

Annual Report 2012



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

Table of Contents

Foreword by the Tánaiste & Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. Eamon Gilmore, T.D.	3
Introductory remarks by the Secretary General of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. David Cooney	4
Goal 1: Promote Ireland’s economic interests in Europe and internationally	9
Goal 2: Deliver on Ireland’s global development commitments, focusing on poverty and hunger	19
Goal 3: Advance reconciliation and cooperation on this island	24
Goal 4: Contribute to international peace, security and human rights	26
Goal 5: Provide consular and passport services for Irish citizens	36
Goal 6: Strengthen our ability to deliver our goals	38

Foreword by the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. Eamon Gilmore T.D.



The mission of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is to promote and protect Ireland's values, interests and the economic well-being of our people abroad.

The 2012 Annual Report gives an insight into how the Department operates both at home and abroad, and highlights some of the significant achievements of the year.

In recent years, our focus has been on contributing to national economic recovery by promoting trade, negotiating with and influencing key partners on European economic and financial policy and rebuilding "brand Ireland" throughout the world.

In 2012, my Department supported 16 Enterprise Ireland led trade missions which helped Irish companies secure €112 million in contracts and commitments. We used the international media throughout the world to reach 24 million people with the message that Ireland is open for business, investment and tourism. 2012 also saw strong engagement with Ireland's 27 priority markets under the direction of the Government's Export Trade Council, which I chair, and on the ground by local market teams led by our Ambassadors overseas.

I am also proud of Ireland's year-long Chairmanship of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe during 2012. We leveraged the contribution a small country can make on the international stage, and this greatly enhanced our international reputation. We brought a uniquely Irish perspective to our Chairmanship with our focus on digital media and internet freedom as well as by drawing on lessons learned from Northern Ireland and how these might assist in "protracted conflicts" within the OSCE region.

2012 was also the first year in the Decade of Commemorations, a period during which we have a chance to look back and reflect on a formative period in the history of our island, and of Europe, in the lead up to the foundation of the State. One hundred years on from 1912, we took the opportunity to reflect – in a sensitive manner – on questions around unionist identity on this island, as well as on the foundation of the political wing of the labour movement in Ireland.

Representing and delivering for Ireland is what the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is all about; be that through the successful execution of trade missions, supporting our exporters, assisting citizens abroad in distress, or leveraging Ireland's position within the EU or at the UN. Both at HQ in Dublin and in our 73 locations overseas, that task is undertaken with dedication and enthusiasm, often in challenging circumstances. I am pleased to share some of the results of those efforts with you in this report.

Introductory remarks by the Secretary General of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. David Cooney



I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which showcases some of the significant achievements of the Department during 2012.

The Department set out with an ambitious agenda, not only to deliver on our high level goals, which are set out in this report, but to excel in their delivery and ensure that the full resources of the Department, at home and in our 73 missions overseas, were used efficiently and effectively to provide high quality services to the State and its citizens.

In keeping with the Government's primary priority of national economic recovery, the Department's focus in 2012 was support to the ongoing rebuilding of our economy through trade promotion and the restoration of our international reputation. Led by the Tánaiste and our Ministers of State, the Department maximised opportunities all over the world to promote Ireland as a destination for trade, tourism and investment.

Working closely with our colleagues in the State Agencies the Department and its Embassy network support 16 trade missions around the world during which Irish businesses secured contracts and commitments worth up to €112 million. The Department also supported visits by President Higgins to Chile, Argentina, Brazil, the USA, Poland, and the UK.

Ireland successfully served as Chair the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the world's largest intergovernmental regional security organisation in 2012. The Chairmanship, culminating in the hosting of the largest ever gathering of Foreign Ministers in Ireland from 6-7 December, succeeded in reaching agreement to launch the "Helsinki +40" process which set out a strategic road map for the OSCE to more effectively address security challenges.

Ireland's election to the UN Human Rights Council was an endorsement of our profile on international human rights issues and during our term on the Council we will work to uphold the highest standards.

Our Development Aid Programme – Irish Aid – continues to serve as a practical demonstration of our values and sense of responsibility to the wider world. Providing a total of €629 million of Official Development Assistance our programme is focussed on the fight against global poverty and hunger.

The Department's work to ensure lasting peace and prosperity on the island of Ireland throughout 2012 had a particular focus on commemorations as we look ahead to a series of centenaries from 1912 until 1922. The Department's Reconciliation Fund supported projects in 2012 to sensitively commemorate the centenary of the Ulster Covenant while in March we invited Northern Ireland First Minister Peter Robinson delivered the first of the Iveagh House Commemorative Lecture Series, on the subject of Irish Unionism.

Throughout 2012, the Department provided a range services to Irish citizens from the provision of passports and letters of freedom to marry abroad, to the authentication of documents. Our consular service both in Dublin and Embassies and Consulates abroad provided assistance to almost 1500 Irish citizens who found themselves in emergency situations abroad ranging from deaths, arrests, accidents, child abductions and hospitalisations.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all of the staff of the Department for their dedication throughout 2012 and acknowledge the contribution they have made, at home and abroad in representing the State and serving its citizens.

The mission of the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade is to promote and protect abroad the values, interests & economic well-being of Ireland and its people

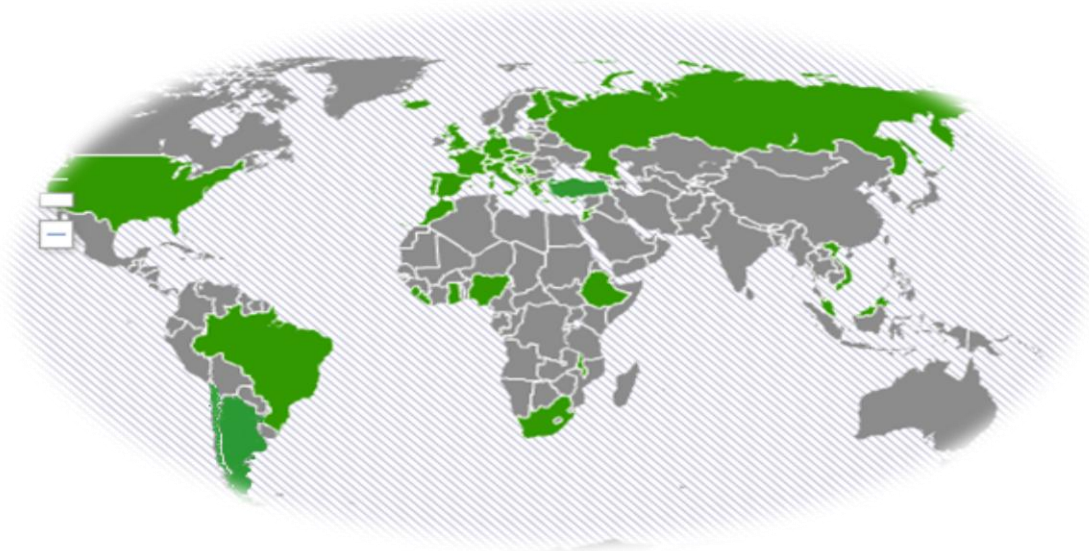
Our High Level Goals are:

- Promote *Ireland's economic interests* internationally
- Deliver on Ireland's *global development commitments*
- Advance reconciliation and *co-operation on this island*
- Contribute to international *peace, security & human rights*
- Provide *consular and passport services* for Irish citizens
- Strengthen our ability to *deliver our goals*



What did the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade do for you in 2012?

- ✓ issued **631,939 Passports**
- ✓ processed **38,682 visa applications**
- ✓ assisted **1,443** Irish citizens involved in **serious consular emergencies abroad**
- ✓ issued Letters of Freedom facilitating **2,500 Irish citizens getting married abroad**
- ✓ supported **155 projects** to promote **reconciliation on the island of Ireland**
- ✓ answered **1,626 Parliamentary Questions** and **138 FOI** requests
- ✓ processed **8,000 applications** for citizenship through the **Foreign Births Register**
- ✓ supported **16 Trade Missions**
- ✓ chaired OSCE Ministerial in Dublin bringing **more than €2 million** to the economy
- ✓ Helped Irish companies secure **€112m in contracts** and commitments
- ✓ Used international media to encourage **24 million people** worldwide to visit, invest and do business in Ireland



In 2012 the Tánaiste and Ministers of State of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade travelled to 47 countries to promote and protect Ireland's values and interests abroad. This combined travel included 119 individual visits, over 5 continents and more than 362,869 kilometres.

People in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 2012

The number of staff serving in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade at the end of 2012 was **1450**. This figure includes 78 temporary additional staff taken on at HQ and at certain missions abroad, most notably the Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels, for the lead-up to and the duration of the Irish EU Presidency in the first half of 2013. Some 588 of these core staff were based in our Embassies and Missions abroad and in Armagh and Belfast (290 of those are locally engaged). The remainder were based at Headquarters, including the Passport Offices in Balbriggan and Cork, and in our Irish Aid office in Limerick.

Focus on Embassy New Delhi

The Embassy of Ireland in New Delhi is accredited to India, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh, which have a combined population of approximately 1.4 billion.

The Embassy is staffed by three diplomatic officers from the Department of Foreign Affairs, four officials from the Department of Justice and Equality, who are responsible for running the Visa office, and a Commercial Counsellor from Enterprise Ireland. The Embassy is supported by a network of Honorary Consulates - in Mumbai, Kolkata, Bangalore and Chennai in India, and Colombo in Sri Lanka.

