

Note for new Minister

14 June, 2017

How the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is organised

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has responsibility for supporting Irish citizens travelling and living abroad, for ensuring that Ireland's voice in Europe is a strong one, and for helping to promote our values and our prosperity on the global stage. We are supported in these tasks by a diverse, dedicated and skilled workforce operating in over 40 languages at 90 offices across 14 time zones. The scope and global reach of our work has shaped our structures and routines, placing a premium on a well-coordinated and integrated network with ready access to central guidance.

The Mission and High-Level Goals of this Department are well-articulated in our current [Statement of Strategy 2016-2019](#) and through the [Global Island: Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World](#).

Values, Behaviours and Culture

Our values underpin a strong culture of service in the Department and are a compass for our efforts to deliver high quality services and professional policy advice.

Our Values in Action (DÍLSE)

Diversity:	We are committed to the principles of equality, impartiality and fairness, to valuing the contributions of all of our staff and to championing gender equality and diversity.
Integrity:	We approach our work with integrity, underpinned by the principles of independence and accountability.
Leadership:	We recognise the importance of our leadership role serving the Irish people, promoting their values, and advancing their prosperity on the global stage.
Service:	We are committed to providing Irish citizens travelling and living abroad with effective and responsive passport, consular and emigrant support services.
Excellence:	We aspire to excellence in the analysis and advice we provide to Government, in the service we provide to our citizens and to the public, and in the management and use of resources assigned to us.

These values reflect the commitment set out in the Civil Service Renewal Plan to:

- a deep-rooted public service ethos of independence, honesty, integrity, impartiality, equality, fairness and respect;
- a culture of accountability, efficiency and value for money; and

- the highest standards of professionalism, leadership and rigour.

Organisational Structures

With 80 Missions abroad, 10 HQ Divisions, and 4 HQ standalone Units/Offices, clarity about individual roles and decision-making structures is key to the efficient and accountable functioning of the Department.

The Department's HQ Divisions are led at Assistant Secretary level or above, all members of the Management Board. These Divisions have responsibility for a number of Business Units in their work area, and report to the Secretary General. A further four stand-alone Units, led at Counsellor (PO) or equivalent level, report directly to the Secretary General.

Divisions

Global Irish Services Division oversees the work of the **Passport Service**, which is responsible for delivering a secure passport facility to Irish citizens; the **Consular Division**, which is responsible for delivering consular services to Irish citizens; and for **Irish Abroad Unit**, which leads on Government engagement with the diaspora.

Ireland, United Kingdom, and Americas Division works to promote peace and reconciliation on the island of Ireland through full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. The Division also has lead responsibility for bilateral relations with the UK, the US, Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Development Cooperation Division manages and delivers the Government's overseas aid programme, Irish Aid. The Division also has responsibility for all aspects of Ireland's bilateral relations with Africa.

Trade Division is responsible for trade promotion strategy and coordination, the Export Trade Council, economic messaging and cultural relations. The Division's Director General also has oversight of **Asia Pacific Unit**, which manages bilateral relations with Asian and Pacific Island countries (including New Zealand and Australia).

European Union Division has responsibility for all European Union internal and enlargement policy co-ordination, as well as for bilateral relations with EU and EEA member states (apart from the UK), the candidate states, Switzerland and other western European states. The Division also leads on negotiations on the UK's exit from the EU and the new EU-UK relationship.

European Neighbourhood and Policy Division has responsibility for EU and national policy towards the European Neighbourhood and Russia. The Division is also the Departmental lead on migration issues. The Director General also oversees the work of the **Policy Planning Unit**, which contributes to strategic policy formulation within DFAT.

Political Division manages the political aspects of foreign policy. It leads on human rights, disarmament and non-proliferation, international security policy, drugs and terrorism, UN issues, the OSCE and the Council of Europe. It is also responsible for coordination of

Ireland's contribution to the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy. The Political Director also has oversight of the Department's **Middle East and North Africa Unit**.

Corporate Services Division provides Human Resource Management, Training and Development, Information Communications Technology, Facilities Management, Coordination, Compliance and Security, and other services to Headquarters and Missions.

