Communications Team invested heavily in building capacity for proactive strategic communications in 2022. A 'Communications Network' was established involving Embassies and Consulates meeting online to share experiences, guidance and support from HQ Comms. Progress was made in strengthening the Department's capacity for public diplomacy and outreach through the consolidation of an in-house Content Studio, governed by a new Editorial Board which meets on a fortnightly basis.

Social Media and Press Relations in 2022

@DFATIRL


95,475

Followers of our official Departmental Twitter Account @dfatirl

An **increase of 15%**, since 2021

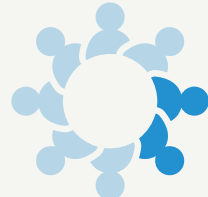


167 **Twitter accounts** with 10 operated by HQ and 97 by missions abroad and 60 Head of Mission accounts



921,516 **audience** across all accounts

16% increase since 2021

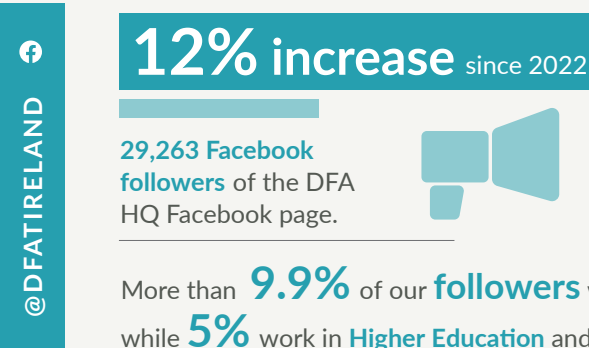


@DFATIRELAND

12% increase since 2022

29,263 Facebook followers of the DFA HQ Facebook page.

More than **9.9%** of our **followers** work in **Government Administration**, while **5%** work in **Higher Education** and **4.2%** in the **non-profit sector**



71 accounts with 4 operated from HQ and 67 by missions abroad

Facebook users **followed** our pages by the end of 2022 **8% increase on 2021**



YOUTUBE

6.5M

views in 2022 of videos on Irish Foreign Ministry channel



INSTAGRAM

28 accounts with more than **63,500 followers**



Press and Media

850+ **press queries** handled in 2021



Over **9 million** views of the St Patrick's Day 2022 videos



110+ media accredited for visit to Ireland Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall in March 2022



218 **Press Releases** issued



Our Online Presence in 2022

97
Diplomatic
Mission
Websites



69 Embassies



20 Consulates



8 Multilateral Organisations
& Other

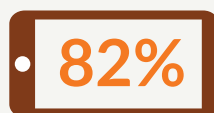


Website Visits: **15,872,075** **17,354,240** **↑ 9.34%**
2021 2022



Page
Views

44,971,564



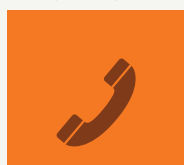
of visitors accessed
via mobile/tablet
devices



of visitors accessed
via desktop

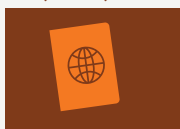
Top five pages
accessed
2022

10,483,945



Passport
Contact Us

3,111,554



Track your
Passport

2,716,181



Passport Online

1,058,848



Passport
Turnaround Times

1,004,868



Travel Advice
for Spain

Top ten Irish Embassy
websites by number
of visits:

1. **India**
2. **Great Britain**
3. **Turkey**
4. **UAE**
5. **Nigeria**
6. **China**
7. **Japan**
8. **USA**
9. **Germany**
10. **Canada**



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

1. **London**
2. **Birmingham**
3. **New York**
4. **Edinburgh**
5. **Glasgow**
6. **Dubai**
7. **Manchester**
8. **Croydon**
9. **Sydney**
10. **Leeds**



Global Island Policy Series (GIPS)

The Policy Planning Unit (PPU) contributes to strategic policy formulation by providing forward-looking analysis of long-term trends and carrying out innovative policy projects.

PPU's Global Island Policy Series of seminars (GIPS) aims to improve the Department's understanding of a broad range of policy issues. After a period of taking place fully online during the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2022 the unit began to host some of these events in hybrid format (indicated with an asterisk below). GIPS seminars in 2022 focused on topics ranging from the African Union/ European Union Summit, COP27, preventing genocide, Brazil, Russia, and Ukraine. The total DFA audience figure across GIPS events in 2022 was approximately 750.

COVID reporting

In Quarter 1 2022, Policy Planning Unit continued to play a role in collecting, collating and circulating regular COVID-19 reports across the wider Government system. Drawing on Ireland's network of diplomatic Missions, PPU's reports highlighted the latest updates from abroad regarding cases, public health measures such as lockdowns, and the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination programme worldwide.