The work of the Embassy and State Agencies in India is based on a joint strategy agreed during 2012 which aims to improve Ireland's profile in India and position Ireland as a destination for Indian investment, Indian tourists and third level students looking for an overseas education. The Embassy and agencies also focus on improving business links between the two countries, in particular by encouraging collaboration between Irish and Indian companies and facilitating Irish businesses seeking to explore the Indian market.

As part of the drive to improve Ireland's visibility in 2012, the Embassy and agencies co-funded a television advertising campaign around the Ireland cricket team, which competed in the 20:20 Cricket World Cup in Sri Lanka. Cricket is a national obsession in India and the Ireland cricket team provides an important vehicle for promoting Ireland in the sub-continent. Irish cricketer Kevin O'Brien, a well-known figure in India, took part in the campaign to increase awareness of Ireland as a destination for investment, tourism and education. The advertisements were seen by millions of Indian viewers within the campaign's target demographic.

Kevin O'Brien also became the Brand Ambassador for Education in Ireland during 2012, a high-profile campaign in which the Embassy and Enterprise Ireland work with Irish third level colleges to recruit Indian students, and develop collaborations with Indian institutions. A series of events were held in India's largest cities and were attended by thousands of potential students. The Embassy also helped to bring together academics from universities in the two countries.

Ireland's visibility in India was also enhanced by the release of Ek Tha Tiger, a Bollywood movie partly set in Trinity College, Dublin (TCD) and filmed around the centre of the city. The Embassy worked closely with TCD and Tourism Ireland to maximise publicity for Ireland from the film, which was the biggest-grossing movie of the year in India.

The Embassy also worked closely with the IDA and Enterprise Ireland (EI) on an Ireland Business Roadshow, which involved the Ambassador and local heads of these two agencies travelling around the country to meet selected members of the Indian business community. The Roadshow received very positive press coverage and was successful in raising awareness of Ireland as a potential partner for trade and investment.

Looking to the future, the Embassy moved to a new chancery premises in New Delhi at the end of 2012. The new building provides greatly-improved facilities for the promotion of Ireland's interests in India.



Minister for State for Training and Skills, Ciaran Cannon, T.D. (centre) onboard an Education in Ireland-branded rickshaw, accompanied by Ambassador Feilim McLaughlin, Julie Sinnamon of Enterprise Ireland and Ruth Freeman of Science Foundation Ireland. The rickshaws ply the streets of Delhi advertising Ireland as an education destination. (c) DFAT

Goal 1: Promote Ireland's economic interests in Europe and internationally

The Embassy network worldwide, in co-operation with the state agencies, worked to:

- promote Ireland's economic and trade interests,
- boost exports, inward investment, tourism, international student numbers
- raise awareness of Ireland's economic recovery.



16 Ministerial-led Trade Missions supported by Embassy network



Getting out the message that Ireland is open for business to 24 million readers in 32 countries

International television and radio audiences in the hundreds of millions



Up to €112 million in contracts and commitments secured during trade missions led by Ministers from the Department alone

The Department and its Embassy network supported 16 Enterprise Ireland Trade missions at Ministerial level in 2012. These missions are a valuable support to Irish business in developing markets abroad and are particularly important in the context of the export-led growth which is crucial to Ireland's economic recovery. The largest was the Taoiseach-led Trade and Investment Mission to China, which took place in March. Contracts and commitments worth €35 million were signed on this mission. Other missions included missions to France and Canada, led by Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation Richard Bruton, where contracts worth €17.6 million and €8 million respectively were agreed. Minister for Trade and Development, Joe Costello T.D. led Trade Missions to Brazil, Italy, Russia, South Africa and Turkey during which Irish businesses secured contracts and commitments worth up to €112 million.

Ministerial travel is also used to promote Ireland as a tourist destination. Tourism Ireland estimates that positive publicity worth €3.2million (in equivalent advertising value) was generated for Ireland and The Gathering from Tourism Ireland's roadshow and visit by Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport Leo Varadkar T.D. to New York, Boston, Chicago and Toronto in September.

The Export Trade Council is the key coordinating mechanism overseeing implementation of the Government's Strategy for Trade, Tourism and Investment, which focuses on our key emerging markets as well as on our established markets. The Tánaiste, in his capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, chairs the Council which is supported by a small secretariat in the Department. The Tánaiste convened Ministers and senior officials from Government Departments and state agencies, as well as private sector members of the Council, in February and September 2012 to oversee progress on the implementation of the strategy.

Local market plans for 27 priority markets were developed and implemented by teams led by the relevant Ambassador and comprising representatives of the State Agencies on the ground and presented to the Council.

Over the 2012 St Patrick's Day period, the Taoiseach, Tánaiste and 16 Ministers travelled to 15 of Ireland's key trading partners to promote Irish business, tourism and culture overseas at events organised by the Embassy network. The message which Ministers emphasised to our international partners during their engagements abroad was 'now is the time to invest in Ireland's recovery'. In each location, a focus was put on events and opportunities for the promotion of Ireland as an attractive location for trade, tourism and investment – from a Business Leaders event in Washington to the BioPharma Asia Convention in Singapore. The visits also supported the worldwide launch and promotion of 'The Gathering 2013'.

The Department helped ensure that the opportunity of St Patrick's Day was used to full effect. To ensure a coordinated approach to St Patrick's Day activity the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, in consultation with the State Agencies, developed a set of key messages focused on Ireland's economic recovery. Travelling Ministers were interviewed by Bloomberg, CNBC, MSN Money, Forbes, Bloomberg Business Week, Atlanta Business Chronicle, Times Picayune (op-eds), NBC, Adrian Flannelly Show (NY), Sky News London, Stuttgarter Nachrichten(Germany), Luxemburger Wort (Luxembourg), Le Quotidien (France), Dow Jones/Wall Street Journal(USA), The Straits Times (Singapore), Sky business TV, Dow Jones Newswire, The Age (Melbourne) as well as numerous local radio, TV shows and local newspapers.

In September the Minister of State for Trade and Development, Joe Costello T.D., launched a report which was co-funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Irish Engineering Enterprises Federation. The report, entitled 'Winning Business in Africa – Building a Cluster for Infrastructure Projects' detailed more than 100 publicly-funded projects in 11 African countries with a combined value of €12 billion which were due to come on-stream over the next 5 years. Irish Embassies across Africa will continue to support Irish business to follow up on the recommendations in this report. Across Africa, our Team is working closely with the private sector to establish Irish Business Associations which can support new entrants to local markets.

The Department and its Embassies also organised events with targeted audiences to encourage businesses to buy Irish products, invest in Ireland, work with Irish companies, buy Irish bonds, found their start-up companies in Ireland, study in Ireland, do their Research and Development in Ireland, and holiday in Ireland. Such events took place all around the world in locations as varied as Texas, Chennai, Saudi Arabia, Osaka and Canberra. We addressed thousands of people from venture capitalists in Atlanta, to the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce of Bangkok, to investment seminars in Beijing and Guangzhou.

We briefed key opinion-informers from the offices of the world's Prime Ministers, Governments and Parliaments to individuals and groups from the German Taxpayers Organisation to the heads of Swiss Banks to the Sultan of Brunei and the leadership of the all the major multilateral organisations.

We gave background briefings on the Irish economy to the world's media including the BBC, Financial Times, Bloomberg, Handelsblatt, FT Deutschland, Wall St Journal, Washington Post, Die Zeit, Le Monde, Le Figaro, the Guardian, the Chicago Tribune, Il Sole 24 Ore, Corriere della Serra and many others influential international outlets. We gave interviews through the year in media outlets across the globe promoting Ireland, from Saudi TV2, to Business FM radio in Kuala Lumpur, to Radio New Zealand, TV Berlin and China Daily.

Articles by and interviews with Government Ministers and Ambassadors were placed in newspapers in 32 countries reaching an estimated audience of 24 million in 2012. The Embassy network also arranged television and radio interviews focussing on economic promotion for Ministers and Ambassadors with outlets with a combined viewership/listenership in the hundreds of millions.

Focus on Embassy Brasilia

Brazil, South America's largest country with a population of some 200 million people, is now the seventh largest economy in the world. In 2012, Ireland's bilateral trade in goods with Brazil reached €772 million with bilateral trade in services exceeding €300 million.

The Embassy of Ireland in Brasilia was established in 2001 and it is staffed by two diplomatic officers and three local staff members. The Ambassador and his colleagues promote Irish interests in Brazil across a range of activities, including cooperation with Brazil on international issues, promotion of trade, investment, sale of services and tourism opportunities, encouragement of positive developments on trade policy, environment and climate change issues, promotion of education, scholarships and language training, as well as highlighting Ireland's strong reputation as a partner in innovation and research, and in the area of art and culture. The Embassy also offers consular services to support Irish citizens resident in or visiting Brazil.

Ireland's strong relations with Brazil were further boosted in 2012 by the successful visit to Brazil of President Higgins. The President's visit, and the accompanying Enterprise Ireland mission of 42 companies and third level institutions led by Minister Costello, raised Ireland's profile in this key high growth market. The President had positive meetings with President Dilma Rousseff and with other Brazilian leaders in a programme that also included events in Brasilia, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. A number of agreements with Brazilian partners were finalised, including announcements of export contracts secured by Irish companies. The President also delivered an address at the University of São Paulo where the highly-regarded Irish Studies programme receives Irish Government support.

