

Ireland's
Economic
Diplomacy
In Action

St Patrick's Day 2015



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

Over the 2015 St. Patrick's Day period, the Embassy network, in coordination with the State agencies, undertook an extensive programme of activities in support of trade, tourism, and investment and to enhance Ireland's reputation internationally. Our national day also provided an excellent opportunity to deepen our bilateral relationship with countries around the globe and to strengthen our ties with the Irish diaspora.

- **29 trade-focussed visits** were led by the Taoiseach, Tánaiste and Ministers to 70 cities in 26 countries, including first-time visits to a number of locations.
- A total of **398 events were hosted or organised by the Embassy network**, from Ireland's first Embassy-organised national day reception in Nairobi in 26 years - following the re-opening of the Embassy in Kenya - to Ireland's first official St. Patrick's Day reception in Silicon Valley, California.
- Trade, tourism and investment in Ireland were promoted at **148 dedicated business events, attended by almost 18,000** Irish and international company representatives.
- The Taoiseach, the Tánaiste, Ministers and Irish diplomats participated in **149 high-level political meetings** arranged by the Embassy network.
- As in previous years, North America was a particular focus, with **100 political, economic and cultural events hosted by our Embassies and Consulates in 19 cities across the US and Canada** over the St. Patrick's Day period, reflecting the strong links between North America and Ireland.
- **China** was also a major focus in 2015, with a Ministerial programme covering Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong.
- More than **7 million people** attended St. Patrick's Day parades and related events around the world. In Mexico City, the busy *Zapata* metro station was re-named as *San Patricio* for St. Patrick's Day!
- **Over 180 iconic buildings and landmarks around the world went Green** for St. Patrick's Day 2015 as part of Tourism Ireland's 'Global Greenings' campaign, which received strong support from the Embassy network. Once again, this annual campaign generated huge media coverage – estimated to be worth €10 million in equivalent advertising value - at very minimal cost.
- Engagements with over **500 representatives of international media** over the St. Patrick's Day period.
- More than **340 community and cultural events** linked to St. Patrick's Day were organised and/or supported by the Embassy network, including events funded by Culture Ireland and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade around the globe.

High-Level Visits

Targeting International Decision-Makers

Supporting Irish Exporters

Irish Design 2015

Promoting Investment in Ireland

Promoting Ireland as a location for International Financial Services

Promoting Education in Ireland and Showcasing Ireland as a Centre of Innovation

Promoting Tourism

Communicating key messages about Ireland's economic progress

Promoting Ireland through our Culture

An Opportunity to Celebrate Bilateral Relations and Build Ireland's Profile

Connecting with the Diaspora

Engaging with International Media

High-Level Visits

During the period around St. Patrick's Day 2015, the Embassy network supported visits by the Taoiseach, the Tánaiste and a further twenty-seven Ministers and Ministers of State to a total of 26 different countries. 25 Ministerial itineraries took place in markets identified as "Priority" or "Exploratory and High Potential" under the Review of the Government Trade, Tourism and Investment Strategy (February 2014). The choice of locations also reflected the recent expansion of the Embassy network, with Ministers opening Ireland's new Embassy in Zagreb (Croatia) and a new Consulate General in São Paulo (Brazil).

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and its Embassy network led on the coordination of all Ministerial itineraries, working closely with Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Bord Bia, Tourism Ireland and Science Foundation Ireland.

The international profile of our national day is unrivalled by any other country in the world, and it provided the backdrop in 2015 for the organisation of **148 business events, attended by almost 18,000 Irish and international company representatives**. Embassies around the world worked closely with the State agencies to target clients and potential clients of Irish companies; potential investors in Ireland; tour operators and other tourism professionals; contacts in the education sector; key Irish community contacts; as well as international media (see further details in sections below).

A Ministerial presence at business events helped to secure high-level attendance by senior executives and key decision-makers, as well as creating opportunities for targeted bilateral engagement, and generating heightened media interest.