Security and Corporate Compliance

Ensuring the security of our people, systems and information was a key priority for the Security Unit in 2022. A new corporate approach to mission security and a framework of security standards was introduced to strengthen the culture of security in the Department and at missions. Our collaborative work with An Garda Síochána, the Department of Defence, Defence Forces and trusted partners also included in person and virtual bespoke training and supports to colleagues both as part of pre-posting security training and in response to emerging crises.

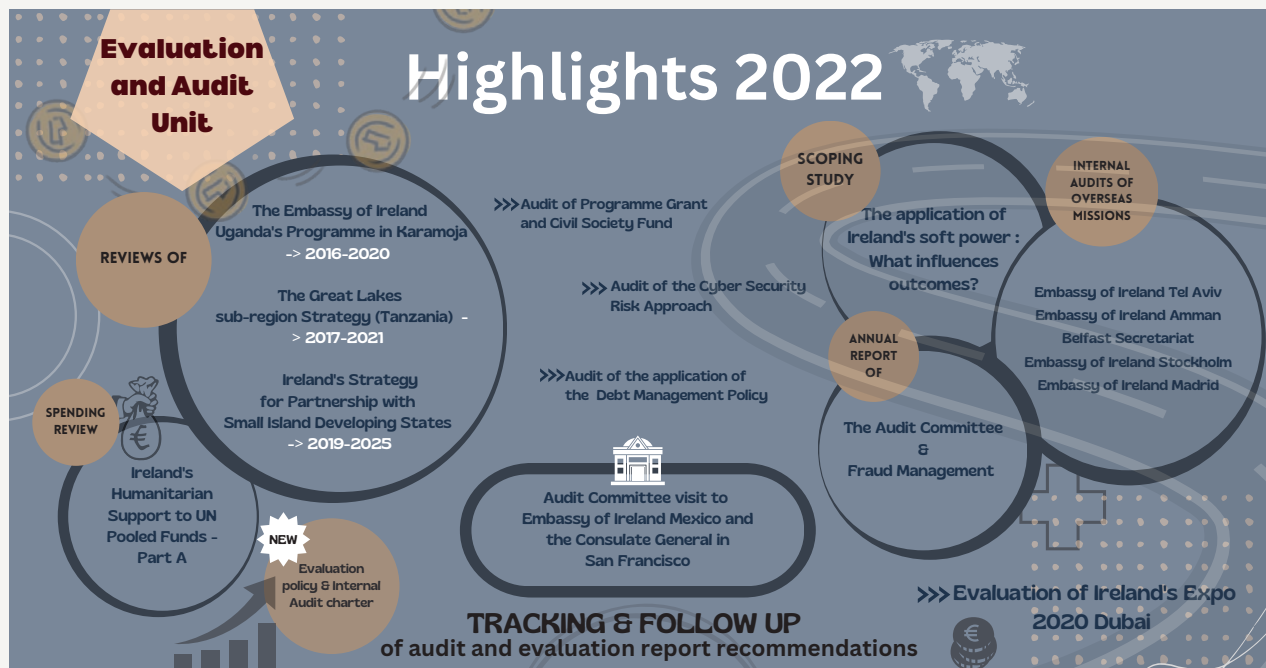
ICT and Cyber Security

In 2022, the Department's Digital Transformation Strategy was launched with three key goals: "Strengthening organisational capability to better exploit digital technology", "Provide first class citizen services and business systems" and "Enhancing collaboration and communication in globally distributed and blended work environments"

In June 2022, the Department's Evaluation and Audit Unit carried out a compliance assessment of the efficacy of the Department's internal Cyber Security control environment as measured against the National Cyber Security Centres "Public Sector Cyber Security Baseline Standards".

The cyber security team undertook an exercise focussing on the technical cyber security controls and the associated response to a simulated cyber-attack.

Strengthening cyber security capacity and capability is a strategic priority of the Department's Digital Transformation Strategy.



Evaluation & Audit

The Evaluation and Audit Unit (EAU) is an independent unit within the Department’s corporate governance structure, reporting to the Secretary General. The Unit’s role is to support, protect and enhance the delivery of the Department’s mission by providing objective assessment, assurance, advice and insight regarding corporate performance, governance, risk management and internal controls. In the course of its work, the EAU works closely with Departmental colleagues, striving to strengthen the effectiveness of our development and diplomatic programmes.

To achieve greater accountability over the EAU’s managed evaluations and reviews, senior Departmental management are responsible for implementation of recommendations, which are monitored and tracked by the Unit. The work of the EAU is reviewed by the Audit Committee of the Department, which provides an independent appraisal of the audit and evaluation function including overseeing progress made in implementing the recommendations arising from audits and evaluations.