Following successful negotiations led by the Embassy, Ireland's participation in a significant Brazilian third-level scholarship programme was confirmed during the President's visit. The Science without Frontiers programme (Ciência sem Fronteiras) is fully funded by Brazilian Public and Private Sectors and is intended to increase Brazilian capacity in science and technology through placement of Brazilians at international third level institutions. Under this programme, up to 4,000 Brazilian students will study at Irish Universities and Institutes of Technology at undergraduate level over the next four years, as well as up to 1,500 post-graduate students. The total value of the scholarships to the Irish economy is estimated to be in the region of €150 million. Moreover, this programme will support the development of closer links between the people of Ireland and Brazil which will in turn support future bilateral opportunities.

During 2012, the Embassy team also supported Ireland's engagement in global environment negotiations. The Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, Phil Hogan T.D., led Ireland's delegation at the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. During the two week conference the Irish delegation worked closely with the EU in pursuit of a successful outcome and also availed of the opportunity to advance Ireland's bilateral relations through a series of meetings that the Minister had with Ministers from other countries.

The Protocol Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has three areas of responsibility:

- a) Preparation and organisation of Official and State Visits abroad by the President.
- b) Preparation and organisation of incoming Visits to Ireland at Head of State, Head of Government and Foreign Minister level and including the Management of Official Hospitality.
- c) The Privileges and Immunities granted from the application of the Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic and Consular Relations.

In 2012 President Higgins embarked on a major visit to South America where he undertook substantive and wide ranging programmes in Chile, Argentina and Brazil. In each case, the visit included meetings with Heads of State, as well as the Irish community, business, educational and cultural representatives.

The President also undertook other visits during 2012 which included engagement with the Irish Communities, and universities, as well as promoting cultural and business links:

- London, in February.
- Boston/New York, in April.
- Poland, Poznan, in June, (the host city for EURO 2012).
- London, in June,(which included the first official visit to the GAA in Britain and the Druid Murphy plays).
- Liverpool/Manchester, in November.

The Department also prepared and supported the following inward visits to Ireland:

- King of Lesotho,
- Vice Premier of the People's Republic of China,
- President of Switzerland,
- Vice President of the Republic of Columbia,
- Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia,
- Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta,
- Foreign Minister of the Republic of Nicaragua,
- Foreign Minister of Romania,
- Foreign Minister of the UAE,
- President of European Parliament,
- US Secretary of State,
- US Speaker Pelosi.

The Department also coordinated the logistical and practical arrangements for major events held in Ireland in 2012 including the British Irish Council Summit, the OSCE Ministerial and a



Government reception to mark the Eucharistic Congress.

Official hospitality in Ireland plays a productive and pivotal role in the promotion of a positive

image of Ireland internationally and in the further development and strengthening of bilateral political, economic/foreign earnings and cultural links with the countries and international organisations concerned. Fifty two such events were organised by the

Heads of Delegation at the OSCE Ministerial Council in Dublin, December 2012 (c) DFAT

The Department managed the Privileges and Immunities of 57 resident and over 68 non-resident missions accredited to Ireland during 2012. This included managing accreditations of personnel at Diplomatic Missions and processing 557 Visa Applications and 415 Residence Permits. Arrangements for the Presentation of Credentials to the President by 24 Ambassadors were made during 2012.

The Department also managed also the participation of the Diplomatic Corps in a number of large-scale events in 2012, including the presentation of New Year Greetings to the President, the National Famine Commemoration, the National Day of Commemoration and the launch of Ireland's Presidency of the European Union on 31 December 2012.

Protocol liaised with resident and non-resident Embassies, Government Departments, Irish Embassies abroad and other agencies to facilitate over 1,317 diplomatic clearances. This included facilitating permissions for 4 Irish naval vessels travelling abroad and 42 foreign naval vessels visiting Irish ports as well as 62 Research Vessels.

Focus on Europe



The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade was restructured along regional lines in late 2011. With the European Union Division located now in the

Department of the Taoiseach, focussing on internal EU issues, Europe Division in DFAT was established to manage bilateral relations with all countries in Europe and lead on European Union external relations in its neighbourhood, including negotiations on EU accession.

In the European context the focus of the Department in 2012 was to enhance Ireland's standing amongst EU and other European partner countries, to provide an excellent service to Government and other stakeholders on developments in Europe and to prepare for Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2013. Through a series of Ministerial and official visits, and through our Embassy network, we helped to repair Ireland's reputation and raise our profile and record as a trusted partner, a location for investment and a country with which to do business.

Our Embassies maintained and developed contacts at all levels and worked to ensure that Ireland's interests and values were advanced and protected.

Ministerial visits were undertaken to all EU Member States. While EU issues and Presidency preparations were key focal points in meetings, the visits also served to strengthen bilateral relations and raise the profile of Ireland in these countries. At home, the Department prepared for the Presidency in the first half of 2013 through intensive coordination and planning with other stakeholders in particular the EU Division of the Department of the Taoiseach.

Bilateral relations with Switzerland were boosted by an official visit to Ireland in October by the President of Switzerland. In the lead up to the visit, the Department met with senior Swiss officials to discuss proposals for strengthening the EU-Swiss institutional relationship. We also finalised a Tax Information Exchange Agreement with San Marino.

Enlargement

2012 saw further advancements in the Enlargement process. Serbia was granted official candidate status in March. Accession negotiations with Montenegro opened in June. Accession negotiations with Iceland continued. No new negotiating chapters were opened or closed with Turkey during 2012.

In advance of Ireland's EU Presidency, Minister of State for European Affairs, Lucinda Creighton, T.D., visited the accession and pre-accession countries. In July the Minister of State travelled to Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey. The visit to Montenegro was the first by an Irish Minister since Montenegro became independent in 2006.

In September the Minister of State travelled to Serbia, Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia. The visits provided an opportunity to meet with key leaders and learn firsthand about the progress achieved by countries involved in the accession process as well as wider social, political and economic developments. Minister Creighton also addressed the annual Croatia Summit on the theme of the EU as a driving force for social and political change.

The visits strengthened Ireland's bilateral relations with the countries of the region and enabled us to reiterate our strong support for the enlargement agenda in the Western Balkans. They also underlined the priority that would be attached to reinvigorating the enlargement agenda during Ireland's Presidency of the EU.

The domestic legislation paving the way for Ireland's ratification of the Croatian Accession Treaty was passed by the Oireachtas in June and Ireland's Instrument of Ratification was deposited on 8 October.

Russian Federation

The 29th EU-Russia Summit took place in St. Petersburg on 3-4 June, the first such summit with President Putin since the setting up of the post-Lisbon Treaty structures. The 30th EU-Russia Summit took place on 21 December in Brussels. International issues and trade questions were discussed as well as the prospects for the EU and Russia concluding a new Agreement. On 7 December, the EU and Russia held their sixteenth round of human rights consultations in Brussels.

While on a trade mission to Russia, Minister of State for Trade and Development, Joe Costello, T.D., held talks with Deputy Foreign Minister Titov on a range of bilateral issues.

Ukraine

The EU and Ukraine initialed an Association Agreement on 30 March in Brussels, with the EU making it clear that progress towards signature and ratification would depend on Ukraine addressing a number of issues including selective justice. The EU discussed these concerns with Ukrainian Prime Minister Azarov at the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council on 15 May.

At the Foreign Affairs Council in December, EU Foreign Ministers adopted Conclusions which reaffirmed the EU's engagement with Ukraine and flagged the possibility of signature of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement at the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius in November 2013, while noting that this would depend on the Ukrainian authorities demonstrating 'determined action and tangible progress' in three areas: the compliance of the 2012 parliamentary elections with international standards and follow-up actions; the issue of selective justice and preventing its recurrence; and the implementation of reforms defined in the jointly agreed Association Agenda.

Ireland also continued efforts with Ukraine to ensure that assets belonging to the State were secured. Minister of State for the Office of Public Works and Public Sector Reform, Brian Hayes, T.D., met Finance Minister Kolobov in Kiev on 8 June and discussed these efforts as well as bilateral commercial issues

Embassy Berlin

The Embassy in Berlin is staffed by five diplomatic officers, an Agricultural Attaché from the Department of Agriculture and Food and six local staff members. The Embassy works closely with the State Agencies based in Germany (Bord Bia, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland and Tourism Ireland) in promoting Ireland. Its work is supported by five Honorary Consuls - in Cologne, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Munich, and Stuttgart.

Ireland's trade relationship with Germany is a crucial one given its population of over 80m people and GDP of €2.65 trillion. It is the largest economy in the Eurozone and the fourth largest in the world.

Germany's Economic Importance to Ireland by the numbers:

- 4th largest merchandise trading partner: 2012 Total €10.94 bn
- 3rd largest source of tourists: 2012 visitor numbers 448,000
- 3rd largest food and beverage market: 2012 exports €519m
- 2nd largest importer of services: 2011 Total 10.5bn; Exports €7.67bn; Imports €2.84bn
- 2nd largest source of Foreign Direct Investment

The Embassy in Berlin has worked hard to strengthen political and economic ties between Ireland and Germany. It has regular contact with senior German figures so as to explain Irish views on current EU issues and to gain a better understanding of German positions.

Engagement at political level is a vital part of advancing Ireland's interests and during 2012, the Embassy organised 3 visits by the Taoiseach as well as 7 Ministerial visits which included political, economic and trade promotion elements.