Taoiseach with President Obama



Tánaiste with the Governor of Massachusetts, Charlie Baker

Targeting International Decision-Makers

In addition to commercially-focused events, high-level visits over the St. Patrick's Day period also enabled private bilateral meetings with Presidents, Prime Ministers and a wide range of Government Ministers, parliamentarians and other key decision-makers and influencers across the world.

In the United States, for example, the Taoiseach engaged directly with almost the entire political leadership in Washington, from President Obama and Vice President Biden to the Speaker and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the Senate, as well as a wide range of members of Congress and the Senate. In the states and cities that they visited, the Taoiseach, the Tánaiste and other Ministers also met with Governors, Mayors and members of State legislatures.

In total, over the period, Minister and Embassy officials participated in **149 high-level political meetings**. In Canada, for example, Minister Flanagan met his counterpart and several other Cabinet Ministers, while Minister Bruton met with the French Economy Minister during his visit to Paris. All of these meetings allowed for significant discussions on global and European issues, as well as important areas of bilateral cooperation, trade and investment opportunities, and briefings on Ireland's economic progress.

Our multilateral missions also used the St. Patrick's Day period to grow networks in international organisations, including the European Union, the United Nations in New York, Geneva and Vienna, the World Trade Organisation, the World Intellectual Property Organisation and the International Labour Organisation. In Brussels, for example, Minister Murphy was guest of honour at a joint reception hosted by the Embassy and the Permanent Representation to the European Union, attended by the President of the European Commission, EU Commissioners, political figures, and other key contacts.

Supporting Irish Exporters

The Embassy network, working with relevant State agencies, placed a strong focus on the development of business opportunities through dedicated St. Patrick's Day business networking events aimed at existing and target clients of Irish exporting companies.

In Toronto, Minister Flanagan addressed an Enterprise Ireland / Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce event, involving over 100



Minister Flanagan addresses an Enterprise Ireland / Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce – Toronto business event

business representatives drawn from the telecoms, financial services, technology, mining, professional services, construction, media, legal and retail industries. In Paris, during the visit of Minister Bruton, four Enterprise Ireland client companies signed high-value contracts and partnership deals with French partners in the life sciences, manufacturing and financial technology sectors. In Abu Dhabi, during the visit of Minister Reilly, an Irish company providing library search services signed a partnership deal with a leading provider of education solutions headquartered in UAE.



Minister Reilly with Shameema Parveen, Edutech; Dr. Hilary Kenna, SeeSearch; and the Irish Ambassador to UAE

In Great Britain, Ireland's largest export market, Minister Heather Humphreys addressed the annual Enterprise Ireland networking reception, attended by over 180 people, including key industry contacts, buyers, influencers and market experts.

High-level contacts were also used to help develop new market opportunities for Irish exporters. In China, for example, Minister Kelly met with three Government Ministers during his visit, pursuing opportunities for collaboration in the Greentech sector, with a focus on solutions to Chinese environmental challenges that could be provided by Irish companies and technologies. In Addis Ababa, Minister Sherlock visited Ethiopian Airlines' cargo facilities, drawing attention to the opportunities afforded by the new Dublin to Addis Ababa route to two-way trade between Ireland and Ethiopia.

ID2015

In 2015, the St. Patrick's Day period also provided an opportunity to raise Ireland's profile in the field of design, tying in with the Irish Design 2015 (ID2015) initiative, which is convened by the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland on behalf of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Minister Nash launched an exhibition of Irish design in Stockholm, while Minister Deenihan promoted Irish design at the opening of a major exhibition of 18th Century Irish decorative arts at the prestigious Art Institute of Chicago. The Consulate in Chicago also supported the design and construction of an Irish Heritage Garden at the Chicago Garden and Flower Show to tie in with ID2015. Minister Bruton visited a dedicated design incubator funded by the city of Paris and discussed design links that could be forged between Ireland and Paris, while Minister Humphreys visited the "Second Skin" exhibition, exploring the potential of Irish textile production, at City Hall in London.