Finance Division has responsibility for all aspects of the Department's finance and budgetary functions, including the development and implementation of the Department's finance strategy, across both Votes 27 and 28. The Division is managed by the Chief Financial Officer.

Legal Division provides legal advice on public international law, human rights law and European Union law as it relates to foreign policy, and issues of domestic law particular to the Department.

Stand-Alone Units (reporting directly to the Secretary General)

Protocol is responsible for the preparation and organisation of visits abroad by the President and visits to Ireland at Head of State, Head of Government and Foreign Minister level. The Protocol service also facilitates the operation of diplomatic missions in Ireland in accordance with international and domestic legislation.

Communications Unit promotes and facilitates external communication of the Department's work and priorities. The Unit also manages the press, information and online presence of the Department.

Strategy and Performance Unit leads on the formulation of Departmental strategy, reviews the operations and systems of the Department, and makes recommendations for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Department. It leads on business planning and risk management, as well as knowledge management and innovation.

Evaluation and Audit Unit provides an independent evaluation and audit function to the Department. Audit helps identify strengths and weaknesses in our systems, and offers advice on how to improve controls, while Evaluation generates evidence in relation to performance in order to help inform how the work of the Department might be more effective.

Relationship with the Minister

The relationship and communication between the Minister and the Department are at the heart of good governance. The successful delivery of business priorities and programmes is contingent on these relationships operating effectively.

The Management Board of the Department meets formally with the Minister on a quarterly basis, and more often if required, to consider strategic policy and management direction. Such meetings are in addition to, and do not replace, routine and on-going interaction between Ministers, members of the Board and other senior officials on the day-to-day business of the Department. It is the responsibility of the Management Board to ensure that

the Minister's office is kept informed and updated on the division of responsibilities among senior management, including in relation to cross-cutting issues, in order to maintain clarity and effective communication.

Further to this, the Minister meets once per week with the Secretary General to discuss the work and management of the Department.

Management Board

The Management Board operates to the principles of shared participation and personal and corporate responsibility for the operational success of the entire Department in support of the Minister and Secretary General. In this, it acts as a leadership and management team for the whole Department, providing strategic leadership, direction and oversight and fostering strong internal communication. It acts as a clearing house for major Departmental management issues and the coordination of policy considerations where they cut across more than one area of the Department. The Board also has a key role in overseeing the performance of the Department as a whole, including in relation to recognising key opportunities for change and driving the reform agenda.

Sub-Committees of the Management Board

To support the operations of the Management Board, a number of Subcommittees or Taskforces have been established. These currently include:

- Brexit Coordination Team
- Executive Management Team
- Senior Management Group (Development Cooperation Division)
- Risk Management Sub-Committee
- Gender Equality Sub-Committee (including Equality and Diversity issues)
- ICT Governance Sub-Committee
- Knowledge Management and Innovation Taskforce
- Human Resources Sub-Committee
- Training & Development Sub-Committee
- Property Management Sub-Committee

These Sub-Committees or Taskforces are chaired by one or more Members of the Management Board nominated by the Secretary General. Membership is drawn from the wider Department, taking into account business needs.

Staffing and Accommodation Profile

There is currently 1533 'core' staff employed in the Department, 870 of whom are based at HQ (including about 317 in the Passport Offices). The remaining 663 are made up of HQ staff serving abroad (311) and locally-recruited employees in missions. This core number excludes temporary specialist and administrative staff employed on contract by Irish Aid at our development missions. It also excludes approximately 237 Temporary Clerical Officers (TCOs) employed annually to assist the Passport Offices in Mount Street, Balbriggan and Cork in coping with the heavy seasonal increase in demand for passports.

The Department is currently housed across nine different buildings in Dublin, Limerick and Cork. The Department has requested additional office space from OPW to enable it to (i) rationalise its footprint, (ii) ensure an efficient use of space and recourses to house current and projected future staffing needs and (iii) provide significant long term savings to the Exchequer.