St Patrick's Day 2012 had a strong promoting Ireland focus with Minister of State Keogh representing the Government at events in Munich, Düsseldorf and Stuttgart including the MedTech Trade Europe Fair, where 10 Irish companies exhibited at what is the largest medical devices event in Europe. The Embassy succeeded in having the iconic Berlin TV tower "greened" for St Patrick's Day which meant that Germany was part of the "Global Greening" for the first time.

Other highlights of the year included a "Smart Cities" event in Berlin held in cooperation with Science Foundation Ireland and the Technische Universität Berlin, to showcase Dublin's status as European City of Science. This was combined with an IDA Ireland networking event for German start-ups where the attractions of Ireland as a location for new business were highlighted. Culture Translate, a German start up, which attended the event, now employs 100 people in Dublin.

Public diplomacy to rebuild Ireland's reputation is an increasing element of the Embassy's role. We use social media (twitter) as well as electronic newsletters on cultural, community and economic developments to transmit positive messages about Ireland throughout Germany. Engagement with the Irish community in Germany is an important facet of this work and in 2012 the Embassy organised two major events in support of this: an Irish Economic Forum Germany, which brought together around 70 Irish executives and entrepreneurs who work in Germany to discuss ideas for Ireland's economic recovery and a meeting of Irish societies in Germany to promote "The Gathering 2013" .

The Embassy in Berlin is one of our busiest Embassies in terms of consular services. In 2012 the Embassy processed more than 1,200 passports, 220 temporary passports, 1,200 visas, 100 Letters of Freedom, and 40 Foreign Birth Registrations. The Embassy also provided consular assistance to more than 100 Irish citizens and their families (with more than 10 cases which involved the death of an Irish citizen), including through its emergency out of hours services at weekends.

Goal 2: Deliver on Ireland's global development commitments, focusing on poverty and hunger



Mwama Juma working in her family's rice field, Mtwara, Tanzania.
Photo: UN Tanzania/Julie Pudlowski

In 2012 Ireland provided a total of €628.9 million in Official Development Assistance (ODA), representing 0.47% of GNP. €507.38 million was managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which manages the Government's aid programme, Irish Aid. A further €121.52 million was accounted for through other Government Departments - predominantly the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Department of Finance - and Ireland's share of the EU Development Cooperation Budget.

Ireland's ODA programme is sharply focused on the fight against global poverty and hunger, concentrating on a limited number of very poor, mainly African, countries. Programmes are delivered through a variety of aid channels, mainly to the health, education, governance and democracy-building, community

development, local government and agriculture sectors.

Funding is provided to a range of partners including partner country governments, non-governmental and missionary organisations, the United Nations and other multilateral and international organizations.

Official Development Assistance 2012 Key Facts

- Total Official Development Assistance: €628.9 million
- Ireland contributed 0.47% of GNP to ODA
- 70% delivered as Bilateral ODA - 30% as Multilateral ODA
- Over 80 countries benefitted from Irish Bilateral ODA
- Over 80% of allocated Bilateral ODA was directed to Least Developed Countries while 85% went to Sub Saharan Africa
- One quarter of Ireland's ODA was delivered through non-governmental organisations
- Almost half of Bilateral ODA was delivered to Ireland's nine partner countries
- Almost 60 % of Ireland's Bilateral ODA was directed to the key sectors of Agriculture, Health, Education, Governance and Social Infrastructure support
- Approximately 6% of Bilateral ODA was spent on programme management, audit and evaluation.

Food and Nutrition Security

Alongside its work with its nine key partner countries, Ireland also works at international level to strengthen world action on hunger and nutrition. An important part of its work on hunger in 2012 involved preparations to maximise the opportunities presented by our EU Presidency in the first half of 2013, and our engagement in international discussions on the post-2015 framework for global development.

In 2012, Irish Aid worked to integrate a focus on nutrition right across its programmes, such as in its investments in education, agriculture, water, sanitation and hygiene, gender equality and social protection. All of these sectors are critical to improving nutrition.

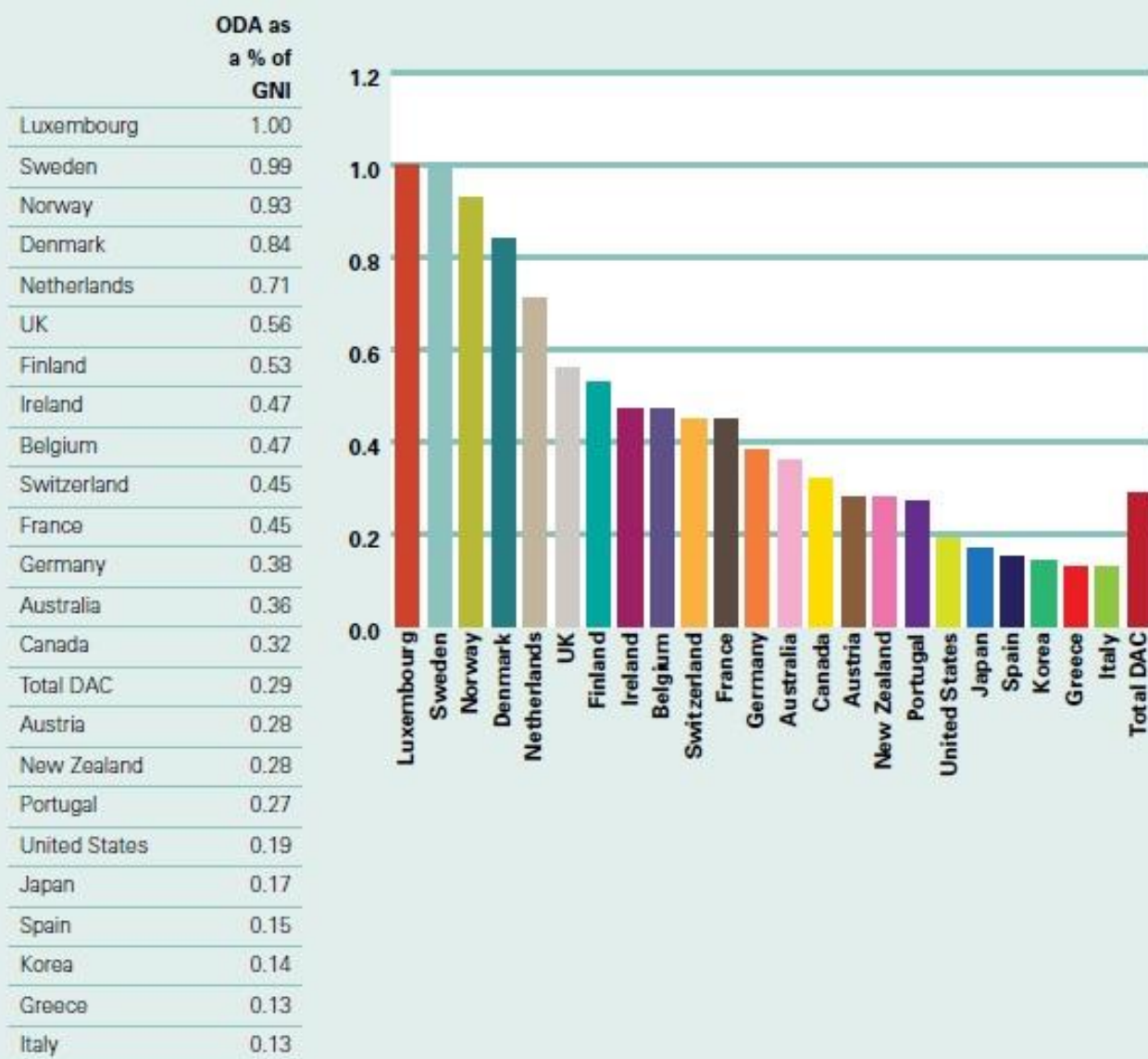
The Irish Aid Annual Report for 2012 provides examples that highlight its work to reduce hunger and strengthen resilience as part of Ireland’s overall commitment to a renewed global effort to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger in a single generation.

Further details on the work of Irish Aid can be found in Irish Aid Annual Report 2012 “Reducing Hunger and Strengthening Resilience” <http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/news-publications/publications/publicationsarchive/2013/september/annualreport2012/>

Examples of Development Results supported by Ireland in its Nine Partner Countries:

Lesotho	In 2012, over 3000 keyhole gardens were constructed and planted. Over 10,000 food insecure people are consuming vegetables from these gardens.
Ethiopia	The proportion of people living on less than \$1.25 a day decreased from 55.6% in 2000 to 39% in 2012
Malawi	Since 2010, farmers’ adoption of certified improved seeds has increased from 22% to 48% which has contributed to increased production and improved food security.
Mozambique	The enrolment rate of girls in primary school increased from 58.1% in 2005 to 71.8% in 2012
Tanzania	The area of agricultural land under irrigation in Tanzania almost doubled between 2001 and 2011
Timor Leste	Government funding for local development and service delivery, increased from US\$3.5m in 2010 to US\$22m in 2011
Uganda	Over two thirds of children in Uganda are now finishing primary school, up by 13% from 2010.
Vietnam	Stunting rate of children under 5 reduced from 33.9% in 2007 to 26.7% in 2012
Zambia	400,000 people have access to clean and safe drinking water and sanitation facilities thanks to Irish Aid’s programme in Northern Province

Net ODA as a Percentage of GNI - DAC Donors 2012



Embassy Maputo

The five diplomatic and development cooperation officers and their team in the Embassy of Ireland in Mozambique have responsibility for managing Ireland's largest bilateral assistance programme, as well as supporting an increasingly dynamic trade and investment relationship. The Embassy is also accredited to Angola and Botswana; its work in Botswana is supported by an Honorary Consul based in Gaborone.

Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world: in 2012 it was ranked third from bottom on the United Nations Human Development Index. Over half of its 23 million people survive on less than 50 cent a day. That said, Mozambique is progressing steadily, with economic growth in 2012 of 7.4% contributing to a staggering 120% increase in GDP in only seven years. However, GDP is still only US\$12 billion.

Irish companies are playing their part in this story: for example, Kenmare Resources is one of the largest foreign investors in Mozambique, with over US\$1 billion invested in its mine; Kentz employ over 2,000 people working on large scale engineering projects; and Cove Energy made the largest ever tax payment to the Mozambican exchequer in 2012 on sale of their share of a gas field. During the year, the Embassy established an informal Irish business network, available to assist Irish business looking at opportunities in the country and linked into the Business Ireland Southern Africa network.

Economic growth, together with donor support, is facilitating huge strides in health and education, key areas of emphasis for Ireland's development programme. In 2012, for the first time over 90% of eligible Mozambican children attended primary school, with particular progress registered in the enrolment of girls in schools.

A number of members of the Oireachtas visited Mozambique in 2012, most particularly the Oireachtas Public Accounts Committee in November. Committee members, led by the PAC Chair John McGuinness, visited Irish funded projects in Inhambane province and in Maputo to bear witness to the progress facilitated by Irish development aid. They also met Irish business people active in Mozambique.

In health, Ireland works in partnership with former President Bill Clinton's Foundation to improve health outcomes of, in particular, women and children. Thanks to a programme pioneered by Ireland and the Clinton Foundation, the number of HIV positive mothers who were treated against mother-to-child



Diagnostic equipment, which is deployed in Mozambique through a partnership between Ireland, the Clinton Foundation, and the Mozambican Health Ministry.

transmission of the virus increased a hundredfold in the decade to 2012. Ireland's emphasis on making a contribution to strengthening Mozambique's health system was underlined in 2012 through a new relationship between the HSE and Mozambique's Health Ministry, in the context of the Global Health Workforce Alliance.

Ireland's contribution to Mozambique is recognised by the Mozambican government, and in 2012 Ireland's development programme retained its top three positions in the Mozambican government's assessment of the quality of donor assistance. The development programme was also the subject of a series of news reports on RTÉ in November 2012, and a Newstalk documentary, 'Roots of Success', both of which were facilitated by the Embassy.

Goal 3: Advance Reconciliation and Cooperation on this island

2012 was the first year in a decade of centenaries of important events in Ireland from 1912 to 1922, which culminated in the foundation of the State. These events include the Home Rule Crisis, the formation of the Ulster Volunteers and the Irish Citizens' Army, the Lockout, the First World War, the Easter Rising, the War of Independence, the Civil War, the foundation of the Irish Free State and the partition of the island of Ireland.

Commemoration of our shared history provides the opportunity to increase understanding of that tumultuous decade and how it has shaped our political and social history. It also has the potential to deepen reconciliation and mutual understanding, including in Northern Ireland. The Department's approach to commemorations is underpinned by the principles of historical accuracy, inclusiveness and mutual respect, and has a particular focus on the North-South and East-West aspects of our shared history.



Tánaiste with the First and deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland at the first of the Iveagh House Commemorative Lecture Series

The Department plays a key role in delivering the Government's programme for the Decade of Commemorations 2012 – 2022. It works closely with other Departments and provides support to the All-Party Oireachtas Consultation Group. Our Missions overseas also work closely with members of the Irish community abroad, in recognition of their vital role in marking the significant anniversaries over the course of the decade.

The Department's Reconciliation Fund supported projects in 2012 to sensitively commemorate the centenary of the Ulster Covenant. The Orange Order in Donegal were supported to hold public lectures and an exhibition in the county's museum on the histories of those who signed the Covenant in Donegal. Lectures and exhibitions were also held in Cavan and Monaghan County Museums. Contemporary Christianity staged an educational theatre production and community-based discussions to increase understanding of the events of 1912. An academic conference in London on the Ulster Covenant centenary was supported.

In March Northern Ireland First Minister Peter Robinson delivered the first of the Iveagh House Commemorative Lecture Series, on the subject of Irish Unionism.

Reconciliation and Anti-Sectarianism Funds

In 2012, the Reconciliation and Anti-Sectarianism Funds awarded €2.7 million to 155 projects run by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community groups, and voluntary organisations to support reconciliation and to create better understanding between people and traditions on the island of Ireland and between Ireland and Britain.

The largest of the groups supported in 2012 was Co-operation Ireland, for its work with at-risk young people and in marginalised communities. Support was also provided to Mediation NI for training to enable community leaders in Ballymena, Limavady and Omagh to deal with contentious issues in their communities, and to Greenore Greencastle Community Association for its development of cross-border links between Counties Louth and Down. Further examples include Clann Éireann Youth Centre in Lurgan, for its cross-community youth programme run jointly with Lurgan Youth Annexe to address issues of sectarianism and prejudice, the City Centre Initiative in Derry which is working to achieve a safe and friendly city centre which is accessible to all and North Belfast Community Development and Transition Group, based in Tiger's Bay in north Belfast, for their work in engaging local communities and decreasing interface tensions.

These examples demonstrate the broad reach of the Funds across communities in Northern Ireland and the border region.

Further information on all projects support in 2012 is available at www.dfa.ie/reconciliation



Tánaiste with Representatives of the Foyle Women's Information Network, Galliagh Women's Group and Caw Nelson Drive Action Group in Derry. (c) DFAT

Goal 4: Contribute to international peace, security and human rights

The Department's Political Division has lead responsibility for the central policy areas of *International Peace, Security and Human Rights*. In 2012 there was a focus on five broad policy objectives:

Promote international peace and stability, including through the development of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)

Ireland's foreign policy objectives in this area are principally advanced by Department at official level through the work of the various EU working groups that examine and shape the Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). These efforts feed into the work of EU Foreign Affairs Ministers at the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC).

2012 was a period of intense activity for the FAC. The Tánaiste represented Ireland at ten Council meetings throughout the year where discussions addressed a wide range of foreign policy issues including: the events of the 'Arab Spring' and the regional repercussions especially in Egypt and Syria; developments in the Middle East; the deteriorating situation in Mali; and deepening relations with the EU's neighbours to the South and to the East.

In addition, three new CSDP missions were established in Africa in 2012. Ireland's strong support for the civilian crisis management aspects of CSDP continued, with 10 Irish experts deployed to CSDP missions.

Finally, in the latter half of the year, preparations intensified across all working groups in advance of Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union begin on 1st January 2013.

Provide effective Chairmanship of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in 2012

In 2012, Ireland chaired the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for the first time. Our year-long Chairmanship of this important multilateral organization was highly successful.

With 57 States from Europe, Central Asia and North America, the OSCE is the world's largest regional security organisation. It addresses a wide range of security-related concerns, including arms control, human rights, democratisation, counter-terrorism and economic and environmental activities. The OSCE's headquarters are based in Vienna, Austria.

Ireland benefitted significantly from chairing the OSCE, including through a significantly raised international profile. We enhanced our reputation for diplomacy and crisis management and expanded our expertise in relation to conflict resolution and human rights, both key features of our foreign policy. At the start of the Chairmanship year, the Tánaiste addressed the UN Security Council to outline Ireland's priorities for the year. He also launched Ireland's OSCE Chairmanship stamp by formally presenting it to UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon.



Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore presents Ireland's OSCE Chairmanship stamp to United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, February 2012 (c) DFAT

The overarching policy goal for Ireland's Chairmanship was to strengthen security across the OSCE's three 'dimensions' and to enhance the Organisation's capacity to fulfil its fundamental objectives. Other specific priorities included freedom of the media, with a particular focus on digital media and internet freedom; good governance; and drawing on lessons learned from the Northern Ireland peace process to help facilitate progress towards the resolution of the so-called 'protracted conflicts' within the OSCE region.

Throughout the Chairmanship year, a significant organisational responsibility fell to the Mission in Vienna, which had to manage the various meetings and also weekly political dialogues which required a Chairmanship presence at a senior level. The Mission was also responsible for coordinating a large number of conferences, seminars and workshops in Vienna and in other cities (in particular Warsaw, the headquarters for the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights).

A number of successful high-level conferences were held in Ireland during the Chairmanship year. Of particular note was a conference held in April 2012 at the Royal Hospital Kilmainham which reflected on the Northern Ireland peace process and was entitled "Shared Future: Building and Sustaining Peace, the Northern Ireland case study". This event, the first of its kind to be held in Ireland, provided a unique opportunity to listen to the experiences of a range of senior political figures with first-hand experience of the peace process.

The Chairmanship also organised a high-level conference in June on internet freedom, underscoring Ireland's position as the Internet Capital of Europe. It involved not only representatives of the OSCE member states but also of civil society and the private sector, many of whom are significant employers in Ireland. The conference stressed the need for OSCE commitments in the areas of freedom of the media and freedom of expression to be applied online as well as offline. Google hosted a side-event and a reception at the Mansion House on the first evening of the conference.