Through a programme of over 300 Irish and international events, ID2015 aims to create 1800 jobs over three years through sales of design-led products and services; generate an additional €10 million in design-based exports; generate 200 new design-led business start-ups; facilitate more than 300 companies in international trade missions and design-based trade events; and engage with an audience of over 3 million at home and abroad.



Minister Bruton promoting Irish Design in Paris, together with Ambassador Byrne-Nason



Minister Sherlock on board the Ethiopian Airlines Dreamliner to be used on the new ADD-DUB-LAX route

Ministers also visited the offices and factories of various successful global Irish enterprises, in support of overseas market activities.

The Embassy network also supported a range of commercial promotions of Irish food and drink products to international customers and events to highlight the strength of the Irish food industry. In

Rome, Minister Coveney launched an Irish beef promotion at a leading Italian retail chain, which now stocks Irish beef at 100 stores, following Bord Bia's involvement in the successful television show, MasterChef Italy.

In London, an Irish Food Market supported by Bord Bia at the St. Patrick's Festival in Trafalgar Square helped to promote high quality Irish produce to tens of thousands of people. In Paris, Bord Bia hosted a media lunch for approximately 20 Paris-based French, American and Irish food writers, as well as members of the French Chapter of the Chefs' Irish Beef Club. Minister Murphy participated in a food presentation organised by Bord Bia at Metro Supermarket, one of the major suppliers of Irish food in the Belgian market. In Stockholm, Minister Nash supported Irish beef exports through a meeting with the second largest retail chain in Sweden and through participation in a dinner organised by Bord Bia for top Swedish chefs. In Korea, Minister Howlin launched the first-ever Irish



Minister Coveney at Irish beef promotion in Rome

Gourmet Food week at the Hyundai Department Store, showcasing some 15 Irish food products. Irish food and beverages were showcased in Macau for the first time, at one of the largest hospitality venues in the peninsula, on the initiative of the Consulate General in Hong Kong.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Bord Bia arranged for Irish food and drink to be showcased at over 150 Embassy events worldwide.

Promoting Investment in Ireland

St. Patrick's Day business networking events and bilateral meetings provided Government Ministers and State agency officials with high-level access to the CEOs and other key decision-makers of major global enterprises, many of which are potential investors or re-investors in Ireland.

In Washington, the Taoiseach spoke at a roundtable meeting organised by the US Chamber of Commerce, and at a lunch for business leaders involving around 350 contacts of the State agencies. In Atlanta, he met with the CEO and other senior executives of Coca Cola, a major investor in Ireland, as well as addressing an investor roundtable at the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. In Austin, Texas, the Taoiseach was the first Head of Government to address the annual South by South West (SXSW) Interactive Festival, one of the world's largest incubators for cutting-edge technologies and digital creativity. The Taoiseach's presence helped to promote Ireland as an attractive destination for start-ups and other companies in the creative and high technology sectors.



Minister Donohoe at the corporate HQ of Google, Mountain View, California

In Philadelphia, the Tánaiste was guest of honour at an event organised jointly by the Irish Consulate and the IDA for key business contacts. On the US West Coast, Minister Donohoe held meetings with senior executives and key decision-makers of a number of investors or potential investors in the high-tech, tourism and audio-visual sectors. The West Coast accounted for over one third of all foreign direct investment into Ireland in 2014.

Key investors and potential investors were invited to events organised by the Embassy

network and IDA Ireland in many other locations, including Brasilia, Brussels, Edinburgh, Helsinki, Indianapolis, London, Mexico City, Moscow, Oslo, Paris, Philadelphia, Seoul, Singapore, and Tokyo.

International Financial Services



Minister Harris promoting IFS in Berlin

St. Patrick's Day engagements provided an excellent opportunity for Ministers and Ambassadors to brief relevant interlocutors on IFS2020, Ireland's new strategy for International Financial Services (IFS). Minister Harris undertook a series of bilateral and roundtable engagements with leading German multi-nationals in the Insurance and FinTech sectors. In Boston, the Tánaiste met with senior executives of two IFS companies which employ over 500 people in Ireland. Sun Life Financial, which employs 350 people in Waterford, has since announced plans to expand their operation in Ireland.

