

SPRING NEWSLETTER

May 2022



Ambasáid na hÉireann
Embassy of Ireland



Message from Dermot McGauran Ambassador of Ireland to the Slovak Republic



Dear Irish community, friends of Ireland,
A chairde,

Greetings from all at the Embassy of Ireland.

As the days get longer and brighter, this is traditionally a time of hope and renewal. That is especially so this year as the last of the public health restrictions have been lifted. It has been an exceptionally difficult two years and I am conscious that many of you have been personally touched by the pandemic. Let us hope that better times lie ahead.

We were very disappointed that the traditional Saint Patrick's Day reception could not go ahead on 17 March. Indeed, it was the third consecutive year without an Embassy reception and, we hope, the last.

We are therefore delighted to invite you to a **community reception on the evening of Wednesday 25 May at the Carlton Hotel**. This will be a great opportunity to reconnect as a community, to meet up with old friends and to make new acquaintances. Invitations will be issued by email about a fortnight beforehand. Children are most welcome.

While spring is a joyful time of the year, events in neighbouring Ukraine are a sobering reminder of the darkest chapters in European history. Russia's brutal war of aggression needs to be called out for what it is - immoral, unprovoked and unjustified. The horrific scenes that we witness on a daily basis on our television screens have no place in the 21st century. Ireland continues to support the widest possible sanctions against the Russian Federation.

Ireland has been to the forefront in efforts to bring about an end to this abhorrent madness. Last month, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Simon Coveney T.D. addressed the UN Security Council on Ukraine, including on his visit to Kyiv and Bucha on 14 April. In his speech, the Minister called on Russia directly to agree to an immediate humanitarian ceasefire and commit to negotiations. We have joined more than 40 countries, including the Slovak Republic, in referring the situation in Ukraine to the International Criminal Court (ICC). Minister Coveney has announced a further €3 million in funding to the ICC. The €20 million in humanitarian aid provided by the Government is being disbursed through UN and NGO partners in Ukraine and in neighbouring countries. Ireland is also contributing a further €33 million through the European Peace Facility. Ireland strongly supports Ukraine's application to join the European Union.

To date, almost 28,000 Ukrainians, mostly women and children, have fled the war and sought safety in Ireland. We expect that many more will come. The Government and wider community are doing all in their power to welcome them after the traumatic experience which they have been through.

I know that many of you have been directly involved in helping Ukrainians who have come to Slovakia, whether by volunteering at the border, raising money or providing much needed supplies. I want to salute you for your humanitarian engagement. You are a credit to Ireland.

We hope you enjoy our Spring Newsletter. We are very pleased to publish an article by the *Slovak Shamrocks*, an energetic and dynamic club who are always looking for new members. We marked this year's Saint Patrick's Day by planting trees across the length and breadth of the country. As they grow, these young oaks will not only enhance the environment for future generations but be a symbol of the enduring friendship between Ireland and Slovakia. And rather than asking our Slovak partners to light their buildings in green on 17 March, we encouraged them to show solidarity with the people of Ukraine by turning gold and blue on our national holiday.

We look forward to seeing you on 25 May.

Message from Janet O’Sullivan Consul at the Embassy of Ireland to the Slovak Republic

Hello Friends of the Irish Community

Unfortunately, an in person reception for Saint Patricks Day was not possible again this year. A big thank you and well done to all at Uisce Beatha who showed the virtual reception and also raised over 1,500 euro to help Ukrainians at the Slovak border.

It’s great to see that the Slovak Shamrock Team are back and have got the 2022 season off to a flying start, successfully retaining their title against Vienna Gaels and taking part in the first ever GAA tournament to be held in Salzburg.

The next big event for the team is the International tournament on 28th May. It would be lovely to see as many as possible come along and support them.

After a host of cancelled events over the last two years, I am very much looking forward to meeting you all at the reception on the 25th May. If you cannot attend, I do hope that we will meet sometime over the summer. In the meantime, if you need any advice or assistance please feel free to contact us - our door is always open.

Finally, we are keen to reach as wide an audience as possible by both renewing and expanding our contacts list. If you know of any Irish people here in Slovakia – or indeed anyone with a connection to or affinity for Ireland – please encourage them to get in touch with us, bratislava@dfa.ie .

All the best
Janet

CONSULAR UPDATE

Before travelling this summer, please remember to check:

1. your passport is in date, you can renew your passport at [Passport Online - Department of Foreign Affairs \(dfa.ie\)](https://www.dfa.ie/passport)
2. Country Specific Travel Advice [Travel - Department of Foreign Affairs \(dfa.ie\)](https://www.dfa.ie/travel)
3. Have you registered with the Department? If not we would encourage you to register with the Department [here](https://www.dfa.ie/register).

If you have any upcoming events or information that you would like to share with the Irish community, please let us know and we will include this in the newsletter.