Audit Committee Secretariat

The Department’s independent Audit Committee is appointed by the Secretary General to provide independent appraisal of the Department’s audit and evaluation arrangements with a view to strengthening governance, risk management and internal controls in the Department, as well as helping to enhance the effective operation of the audit and evaluation function, as set out in the Audit Committee’s [Charter](#). The Audit Committee’s activities and work for the year are captured in the Committee’s 2022 Annual Report, which is published on the Department’s website, [here](#). The Evaluation and Audit Unit supports the Audit Committee in delivering its responsibilities through allocation of staff to the Committee Secretariat.



Audit Committee with Members of Congress during a Mission visit to the Embassy of Ireland, Mexico and the Consulate General, San Francisco, October 2022 © DFA

Archives

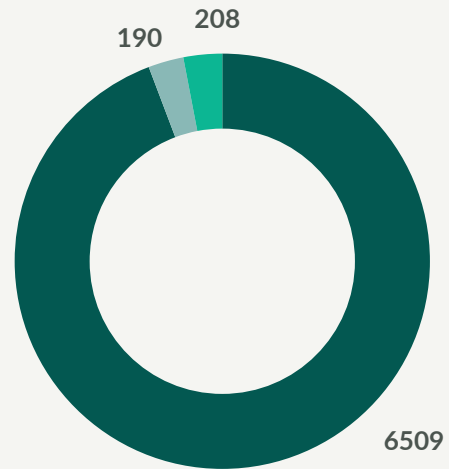
The Department's annual transfer to the National Archives for 2022 for records older than 30 years was completed on schedule. In total 10,126 files were transferred by the Department for release to the public on 1 January 2023. This is the largest transfer the Department has ever made and it continues to be the lead transferring Department to the National Archives. Included in this transfer were 1,467 Anglo-Irish files from 1997 and 1998 as part of the Northern Ireland Records Project.



Files prepared by the DFA Archives Unit for transfer to the National Archives © DFA

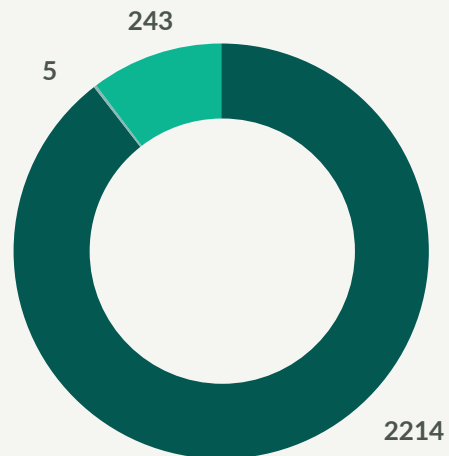
272 FOI Requests in 2022

HQ files over 30 years old



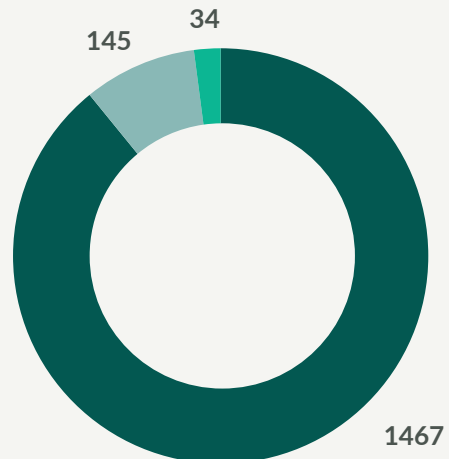
Released in full Released with abstractions Restricted

Mission files over 30 years old



Released in full Released with abstractions Restricted

Anglo Irish files over 20 years old



Released in full Released with abstractions Restricted

Wellbeing at Work

The DFA Wellbeing at Work programme was formally established in 2019 as part of the Department's HR Strategy with the aim of supporting staff to achieve their potential through the deployment of a broad range of responsive and tailored wellbeing initiatives.

The programme is structured around four key pillars, namely physical, social, mental and environmental wellbeing and is driven by the HR Workplace Relations Unit with the support of a Wellbeing Committee and network of Wellbeing Champions. Initiatives and interventions are developed having regard for the needs of staff, both at home and abroad as well as the future and strategic needs of the Department.

A bi-weekly programme of online wellbeing events is the beating heart of the programme and ensures a steady and varied mix of speakers and workshops. From a physical perspective we have also established the annual walking challenge, a running group, we fund the departmental choir and we have also supported events like the PwC Relays and the Grant Thornton 5K as well as meditation classes, cookery classes and more.