Missions Abroad

Ireland's diplomatic network comprises 80 Missions (61 Embassies, 7 multilateral Missions and 12 Consulates General and other offices) through which the Department maintains diplomatic relations with 178 States. Our first Embassies to the UK and US opened in 1923 and 1924 respectively and by 1980, Ireland had 40 Missions across every continent. Our Mission network has therefore doubled in the last 36 years, although, in comparison to EU Member States of similar size, our footprint remains relatively light. Denmark, with a population of 5.6 million maintains 105 Missions worldwide, while Finland (population 5.4 million) has 89 such offices. The Netherlands and Sweden have established 141 and 104 Missions respectively.

Each office of the Department abroad is led by a Head of Mission, who is responsible for ensuring that the Mission meets its strategic and operational objectives and that its day to day work is coherent with that of the Department and the Government as a whole. Each Mission reports to a lead Division or Unit at Headquarters which has overall responsibility for ensuring coherence and a unified approach to policy implementation.

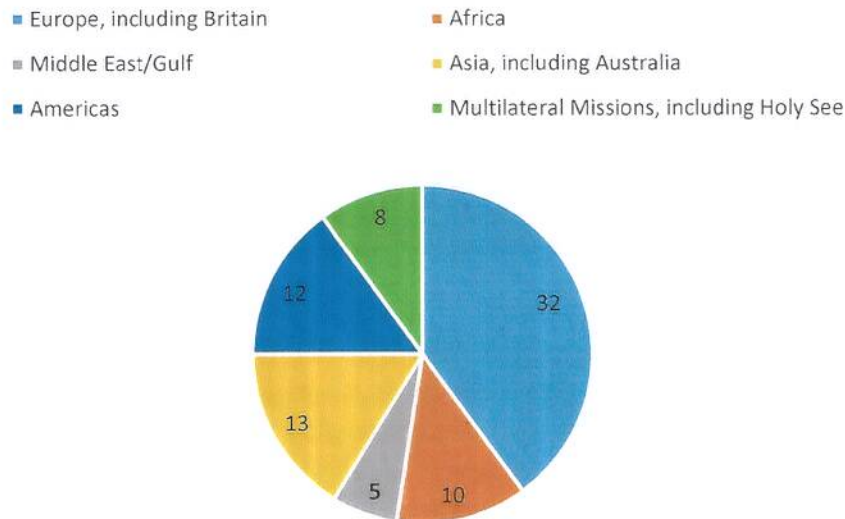
Assistant Secretaries serving abroad fulfil Head of Mission functions in major bilateral assignments and, in other instances, in addition to their Head of Mission roles, may also oversee the work of Embassies within their respective regions. This regional approach continues to evolve in light of the Department's developing business needs.

The Government approves the nominations for Head of Mission appointments based on nominations submitted by the Minister. It should also be noted that the nomination of certain Heads of Mission are subject to the approval (*agrément*) of the authorities of the receiving States and appointments are not formally confirmed until this approval is forthcoming. Currently, Heads of Mission positions can be filled by officers from the First Secretary grade and above.

A majority of our Missions (42) have just one or two DFAT HQ-assigned staff, while only 12 have five or more DFAT HQ-assigned staff. HQ-assigned staff overseas manage or work alongside locally-recruited employees.

The majority of Missions (50) cost less than €1 million per year to run, while 8 of our largest Missions have expenditure exceeding €2 million per year.

DFAT Spread of 80 Missions Globally



Resourcing response to Brexit

Additional capabilities and resources have been assigned across the Department to address issues arising from the complex process of the UK exit from the EU. Our approach has not been merely to recruit or assign additional staff, but rather also to prioritise Brexit in the work of our entire network. Exit negotiations will be complex and intensive and the Department will require additional staff resources if we are to increase our level of support across Government and across our network.

At Headquarters in Dublin, the key Divisions of European Union Division and the Ireland, UK and Americas (IUKA) Division have been assigned additional resources. The European Union Division contains a dedicated team focused exclusively on the EU-UK negotiations, led by a senior officer. Many other business units of the Department at its headquarters in Dublin are involved as part of the strategic response to the UK exit and staff numbers have been augmented, for example in the Legal Division, the Trade Division and the Policy Planning Unit. There is also an intra-Departmental senior management group focusing on issues relating to the UK exit, chaired by the Secretary General and comprising senior officials from across all relevant business units of the Department. A number of officers are seconded to the Department of the Taoiseach and working on EU matters, while two officers are seconded to the International and EU Relations Division of the Department of Finance.