EMBASSY ACTIVITIES

Marking Saint Patrick's Day

- As part of the #greeningwithameaning initiative, the Embassy was proud to sponsor and plant trees in Trnava, Žilina and Chorvátsky Grob. As they grow, these trees will enhance the environment and be enjoyed by future generations for years to come. We chose Ireland's national tree, Sessile Oak (*Quercus Petraea*), which thrives in Slovakia. In addition, we marked the week of our national holiday by participating in a number of events to promote our beautiful country and further strengthen our relations with Slovakia.
- Ambassador McGauran met with the Mayor of Trnava, Peter Bročka at city hall on 15 March. The Mayor briefed the Ambassador on the many initiatives which he has undertaken to further enhance this outstandingly beautiful and historic city, justly called the *Slovak Rome*. After their meeting, the two walked through the city to admire the recently-planted Irish Oak which the Embassy was proud to co-sponsor with the city authorities.
- The Ambassador met with the President of the Žilina self-governing region, Erika Jurínová, on the beautiful and historic grounds of Budatín castle where they planted a Sessile Oak. If you are in Žilina, we recommend the *Wireworks* exhibition at the Považské Museum which is on display at the castle. The surrounding gardens are stunning and a protected national area.

During our meetings with them, both Mayor Bročka and President Jurínová set out the steps they are taking to help Ukrainians fleeing the war - in Trnava and the Žilina region as well as directly at the border.

- We were delighted to participate in the celebration of St. Patrick's day at the Faculty of Education of Trnava University and the Javorová Primary School in the Chorvátsky Grob on 15 and 16 March respectively. Ambassador McGauran talked to the pupils at Javorová about Saint Patrick's Day and its importance for Irish people around the world. The children asked many searching questions about Saint Patrick and Irish traditions and folklore.
- At the University of Trnava, we met with the faculty and joined academic staff and students alike in celebrating Ireland's national holiday. The Ambassador spoke about Ireland, its language, culture and traditions as well as our warm relations with Slovakia. It was an excellent opportunity to engage with students, some of whom had just returned from a visit to Ireland and who were keen to share their impressions.

The Ambassador and Embassy team would like to express sincere thanks to everyone for the warm and generous welcome which we received on our visits.

Across the world, including here in Slovakia, it has become an annual tradition for buildings and public landmarks to light up in green on Saint Patrick's Day. This year, as Ireland stands with Ukraine, we asked our generous partners to consider lighting their buildings in gold and blue instead as a sign of solidarity with the people of Ukraine. We are deeply grateful to all our Slovak partners for their ongoing friendship and cooperation on Saint Patrick's Day.



Slovak Chamber Theatre in Martin lit in the colours of Ukraine on 17th March as a mark of solidarity



Budatín Castle in Žilina in colours of Ukraine on 17th March as a mark of solidarity



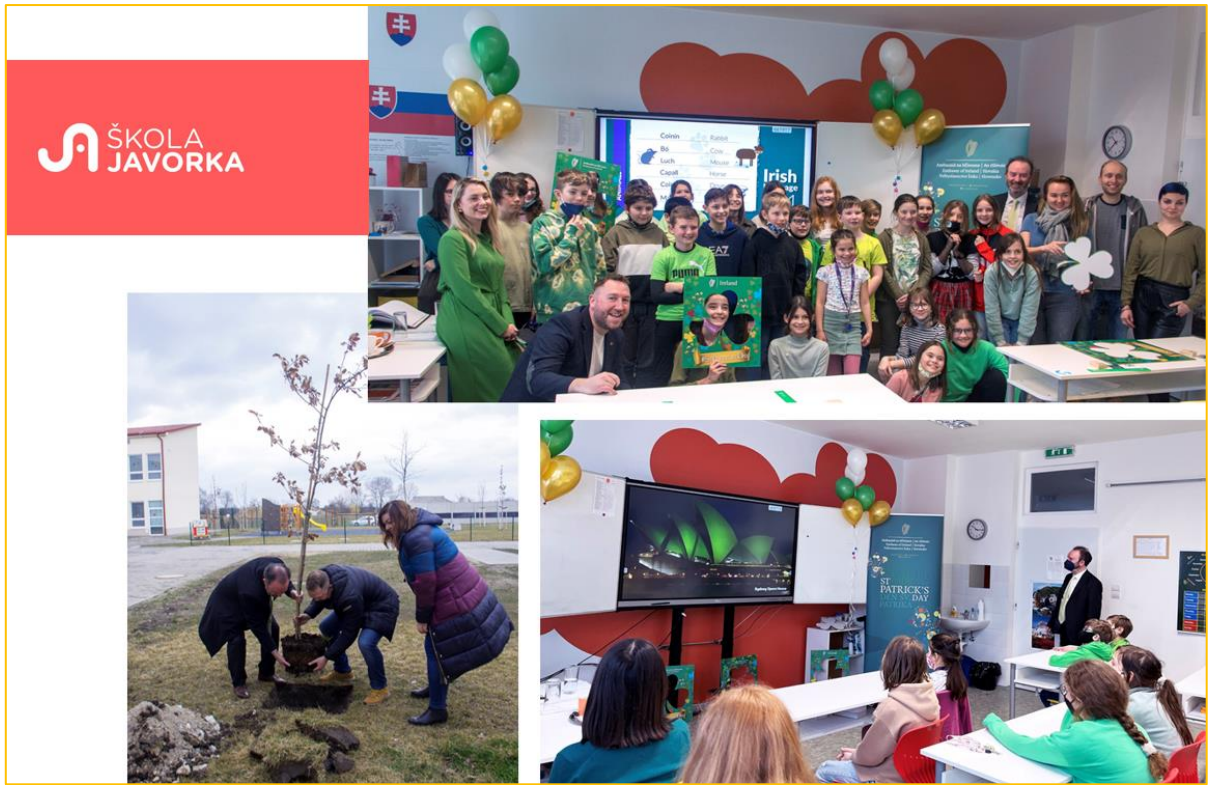
Slovak National Museum of Ukrainian culture lit in colours of Ukraine on 17th March as a mark of solidarity