We have introduced a range of new policies to support staff in their day-to-day work including a Maternity Leave Supports Policy, a Bereavement Policy, a Blended Working Policy, a Menopause Policy and a Safeguarding policy.

Another area that we have focused on is mental wellbeing and we have engaged in a collaboration with Saint Patrick's Mental Health Services to develop a tailored wellbeing and resilience programme to various cohorts of staff across the Department but specifically to colleagues who are working in extreme risk missions or who have undertaken particularly challenging assignments.

From an environmental perspective we have banned the procurement of single-use plastics at HQ, we've added additional recycling facilities and, we've installed filtered drinking-water dispensers and provided staff with reusable water flasks. We've also installed bee hives on the roof of our Mount Street building and we've greened our offices.

Finally, we are delighted and extremely proud to announce that our wellbeing programme won the 2022 national CIPD award for 'Embedding a culture of workplace wellbeing', recognising the commitment and progress the Department has made to support workplace wellbeing.

**CIPD | HR AWARDS 2022
WINNER |**

Training & Development

2022 saw the continued rollout of the Department's Learning & Development Framework. Due to the continued COVID-19 restrictions around face-to-face meetings, Training & Development Unit continued to successfully deliver all staff training online. Further improvements were made to the online delivery of the pre-posting programme. Thankfully, we were allowed to deliver some of our programmes in person, albeit in limited circumstances.

One of the highlights of 2022 was the rollout of a Foreign Service Entry Programme (FSEP). Launched in January 2022, the FSEP is a bespoke in-house programme, developed primarily for newly recruited Diplomatic and Development Specialist grades. We also opened these training sessions to the wider Department. The aim of the programme is to increase individual knowledge of the Department's work, enhance understanding and improve core diplomatic skills. We delivered this programme consisting of seven thematic areas delivered across 12 modules across the calendar year to 171 officers using a blend of online delivery, workshops and in-person sessions.

To support our colleagues preparing for posting in 2022, Training & Development Unit delivered a comprehensive pre-posting programme of 62 modules to 130 staff over 29 days. The majority of these sessions were recorded and made available to staff on the Learning Management System (LMS) platform for future reference.

We also delivered a Leadership programme to our 36 newly appointed Heads of Mission (HoM) and 28 Deputy Heads of Mission (DHoM). These leadership programmes were designed to support these colleagues over the first 12 months in these challenging roles.

In 2022 we also introduced the Regional Training Programme. Developed in conjunction with the HR Abroad Learning & Development team, the aim of this training programme is to reinforce the skillset of our staff at missions abroad and create an opportunity to build peer network groups across the regions. The programme provides a shared standard of training and understanding of the Department's work across missions, whilst working to cultivate and maintain a culture of continuous learning. So far, we have delivered this 6-day programme to 195 posted and local staff colleagues across 26 Missions in North America, Asia, Africa, India & Middle East. We plan to reach all regions by end 2023.

2022 also saw the continued rollout of the Department's Foreign Language Policy. In 2022 we delivered 8,149 hours of language training to 306 officers across 31 different languages.

Further to the above, we also:

- » Hosted two induction programmes for 85 new members of staff;
- » Trained up 46 new duty officers to support the Department's out-of-office consular support service;
- » Facilitated 620 members of DFA staff to undertake 84 modules of training from the OneLearning catalogue;
- » Supported 35 officers through the Refund of Fees scheme at an approximate cost of €110,744.

Recruitment Campaigns



Interviews -
HR Abroad Participation
48 Interview days **32** Missions/
Campaigns

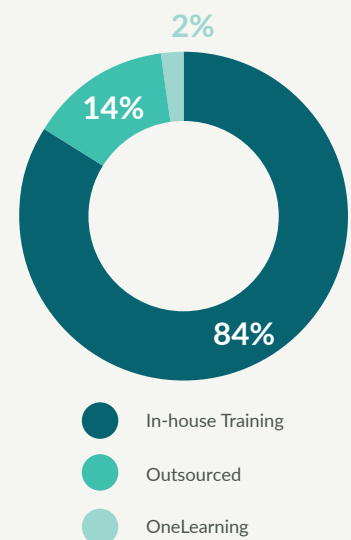
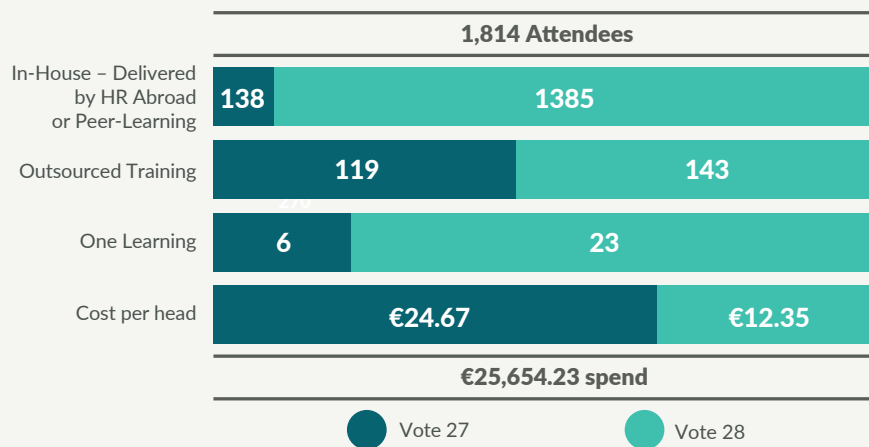