The highlight of the year was the OSCE Ministerial meeting, which took place from 6-7 December at the RDS Simonscourt. This was the largest ever gathering of Foreign Ministers in Ireland.



Tánaiste greeting US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton at the OSCE Summit in Dublin (c) DFAT

Over fifty Foreign Ministers attended, including the then US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov, and the EU's High Representative, Catherine Ashton. Over 1,200 delegates attended and 200 media also covered the conference. Coming on the eve of Ireland's Presidency of the EU, it provided an excellent opportunity to showcase Ireland as a business and tourist destination. Bord Fáilte and the Dublin Chamber of Commerce estimated that the event was worth more than €2million to the Dublin economy, based on the likely spend per delegate. Particular effort was made to promote tourism opportunities.

Working closely with the EU Presidency Planning Unit, sponsorship opportunities were actively explored. Sponsorship provided by various companies for the Ministerial meeting resulted in a saving of over €200,000. It was originally estimated that the Chairmanship could cost in the region of €10million, with a significant percentage required for the Ministerial meeting. However, the Department worked hard to ensure that costs were kept to a minimum. In the end, just under €3 million was spent by Ireland on the Chairmanship year, which included the hosting of the Dublin Ministerial; the overall cost of the Chairmanship was €4 million over three years.

The Ministerial meeting, which involved a complex and multi-faceted logistical operation, was considered an outstanding success. In policy terms, the agreement to launch the so-called "Helsinki +40" process was a notable achievement; this was a Chairmanship initiative aimed at the identification of new strategic priorities for the OSCE in the run-up to the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act in 2015.

Work to make the UN and other multilateral institutions more effective in facing global, regional and development challenges.

As a small state, Ireland is profoundly attached to multilateral diplomacy. Our commitment in particular to the United Nations remains a cornerstone of our foreign policy, and this is reflected in strong engagement across a range of UN activities. Peacekeeping is an integral part of our foreign policy and underpins Ireland's strong commitment to multilateralism and the UN. In 2012 approximately 400 Irish peacekeepers served at six UN peacekeeping missions in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Throughout, 2012, our foreign policy objectives were successfully progressed through the UN and other multilateral organisations, across a range of issues. In addition and in response to the challenges presented by the contemporary geopolitical landscape, we continued to pursue efforts to reform the UN and other multilateral organisations, in order to increase their effectiveness.

Promote respect for and protection of human rights and the rule of law



Ambassador Anderson and the Irish team following Ireland's successful election to the Human Rights Council 2013 (c) DFAT

Ireland's commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights issues is a fundamental principle of our foreign policy. The undoubted highlight of 2012 was Ireland's election – for the first time – to the United Nations Human Rights Council on 12 November; the term runs from 1 January 2013- 31 December 2015

The Human Rights Council is the United Nations' principal human rights body. Based in Geneva, the Council is made up of 47 states and is responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights around the world.

Ireland declared its candidacy for election in 2006. Our election campaign involved extensive diplomatic efforts at the United Nations in New York and Geneva, and in capitals across the world, on the part of the Tánaiste, his fellow Ministers and officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The campaign focused on Ireland's record of international human rights activism, our consistent support for a strong and effective United Nations and the global reputation of our development cooperation programme.

Every effort was made to utilise pre-existing Ministerial and official engagements to seek support for Ireland's candidature. Direct lobbying was undertaken by the Tánaiste with fellow Foreign Ministers at meetings throughout 2012, most notably at the United Nations General Assembly in September. Other Ministers, including the Minister of State for Trade and Development, Mr. Joe Costello T.D., and the Minister of State for European Affairs, Ms. Lucinda Creighton T.D., were also active in promoting Ireland's candidacy. Ministers sought the support of foreign governments in the context of St. Patrick's Day 2012. Department officials lobbied for support bilaterally and through their attendance at key events such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Foreign Ministers meeting (April 2012), a meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (May 2012) and the Pacific Islands Forum (August 2012).

In New York, Ireland's Permanent Mission to the United Nations lobbied widely and intensively. Sustained efforts continued in the run-up to the vote itself, with the Tánaiste writing to a large number of fellow Foreign Ministers highlighting Ireland's candidacy and requesting their support. The campaign also sought to draw on Ireland's cultural capital in various ways, including the participation of the musician Bono in an event organized by the Permanent Mission to the UN in New York to promote Ireland's candidacy.

The election took place on 12 November 2012 in the chamber of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. All 193 United Nations Member States were entitled to vote, with the successful candidates requiring a minimum of 97 votes. Ireland was elected in the first round with 124 votes.

Ireland wishes to see increased cooperation and genuine dialogue between States with a view to strengthening their commitment to, and their capacity to comply with, their human rights obligations. We recognise that human rights, development and peace and security are inter-linked and mutually reinforcing; and our policies at the United Nations have consistently sought to recognise that reality. As a member of the Human Rights Council, Ireland is working to progress our core human rights priorities, including through a focus on the human rights situation in individual countries and on freedom of expression, freedom of religion or belief, freedom of the media (in particular on the internet), LGBTI rights and human rights and climate change.

Promote disarmament and non-proliferation, through active engagement in international disarmament and non-proliferation processes.

Ireland has a long-standing commitment to the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda and in 2012 we maintained our active role in this area. We contributed actively to the negotiations on an Arms Trade Treaty which took place in July 2012. In our Coordinator role on the Convention on Cluster Munitions, we arranged (along with our fellow Coordinator Lao) a presentation by field practitioners at the Meeting of States Parties in Oslo in September 2012 focused on improving efficiencies to better achieve goals. In August/September 2012 Ireland contributed to the Review Conference for the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. Ireland also continued to support efforts towards a Conference on a Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) -free zone in the Middle East. Ireland also participated actively in the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee process for the 2015 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Focus on: The Middle East and North Africa

The Department's Middle East and North Africa Unit is responsible for the broad foreign policy, trade and human rights aspects of Ireland's relations with the countries of the region and with intergovernmental organisations such as the League of Arab States and the Gulf Cooperation Council. The Middle East and North Africa is a strategically important region for Ireland as well as for the European Union as a whole. This region is Europe's immediate neighbourhood, and has in recent history been a source of considerable instability, some of which has spilled over into Europe. The region is also a major source of energy for Europe, and a source and transit area for both legal and illegal immigration into Europe. To address these issues necessitates building a constructive relationship and engagement with the countries of the region.

Politically, the Middle East and North Africa region underwent a period of profound transformation during 2012. Following the Arab Spring uprisings of the year before, democratically elected governments took office for the first time in Libya, Egypt, Yemen and Tunisia. Ireland and the EU continued to play a major role in supporting each of these states' transitions to fully functioning democracy, with respect for human rights, rule of law, and the pursuit of sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Unfortunately however, it was the deteriorating situation in Syria which dominated much of the Department's work in the region throughout the year. Ireland was very much at the fore in terms of the international aid response to the humanitarian crisis which emerged and worked closely with our EU and international partners in trying to find a lasting political resolution to bring an end to the violence. We worked through the EU and United Nations to fully support the ongoing efforts of UN/Arab League Special Representative, Lakhdar Brahimi, to end the conflict. Mr. Brahimi travelled to Dublin in early December for consultations with US Secretary of State Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov on the margins of the OSCE ministerial council and met with the Tánaiste to brief him on his work. In December, Minister of State Costello attended the 'Friends of Syria' meeting in Morocco at which the Minister met with the newly formed Syria Opposition Coalition. At the meeting he stated "Ireland stands with all those seeking to end the bloody repression which the

Assad government has inflicted upon its own people. We support calls for the referral of the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court and this will be a priority for Ireland when we join the UN Human Rights Council next month. Similarly, we will prioritise efforts to seek an overall resolution to the crisis during our Presidency of the EU in the first six months of 2013.”

The Middle East Peace Process was also a key strategic priority for the Department during the year. In January, the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Eamon Gilmore T.D., visited Israel and Palestine to support efforts to break the diplomatic impasse between the parties and to encourage further dialogue. He met with Palestinian President Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu. Commenting on his visit, the Tánaiste stated, “Against the backdrop of the historic political changes underway within the region, I believe in the hugely transformative and positive effects for the Middle East and North Africa of a comprehensive Israeli-Arab peace agreement and this is a point which I will be emphasising in my discussions.” He also called on Israel to end its blockade of Gaza and visited two schools and a food distribution centre in Gaza operated by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA).



Tánaiste during his trip to Gaza (c) DFAT

Nationally, Ireland was active in highlighting the continuing threats to the viability of the two-State solution and promoting international efforts to restart peace negotiations to resolve the conflict. Ireland condemned the outbreak of violence in Gaza in November and called on both sides to avoid escalation and refrain from further attacks. Ireland and our EU partners strongly supported the intense international diplomatic efforts, principally mediated by Egypt, which successfully brought about a ceasefire and averted the imminent prospect of a ground invasion and the danger of far greater casualties. In November, the UN General Assembly voted to accord 'Observer State' status at the General Assembly to Palestine. Ireland supported the Resolution which was overwhelmingly approved by the General Assembly by 138 votes to 9 (with 41 members abstaining).

In relation to Iran, Ireland shared the widespread international concerns about the nature of Iran's nuclear programme and how lack of progress in dealing with the issue is contributing to increased instability and could even conceivably lead to conflict in an already very troubled region. We worked with our EU partners to broaden the restrictive measures in place against Iran in the absence of progress in the E3+3 (UK, France, Germany, US, Russia and China) negotiations with Iran on the latter's nuclear programme.