Ambassador meeting Mayor Peter Bročka in Trnava, admiring the city and the recently planted Irish Oak.



Ambassador meeting President of Žilina Self-governing region Erika Jurínová, planting an Irish Oak and admiring the historic Budatín Castle and the fascinating "wireworks" exhibition



Ambassador at the Javorka elementary school meeting with pupils and planting another Irish Oak!



Ambassador at the Faculty of Education at the University of Trnava meeting with senior faculty staff and students during St. Patrick's Day celebrations.



Embassy team at French Institute in Bratislava

On 31st March, Consul Janet O'Sullivan and our new outreach officer, Ivana Pangracova were proud to showcase the best of Irish food & drink at the French Institute during the closing reception of the Francophonie month. Our selection of cheeses, meats and other delicacies was a great success.

On April 5th, the Embassy Team visited DePaul Slovensko, where the director Josef Kákoš, opened the new "Irish room" at the night shelter in Bratislava. The room is now adorned with pictures of Ireland. While there, we were pleased to meet Prof Luke O'Neill who is working with DePaul international & the DePaul warehouse team here in Slovakia in getting urgent supplies to Ukraine



Director Josef Kákoš, Prof O'Neill and Ambassador McGauran in Irish Room

On 9th May, the Embassy will participate in the Europe Day celebrations at the Stara Trznica in Bratislava. We will be promoting Ireland while also marking the 50th anniversary of Ireland's EU accession. **The programme is open to the general public.**

Discussions will include the **EU as a Peace Project**. There will also be **Language workshops** for students, adults and children aged 3-6. **A dance workshop** is being organised by the French dance school. **A contemporary theatre performance by LUDUS, aimed at teenagers**, will address populism, extremism, solidarity, human rights, civic responsibility and migration – many with direct resonance to the war in Ukraine.

For detailed programme, please visit [FB LINK](#)

SLOVAK SHAMROCKS GAA NEWS



Our Gaelic Football club, in its 11th year, continues to thrive after recovering from a challenging two years. We currently have 40 members (men and women of different nationalities and backgrounds) and are now beginning the 2022 season.

Training schedule in Bratislava:

Every Tuesday at 18:30 - Športový areál Nevädzová in Ruzinov

Every Sunday at 13:00 - Futbalový klub mládeže in Karlova Ves

We also host additional indoor sessions at Cambridge International School who have kindly sponsored us for this season's campaign.

On March 26th, we hosted the finals of the Danube Indoor League where we successfully retained our title against our friends and neighbours the Vienna Gaels.

On April 23rd, we made history by being part of the first ever GAA tournament to take place in Salzburg. It was a great weekend of football, hurling, and camogie. We wish Salzburg all the best as they begin their journey.

SLOVAK SHAMROCKS PRESENTS:

THE CENTRAL / EAST EUROPEAN GAELIC FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

28 MAY 2022
BRATISLAVA

08.00 - 17.30 Tournament
NŠK 1922 - Tomášikova 12444, Bratislava, Slovakia

19.30 - 23.30 Trophy Presentation
Centrálne klubovňa, Križna 64, Ružinov

23.30 - 02.30 Afterparty
Goblin's Pub, Michalska 12

GAA
BE THERE. ALL THE WAY.

LGFA
LADIES GAELIC FOOTBALL

On May 28th,

we host an international tournament consisting of over 250 athletes representing more than 8 countries within the CEE region. It will be the biggest tournament of its kind to take place in Slovakia. Entry is free and everyone is welcome!

[More details on our FB page](#)

Additionally, we hope to host an event celebrating 11 years of the Slovak Shamrocks (the pandemic postponed our 10th anniversary celebrations) as we continue promoting Irish culture in Slovakia while enriching the bond between the Irish and international communities.

For more information on training, tournaments, and social events please contact us via our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/SlovakGAA>

or email

secretary.bratislava.europe@gaa.ie