Recruitment
Campaigns
263



New
Posts
52

Learning and Development Numbers Trained in 2022

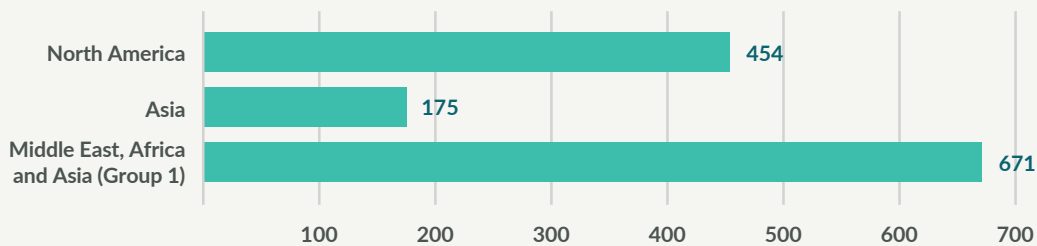



**Numbers Trained
 (inc. RTP)**
3114


Total Spend
€25,654.23


Cost per Head
€14.14

**Regional Training Programme
 (In collaboration with Training and Development Unit)**



Local Staff Training in 2022



Appendix



Appendix I: Financial Overview

The Department of Foreign Affairs is committed to the provision of value for money to Irish taxpayers and to transparency in all our financial dealings.

The Foreign Affairs Group of Votes were allocated a Gross Expenditure Allocation of €1.035 billion in 2022 across two Votes: Vote 27 (International Co-Operation) and Vote 28 (Foreign Affairs).

The Department's expenditure was allocated across six Programmes corresponding to the High-Level Goals set out in the Department's Statement of Strategy 2021-2023, in support of the Department's main work priorities, as outlined in this Annual Report. One of the Programmes was managed through Vote 27 and five Programmes were managed through Vote 28. The budget allocations for each Programme included pay and non-pay administration costs incurred by business units in Ireland and at our overseas diplomatic missions.

The initial 2022 gross expenditure allocation for **Vote 27**, including a capital allocation of €2.5 million, was €604.9 million (versus €571 million in 2021, an increase of 5.9%). In addition, a supplementary estimate of €30 million was

approved in November 2022. The overall allocation for administration for Vote 27 was €40.9 million, which represented an increase of 6.1% on the 2021 allocation. The final gross outturn was €632 million.

The initial 2022 gross expenditure allocation for **Vote 28**, including a capital allocation of €22.5 million, was €316.4 million (versus €281.4 million in 2021, an increase of 12.4%). In addition, a supplementary estimate of €84 million was approved in November 2022. The overall allocation for administration for Vote 28 was €239.4 million, which represented an increase of 15% on the 2021 allocation. The final gross outturn was €396.1 million.

Capital investment in 2022 focused on the acquisition and construction of new premises for our diplomatic missions, most notably the construction of a new Ireland House in Tokyo, as well as investment in the Passport Service, ICT and other office equipment and vehicles.

A total of €80.5 million income was received across both Votes, primarily from Passport fees and other consular income, as well as VAT refunds at diplomatic missions overseas.