In relation to citizen services, there has been a marked increase in demand for passports and citizenship (via foreign birth registration) from applicants in Northern Ireland and Great Britain. In response to this and a significantly increased seasonal demand, we have recruited over 300 temporary and fulltime clerical officers to meet demands for our Passport and

Consular Services and these additional resources have been assigned to our Dublin, Cork and London operations.

Overseas, specific additional senior diplomatic posts have been assigned to our Embassies in London, Berlin and Paris as well as in our Permanent Representation of Ireland to the European Union in Brussels. The Permanent Representation in Brussels has a unit dedicated to managing our response to this issue comprising a Counsellor, First Secretary and Third Secretary. Berlin and Paris each have had senior diplomats assigned to the embassy teams with a specific Brexit remit. London has augmented both its diplomatic staff and its administrative teams.

These measures, which comprise the initial phase of our response to the UK decision to leave the EU, remain under review as the Government carries out its work in response to the UK referendum decision and as preparations for the forthcoming negotiations on the UK's exit from the EU intensify.

The Department will also need to secure additional funding as part of the memo to government process for the upcoming UN Security Council (SECCO) campaign. Projected additional staff requirements are currently estimated at 9 additional staff at various grades, based at both HQ and in our Permanent Mission to the UN, New York. These resources will need to be deployed progressively from summer 2017 onwards.

Review of Mission Network

The Department periodically reviews Ireland's representation abroad and has been able to achieve savings across the Mission network (in the period 2009-2013, cost savings of 21%), while ensuring that the Government can open strategic and necessary new Missions. In 2011, the Missions to Iran, the Holy See, and Timor Leste were closed on economic grounds. In early 2014, following a detailed review, the Embassy in Lesotho was closed and the Embassy in Vilnius downsized, allowing for savings across the network. In addition, the Government agreed an expansion of the Mission network to include five new Embassies (Indonesia, Kenya, Croatia, Thailand, the Holy See) and three new Consulates General (Hong Kong, Sao Paulo, and Austin). These locations were principally chosen on the basis of their strategic value in the promotion of Ireland's economic interests. The resources allocated to these new locations have been kept to an absolute minimum. The Department is committed to keeping the Mission Network under review and to ensuring that it maintains the ability and agility to respond to new opportunities for Irish citizens and businesses.



Engagement with External Stakeholders

The Department accounts to the Houses of the Oireachtas in the first instance, through parliamentary questions and debates and through the following Oireachtas committees:

- Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Joint Committee on European Affairs

- Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement

The Secretary General of the Department also appears before the Oireachtas Public Accounts Committee as required.

The Department applies an open approach to policy making in a number of different ways. We advertise public consultations, publishing draft policy papers online and inviting submissions from civil society and individual members of the public. The Department also regularly hosts open policy debates which aim to involve networks of practitioners, academics and experts in developing and debating policy options. This has included opening Iveagh House for greater use by other Government Departments, agencies and partners in recent years.

Governance across organisational boundaries

Members of the Management Board, and other Department staff, also contribute to broader Civil Service management. The Secretary General is a member of the Civil Service Management Board and is a lead sponsor of various Actions under Civil Service Renewal. Additionally, other Management Board members participate in senior civil service management fora, as appointed by the Secretary General.

The Director General of EU Division chairs the EU Senior Officials Group which feeds into the Cabinet Committee on EU Affairs. The Director General of Trade Division supports the Minister in the Minister's chairing of the Export Trade Council. The Department also hosts the Inter-Departmental Committee on Human Rights and the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development.

The Department recognises that its work is particularly interlinked with that of the Department of the Taoiseach on matters relating to Brexit, EU Policy, Northern Ireland, and Ireland's relationship with the United Kingdom, and, in its trade function, with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.