The Department was active in promoting stronger trade relations between Ireland and the Arab region in 2012. Both Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are among the priority markets identified in the Government's trade strategy, Trading and Investing in a Smart Economy, and the Unit supported the work of Ireland's missions in both countries to grow Ireland's market presence. In addition, the Unit sought to strengthen our economic relations with those countries in the Arab region undergoing transition including Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco. Ireland concluded Double Taxation Agreements with Egypt, Qatar, Morocco and Saudi Arabia in 2012 to assist Irish companies seeking to do business in those markets.

Goal 5: Delivering for Irish Citizens: Provide consular and passport services for Irish citizens and engage with Irish communities abroad

In 2012, the Department assisted nearly 1,500 Irish citizens following serious consular emergencies, including deaths, arrests, accidents, child abduction and hospitalisations. While consular assistance was provided to Irish citizens in many countries across the globe, by far the highest number of consular emergencies abroad occurred in Spain, followed by Australia, US, France, Britain, Turkey, Thailand, Canada, UAE, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Greece, Poland and Portugal. The Department provided consular assistance to the families of 194 people who died while abroad, a number of these in very tragic circumstances. Assistance was also provided in 290 cases of arrest, as well as in a number of difficult and protracted child abduction cases.

During the 2012 UEFA European Championship, the Department opened dedicated consular offices in Gdansk and Poznan with 24 hour cover for fans travelling for the tournament. These gave comprehensive consular support to over 180 individual consular cases and several hundred more were advised and assisted with queries.

The Department also monitored the situation in the Middle East closely over the course of 2012. Through our embassies in Cairo and Tel Aviv, we maintained contact with Irish citizens in Syria and in Israel and the Occupied Territories in relation to their safety and welfare.

The Passport Service launched a pilot appointment booking scheme in November 2012 aimed at cutting waiting times at the Office in Molesworth Street in Dublin. The scheme proved very successful and has since been implemented in full. The Passport Office issued an impressive 631,939 passports in 2012. 79% of applications via the Passport Express facility were issued within 10 days or less while 98% were issued within 15 days. Irish embassies processed 38,682 visa applications over the year, the vast majority of which had a turnaround time of less than 3 days.

We issued more than 2,500 Letters of Freedom to Irish citizens getting married abroad, with the most popular countries being Italy, Spain, Germany, Malta and Scotland. We processed in excess of 8,000 applications for Irish citizenship through Foreign Births Registration, the majority of applications received through the Embassies and Honorary Consulates in the United States, Britain, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, reflecting the large Irish communities living in these areas.

The Department also authenticated in excess of 50,000 Irish documents such as educational certificates, legal documents and company documents, which were required for presentation abroad, many of which were required in order to secure employment or for property and commercial transactions. We continue to offer a same day service for the majority of authentication requests.

Profile of Cabhair

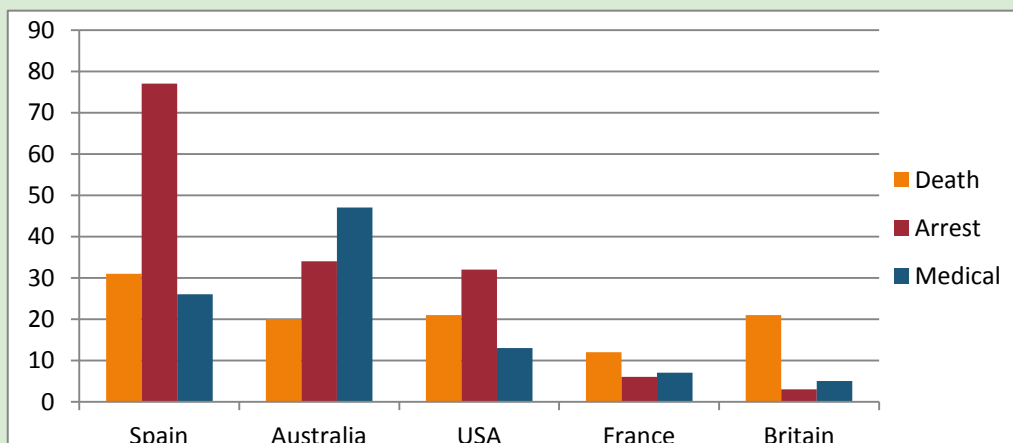
Over the last decade, the number of Irish citizens travelling abroad has increased dramatically, with over 6.3 million visits abroad by Irish residents in 2012 alone. As the number of Irish citizens travelling and living abroad continues to rise, so too does the need for consular assistance and support. Together with the Headquarters-based Consular Assistance Section, our Missions and Honorary Consuls abroad provide consular assistance and advice to our citizens in need overseas and their families in Ireland. In 2012, the Department assisted 1443 Irish citizens following serious consular emergencies overseas, including deaths, arrests, kidnaps, accidents, child abductions and hospitalisations.

In 2009, the Department's Consular Case Management system - Cabhair was introduced with the aim of maintaining and improving the service available for Irish citizens in distress overseas. This software provides a comprehensive electronic database of all consular cases, with a number of sub-categories: e.g. deaths, arrest and detention, prisoners, child abduction, accident/illness, and missing persons. It enables consular staff at home and abroad to share real-time consular assistance information and coordinate assistance delivery regardless of the time zone or geographic location. It allows consular staff to track electronically all aspects of each consular assistance request showing the exchange of data and information provided to citizens.

Some of the benefits of Cabhair include: establishing a "departmental memory"; standardising case management procedures; concurrent management of cases; and the system's capacity to produce up-to-date and accurate statistics. In addition, consular officers can easily see where assistance was provided previously, Missions are more alert to the repeat cases, and cross-Embassy assistance can easily be arranged. Cabhair has allowed for the electronic storage of information without the need to create a hardcopy file on each case while also providing immediate access to all cases.

The Cabhair database also has a crisis module which extends the reach of assistance to citizens involved in crises abroad.

Our service to Irish citizens is enhanced through the efficient use of Cabhair. Up-to-date statistics are easily accessed showing the number and categories of cases for 2012. The diagram below, for example, shows the number of deaths, arrests and medical cases for the 5 countries where demand for consular assistance has been greatest in 2012.



Goal 6: Strengthening our ability to deliver our goals

Evaluation and Audit

The Department has a combined internal audit and evaluation function, managed by the independent Evaluation and Audit Unit. Ensuring that public funds are spent correctly for the purpose intended, and that they provide value for money, continues to be a top priority of the Department. The main elements of the planned internal audit programme for 2012 were delivered. The necessity to give priority to a Uganda fraud allegation in the last quarter of 2012 impacted on some aspects of the programme and the Evaluation and Audit Unit managed to accommodate this unexpected additional work.

Formal evaluation of expenditure is becoming ever more a key element in modern public service management, both in Ireland and internationally. Evaluation seeks to explain why something succeeded or failed and the reasons why. This should be integrated into all stages and levels of business practice, starting from the initial appraisal of a proposal, through implementation and finally to a formal end-of-implementation assessment.

In 2012 major evaluations were conducted of Ireland's development assistance to Ethiopia (2008-2012), Lesotho (2008-2012) and South Africa (2008-2012). In addition, in 2012 the E&A Unit helped lead an evaluation of Ireland's support for peace and reconciliation in Ireland (the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation) and initiated a major Value-for-Money review of Ireland's bilateral mission network in the EU member states.

Evaluation and Audit Unit also finalised an Evaluation Operations Manual which contributes to promoting the inclusion of evaluation related considerations into all stages of planning and implementation of funding programmes and other areas of expenditure.

While the main focus of work in 2012 continued to be around the Irish Aid programme and public financial management in programme countries, there was an increased focus on the systems around the broader Department. Audit work was carried out on accommodation, travel and subsistence, and information technology expenditure. Audits of the embassies in Singapore and Malaysia were also conducted as well as an audit of compliance with ethics obligations.

The Audit Committee is regularly updated on progress on the implementation of all the evaluation and audit report recommendations, as is the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Strategy and Performance

The Department's Strategy and Performance Division views its operations and systems as well as its embassies and offices overseas and makes recommendations for improving their effectiveness and efficiency. It is responsible for Business Planning across the Department and supports the departmental Knowledge Management Taskforce in fostering an organisational culture of continuous Business Process Improvement. It also assumes the function of the department's inspectorate and conducts between 6 – 8 inspections each year.

During 2012 Strategy and Performance Division published the Department's Statement of strategy, which will inform our work until 2014 and concluded a review of Ireland's US mission network.

Our successful Knowledge Management initiatives in 2012 included the pilot of an electronic system for the management of Parliamentary

Questions and the roll-out of a departmental-wide mobile mail service, which supports secure remote access to departmental services, which has delivered real efficiency gains to our highly-mobile workforce. This is a key requirement ahead of our Presidency of the European Council in the first half of 2013.



Information on Communications Technology in DFAT in 2012

A number of significant procurements were successfully completed in 2012 for a range of ICT services including the Department's Global Network, which connects over 90 offices, including the Department's 75 Missions. The Global Network is the foundation on which all ICT services are delivered to offices of the Department, including data, voice and video-conferencing. In 2012 for the more than 2,000 users of services available over this network included: 4,720 video-conferences of 41 minutes average duration; 5.7million internal, 9.8million inbound and 4.5million outbound e-mail messages; and 1,775 average daily unique individual users of the Department's Intranet.