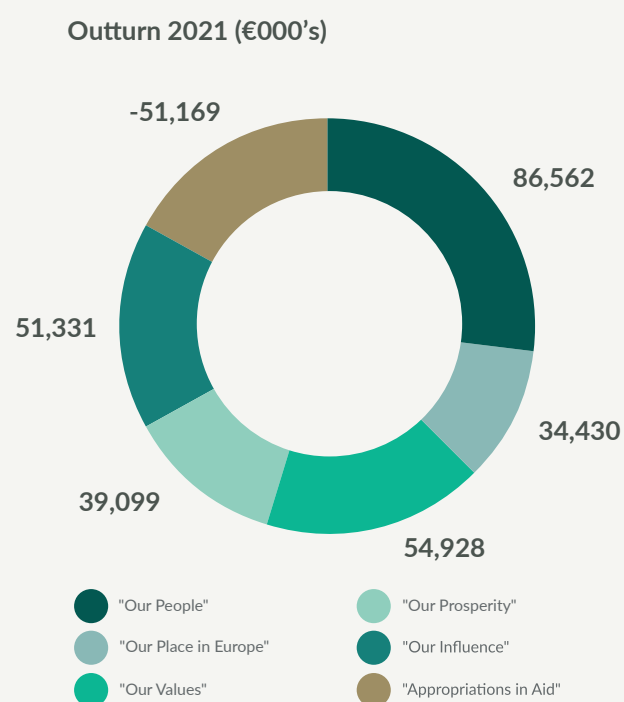
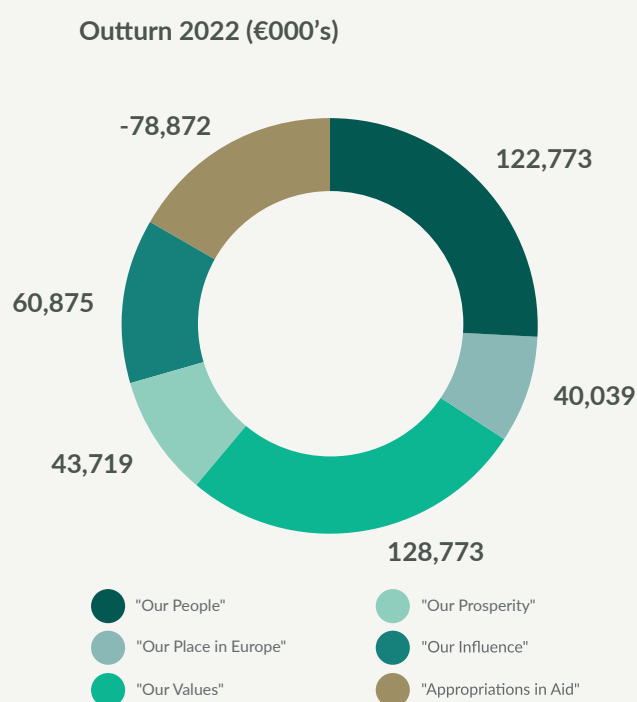
Department of Foreign Affairs Accounts

Vote 27: International Cooperation

		Figures in €000's	
PROGRAMME: WORK ON POVERTY AND HUNGER REDUCTION		Outturn 2022	Outturn 2021
A.1	Administration - pay	22,480	20,861
A.2	Administration - non pay	15,691	14,163
A.3	Bilateral co-operation and humanitarian assistance	513,710	444,668
A.4	Contributions to international funds for the benefit of developing countries	36,341	45,507
A.5	Contributions to United Nations and other development agencies	43,800	43,074
Gross Expenditure		632,022	568,273
B	Appropriations-in-Aid	1,676	1,041
Net Expenditure		630,346	567,232

Vote 28: Foreign Affairs

Programmes	Figures in €000's	
	Outturn 2022	Outturn 2021
A  "Our People"	€122,773	€86,562
B  "Our Place in Europe"	€40,039	€34,430
C  "Our Values"	€128,773	€54,928
D  "Our Prosperity"	€43,719	€39,099
E  "Our Influence"	€60,875	€51,331
Gross Expenditure	€396,179	€266,350
F Appropriations in Aid	- €78,872	- €51,169
	€317,307	€215,181



Green Public Procurement Report

As per Circular 20/2019: Promoting the use of Environmental and Social Considerations in Public Procurement, the Department is required to publish details of the number and value of contracts over €25,000 by priority sector, where Green Public Procurement has been incorporated. In the limited instances where the Department procures domestically in relation to these

priority sectors, it is our policy to use central Office of Government Procurement (OGP) frameworks, which take account of Green Public Procurement considerations. The majority of domestic procurement by the Department involves the engagement of professional services and consultancies and this is reflected in the table below.

Reference year 2022	A. Total number of contracts signed over €25,000 by priority sector	B. Total value of contracts signed over €25,000 by priority sector. All values should be VAT exclusive	C. Total number of contracts signed over €25,000 by priority sector which have incorporated GPP	D. Total value of contracts signed over €25,000 by priority sector which have incorporated GPP. All values should be VAT exclusive
ICT Services	1	€75,000	0	€0
Indoor Cleaning Services	1	€2,928,000	1	€2,928,000
Transport	2	€134,481	2	€134,481
Priority Sector* subtotal	4	€3,137,481	3	€3,062,481

* Ten sectors for which GPP criteria have been developed by the EPA, based on common EU criteria, with adaptations to reflect the Irish market and procurement practices