Freedom of Information

In 2012, the Department received 138 requests for information under the FOI Acts. Of these, 39 were granted in full, 47 were part-granted, 17 were refused, 21 were withdrawn, 9 were handled outside of the Act, and 12 carried into 2013. Some 26 of the requests were for personal information and 112 for non-personal information. Of the 138 requests, 91 were received from journalists, 16 from business/interest groups, 5 from Oireachtas/public representatives and 26 from others.

As encouraged by the Information Commissioner, the majority of non-personal requests and replies for 2012 were placed on the Department's external website with the released records available on request. All records held by the Department, including files, reports, emails, etc. are eligible for consideration for release under the FOI.

Focus on China



Tánaiste greeting Xi Jinping at Shannon Airport (C) MerrionStreet.ie

The Department was heavily involved through both the Asia Pacific Unit and the Protocol Service in delivering major visits with China in both directions in 2012 including the visit of then Vice President Xi Jinping (now President) to Ireland in February, and the mission led by the Taoiseach to China in March supported by the Embassy in Beijing.

The Embassy in Beijing and Consulate in Shanghai supported a range of other high level visits as well as continuing to promote Ireland and Irish business opportunities at national and provincial level in China.

The first official visit of Vice President Xi Jinping to Ireland delivered agreement on two Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs). The first on the Establishment of a Joint Investment Promotion working group and the second for the Promotion of Ireland and PR China's International Trade in Services in February 2012.

A high level visit to China followed by the Taoiseach with a cross sectoral trade delegation. This visit marked the delivery of an Agreement to establish a Strategic Partnership for Mutually Beneficial Cooperation in March 2012.

This was followed up by several Ministerial visits focused on sectoral strengths including education and skill, health, and environment and agriculture food and the marine. The visit of Minister for Agriculture, Food and Marine, Simon Coveney, T.D., was particularly successful with the signing of four MoUs related to agri-food and fisheries areas. During his visit in August 2012, Minister for Health, James Reilly, T.D., signed a MoU deepening cooperation with China in the area of healthcare cooperation. While in December Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Jimmy Deenihan, T.D., extended an existing MoU on cultural cooperation. Then Lord Mayor of Dublin, Naoise Ó Muirí, also visited Beijing in September 2012 and attended the inaugural summit of the World Cities Tourism Federation and City Tourism Expo.

In October 2012, the Department hosted the Ireland-China Joint Economic Commission. This biennial meeting brings together senior officials from across Government in Ireland and China to review opportunities for building on two-way trade, currently worth over €8 billion per annum. In recognition of the growing importance of trade in services, the JEC established a separate working group in this area.

The Department's Legal Division

In supporting the Department to achieve its High Level Goals our Legal Division provides legal advice in relation to international law, human rights law and aspects of EU law to policy units, other service units and multilateral missions. It also plays a lead role with respect to international criminal justice and law of the sea issues.

The second half of 2012 was dominated by preparations for Ireland's EU Presidency – putting in place and training relevant staff involved in servicing the EU working groups chaired on law of the sea, public international law and the International Criminal Court.

Legal Division staff also chaired meetings of the National Committee on International Humanitarian Law and was instrumental in ensuring that Ireland's policy objectives were reflected in the Brighton Declaration on Reform of the European Court of Human Rights. In 2012 our team also played an active role in the negotiation, conclusion and ratification of the Stability Treaty (which entered into force on 1 January 2013).



Photo (c) ICRC/Jorge Perez

Our Legal Division also works closely with the Office of the Attorney General. Whole of Government responsibilities include processing extradition and mutual legal assistance requests and running our Treaty Office – a list of treaties that entered into force for the State in 2012 [is annexed](#).

Annex 1

The following international agreements entered into force for ireland in 2012

<u>No.1 of 2013</u>	Ratification of the Revised Text of the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants, done at Paris on 2 December 1961, as revised on 10 November 1972, 23 October 1978 and 19 March 1991, Ireland's instrument of ratification deposited on 8 December 2011, entered into force with respect to Ireland on 8 January 2012
<u>No.2 of 2013</u>	International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-fouling Systems on Ships 2001 (AFS Convention), done at London on 5 October 2001, Ireland's instrument of accession deposited on 20 October 2011, entered into force with respect to Ireland on 20 January 2012
<u>No.3 of 2013</u>	Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of Ireland and the Government of South Africa for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and Capital Gains, with Protocol, done at Cape Town on 17 March 2010, notifications of the completion of the procedures necessary for the entry into force of this Protocol exchanged on 15 February 2011 and 10 February 2012, entered into force on 10 February 2012
<u>No.4 of 2013</u>	Agreement between Ireland and Samoa for the Exchange of Information relating to Tax Matters, done at Dublin on 8 December 2009, notifications of the completion of the procedures necessary for the entry into force of this Agreement exchanged on 15 February 2011 and 21 February 2012, entered into force on 21 February 2012
<u>No.5 of 2013</u>	Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Ministry of Agriculture of the People's Republic of China, done at Beijing on 16 April 2012, entered into force on 16 April 2012
<u>No.6 of 2013</u>	Agreement between the Government of Ireland and the Government of Grenada for the Exchange of Information Relating to Tax Matters, done on 31 May 2012, notifications of the completion of the procedures necessary for the entry into force of this Agreement exchanged on 13 January 2012 and 23 April 2012, entered into force on 23 April 2012
<u>No.7 of 2013</u>	Protocol of 1996 to Amend the Convention on Limitation of Liability for Maritime Claims (LLMC) 1976, done at London on 2 May 1996, Ireland's instrument of accession deposited on 25 January 2012, entered into force with respect to Ireland on 24 April 2012
<u>No.8 of 2013</u>	WIPO Patent Law Treaty, done at Geneva on 1 June 2000, Ireland's instrument of ratification deposited on 27 February 2012, entered into force with respect to Ireland on 27 May 2012
<u>No.9 of 2013</u>	Convention between Ireland and the Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital Gains, done at Sarajevo on 3 November 2009, notifications of the completion of the procedures necessary for the entry into force of this Convention exchanged on 16 April 2009 and 25 June 2012
<u>No.10 of 2013</u>	Convention between Ireland and the Kingdom of Morocco for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income, done at Rabat on 22 June 2010, notifications of the completion of the procedures necessary for the entry into force of this Convention exchanged on 17 February 2011 and 10 September 2012, entered into force on 10 September 2012
<u>No.11 of 2013</u>	Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making, and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention), done at Aarhus,

	Denmark on 25 June 1988, Ireland's instrument of ratification deposited on 20 June 2012, entered into force with respect to Ireland on 18 September 2012
<u>No.12 of 2013</u>	Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (PRTR), done at Kiev on 21 May 2003, Ireland's instrument of ratification deposited on 20 June 2012, entered into force with respect to Ireland on 18 September 2012
<u>No.13 of 2013</u>	Agreement between the Government of Ireland and the Government of South Africa on the Co-production of Films, done at Cannes on 20 May 2012, notifications of the completion of the procedures necessary for the entry into force of this Agreement exchanged on 17 September 2012 and 27 September 2012, entered into force on 27 September 2012
<u>No.14 of 2013</u>	Treaty Establishing the European Stability Mechanism between the Kingdom of Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Republic of Estonia, Ireland, the Hellenic Republic, the Kingdom of Spain, the French Republic, the Italian Republic, the Republic of Cyprus, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Malta, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Republic of Austria, the Portuguese Republic, the Republic of Slovenia, the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Finland and Interpretative Declaration thereto, done at Brussels on 2 February 2012, Ireland's instrument of ratification deposited on 1 August 2012, entered into force on 27 September 2012
<u>No.15 of 2013</u>	Agreement between the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United States of America on Enhancing Cooperation in Preventing and Combating Serious Crime, done at Dublin on 21 July 2011, notifications of the completion of the procedures necessary for the entry into force of this Agreement exchanged on 30 April 2012 and 19 October 2012, entered into force on 19 October 2012
<u>No.16 of 2013</u>	Agreement between Ireland and the Federal Republic of Germany for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital, done at Dublin on 30 March 2011, notifications of the completion of the procedures necessary for the entry into force of this Agreement exchanged on 28 November 2012, entered into force on 28 November 2012
<u>No.17 of 2013</u>	Agreement between the Ireland and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income, done at Riyadh on 19 October 2011, notifications of the completion of the procedures necessary for the entry into force of this Convention exchanged on 10 April 2012 and 17 October 2012, entered into force on 1 December 2012
<u>No.18 of 2013</u>	Agreement between Ireland and the Kingdom of Spain on the Reciprocal Holding of Emergency Stocks of Crude Oil and/or Petroleum Products, done at Madrid on 12 December 2012, entered into force on 12 December 2012
<u>No.19 of 2013</u>	Agreement between the Government of Ireland and the Government of the Republic of Armenia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Income with respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, done at Dublin on 14 July 2011, notifications of the completion of the procedures necessary for the entry into force of this Agreement exchanged on 22 February 2012 and 18 December 2012, entered into force on 18 December 2012
<u>No.20 of 2013</u>	Convention between Ireland and the Republic of Panama for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and Capital Gains, done at Dublin on 22 November 2011, notifications of the completion of the procedures necessary for the entry into force of this Convention exchanged on 10 October 2012 and 19 December 2012, entered into force on 19 December 2012