Reference year 2022	A. Total number of contracts signed over €25,000 by other sector	B. Total value of contracts signed over €25,000 by other sector	C. Total number of contracts signed over €25,000 by other sector which have incorporated GPP	D. Total value of contracts signed over €25,000 by other sector which have incorporated GPP
Professional Services	7	€2,400,400	0	€0
Training	1	€39,500	0	€0
Managed Services	3	€1,169,749	0	€0
Consultancy	5	€432,000	2	€155,000
Other Sector subtotal	16	€4,041,649	2	€155,000
All Sectors Totals	20	€7,179,130	5	€3,217,481

Appendix II: A more equal, diverse and inclusive Department

Publication of the GEDI Action Plan

In 2022, the Department took a significant step forward to redouble our commitment on issues relating to Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI). This journey towards an increasingly diverse and inclusive Department resulted in the publication of two landmark documents, namely the GEDI Policy and GEDI Action Plan, in which clear targets, outcomes, and actions were developed and committed to.

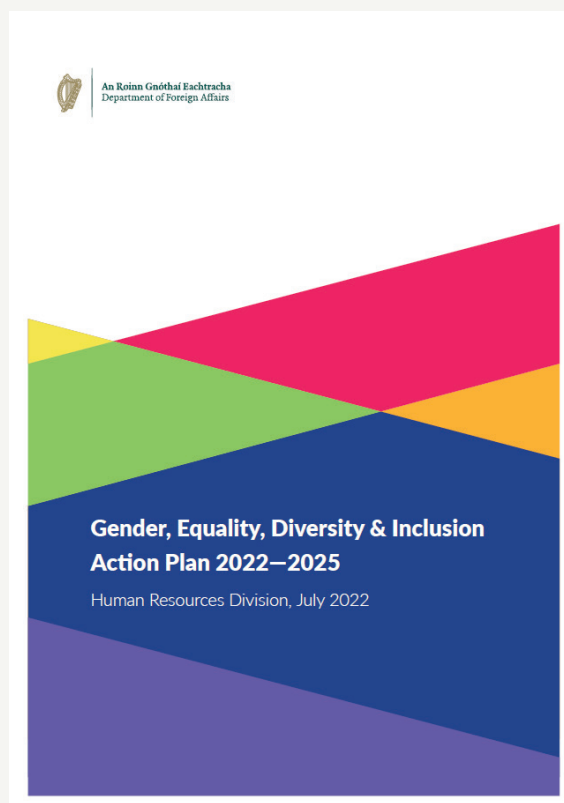
These were prepared in consultation with key stakeholders across the Department, including the Management Board Sub-Committee on Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI Sub-Committee), and members of the Management Board, as well as engagement with external organisations.

The objective of the policy and action plan is to align our practice and culture with the Department's core values; to deliver meaningful impact for staff and line managers; and to further develop systems, policies and practices that embed diversity and inclusion.

Building on the foundations in place, and with the ultimate goal of delivering better services for government and citizens, the Department is undertaking sustained work to lead to a considerable leap forward in:

- i. Staff experience of fairness and belonging.
- ii. Enhanced gender equality.
- iii. Effective talent management at all grades and in all locations.
- iv. Becoming a Department that better reflects the diversity of modern Ireland and that provides opportunities for all.

By the end of 2022, the positive impact of the Action Plan could be seen through the publication of the Department's Menopause Policy, the Guide to Supporting Transgender Colleagues, the appointment of an Equality Officer, and the awarding of Bronze Certification in "Investors in Diversity" programme from the Irish Centre for Diversity.



Achievement of ICD Bronze

To take stock take of efforts to date and to identify areas for further progress, the Management Board approved the engagement of the Irish Centre for Diversity (ICD) and the “Investors in Diversity” benchmarking programme.

In a first stage, ICD undertook an audit of the Department’s GEDI policies and procedures, which resulted in DFA becoming the first Government Department to achieve Bronze Certification from the Irish Centre for Diversity in March 2022.

A second stage of benchmarking involved ICD engaging with DFA staff on their experience of diversity and inclusion, through a survey of all staff at home and abroad, and focus group discussions. This engagement resulted in expert guidance and recommendations as to how DFA could further develop Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Department and provided the basis for the development of an Action Plan, approved by the Management Board in June 2022.

» A. HOMS:

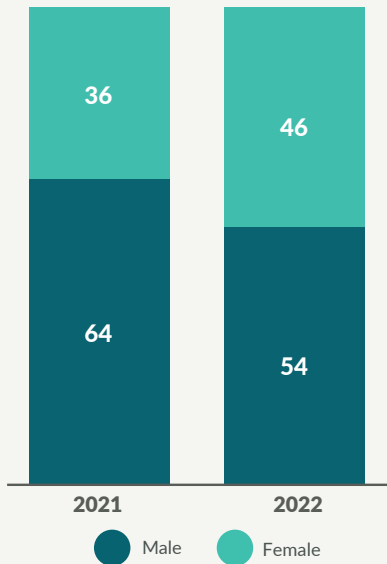
Once all of the 2023 Irish Heads of Mission appointments take effect, agreed in 2022, 52% of Ireland’s diplomatic missions will be headed by women. This will be the first time that over half of Ireland’s missions around the world will be led by women.

» B. Gender Pay Gap:

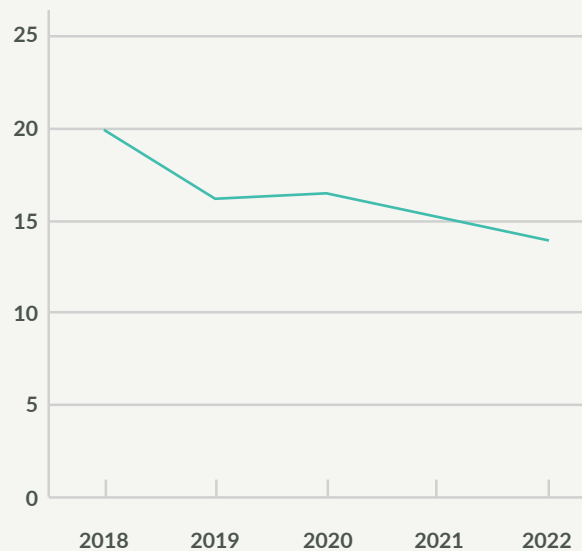
The Department of Foreign Affairs is fully committed to being an adaptable and resilient global workforce where a culture of dignity and respect is embedded and where everyone feels accepted, supported and valued. We have a globally distributed workforce and we invest significantly in supporting our people to perform to the highest levels.

The Department has been active in seeking to reduce the gender pay gap over a number of years and we are pleased that since 2013, the Department has reduced its Gender Pay Gap from just over 30% to 13.87% in June 2022.

% Gender breakdown of HOMS



Gender pay gap %



Appendix III: Sustainability and the Climate Action Roadmap

Sustainability and Climate Action

Enhancing the sustainability of our buildings, operations, systems and processes at headquarters and across the mission network was a key priority in the Department's Statement of Strategy 2021-23. The Department has been consistently active nationally and internationally across all aspects of the Climate Action agenda. Our aim is twofold; to meet the targets detailed in the Government's Climate Action Plan and to be recognised both nationally and internationally as a Green Foreign Ministry with strong green credentials.

In 2022 the Department continued to progress the Green Foreign Ministry initiative which was first launched in 2019. The Department's Green Committee continued to meet bi-monthly in 2022, to drive sustainability initiatives throughout the Department. Some highlights from 2022 are as follows;

- » The Department reduced Green House Gas Emissions from energy at its HQ buildings by **15%** in 2022. Emissions of 1,402,368kg of CO₂ were recorded, against the 2016-18 baseline of 1,654,053kg.
- » The Department achieved a **42.2%** increase in Energy Efficiency since the 2011 baseline and is on track to achieve the target of a **50%** reduction by 2030.
- » The Department continued to actively engage with the SEAI's Reduce Your Use Campaign to promote energy saving techniques to staff across the Department.

- » The Digital Transformation Strategic Framework 2022-2025 was launched and has begun the reduction in paper-based processes.
- » A further 7 missions achieved Green Star Mission status during 2022: Maputo, Sydney, Berlin, Bogotá, Amman, The Hague and Dar Es Salaam.
- » The Department will continue its role as co-chair of the Network of Sustainable Foreign Ministries along with Canada from January 2023.

Air Travel

By the end of February each year, all Government Departments are required to make a payment to the Climate Action Fund in relation to CO₂ emissions resulting from flights undertaken in the previous calendar year. For the Department of Foreign Affairs, this payment covers flights taken by staff based at HQ and at Missions abroad. For 2022, DFA made a payment of €72,045 to the Climate Action Fund. Further details are provided below for 2022 and for the two previous years, when the numbers of flights undertaken were depressed by COVID-19 restrictions.

Year	Flight Costs	KMs travelled	Tonnes of Carbon	Multiplier per Tonne	Payment to the Climate Action Fund
2022	€2,903,911	19,760,452	1,757	€41.00 per tonne	€72,045
2021	€1,747,427	13,586,528	1,095	€33.50 per tonne	€36,690
2020	€917,190	7,660,846	686	€26.00 per tonne	€17,833



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