Promoting Education in Ireland and Showcasing Ireland as a Centre of Innovation

The profile of Ireland as a destination for education and as a leader in research was raised during Ministerial visits and St. Patrick's Day events around the globe.

In Washington, the Taoiseach highlighted education in Ireland as an attractive option for US students and underlined the commitment of the Irish Government to continue to invest in research. The Taoiseach also addressed a Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) event showcasing research activities in Ireland to a target audience of US corporations, the US National Science Foundation, the US National Institute for Health, the US State Department, and the 'Wild Geese Network of Irish Scientists', among others. The Taoiseach highlighted Ireland's strong tradition in the scientific field and presented the second annual SFI St. Patrick's Day Science Medal.

Minister Ring visited the campus of Arizona State University (ASU) in Phoenix. ASU is a key partner for Dublin City University and there is cooperation between the institutions in the field of technology with a large number of business-focused joint research initiatives, such as the 'Smart Stadium' technology project which aims to make Croke Park and the ASU Sun Devil Stadium two of the 'smartest' stadia in the world, through the use of sensor technology. In Indianapolis, Minister Coffey saw at first hand the pioneering research work being carried out at the Walsh Forensic DNA Phenotyping Laboratory, led by an Irish UCC graduate.

In Brazil, Minister O'Sullivan met with the Foreign Minister and the acting Minister for Education, discussing a wide range of bilateral issues, including the overwhelmingly positive experiences of over 3,000 Brazilian students who have studied in Ireland under the Brazilian Government's 'Science without Borders' programme. Ten separate Memoranda of Understanding were signed during the St. Patrick's Day period between third-level institutions in Ireland and Brazil. In Mexico, Minister Varadkar witnessed the signing of a cooperation agreement between Digital Skills Academy (DSA), based in the Digital Hub, and Guadalajara's Digital Creative City.

In China, Minister Kelly visited Beijing Technology and Business University, joined by senior representatives of DCU, UCD and UCC. He also addressed a number of 'Ireland Days' organised by Enterprise Ireland at prestigious universities in Beijing and Shanghai, increasing Ireland's profile as an education partner.

In Japan, Minister Howlin witnessed the signing of a cooperation agreement between Josai University and UL to facilitate student exchanges and internships. Minister Howlin also discussed the potential for greater links in the education sector during a meeting with the President of Korea University, one of Korea's top universities. In Singapore, a market from which student numbers have been traditionally strong, Minister Fitzgerald supported an event organised by the Irish Universities Medical Consortium, also attended by the



Minister Kelly at an 'Ireland Day' promotion, Tongji University, Shanghai

Deans of the medical schools of TCD, NUI Galway, UCC and UCD. The President of UCC led a delegation to Hanoi to promote Irish education during the week around St. Patrick's Day, signing a MoU with a leading private Vietnamese university, and giving interviews to Vietnam TV about the opportunities for study in Ireland.

The St. Patrick's Day visits also provided an opportunity to deepen educational links with universities overseas teaching Irish studies and Irish language courses.

Promoting Tourism

The Embassy network worked closely with Tourism Ireland to maximise tourism promotion opportunities during the St. Patrick's Day period, with a focus in 2015 on the Wild Atlantic Way promotional campaign, as well as celebrations worldwide to mark the 150th anniversary of the birth of William Butler Yeats, the celebrated Nobel Prize-winning poet. Tourism promotion was incorporated into all media and public diplomacy events, with coordinated and targeted messages prepared for all high-level visits and Embassy events worldwide. Ministers and Ambassadors highlighted the improved value for money rating of Irish holidays and also promoted specialist offerings such as our world-class golf courses and Ireland's bids to stage the Rugby World Cup in 2023 and the Women's Rugby World Cup in 2017 (the latter of which has since been confirmed).

Targeted tourism promotion events were organised by, or supported by, the Embassies and Consulates in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, China, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Top media Tweet earned 4,536 impressions

St. Patrick visiting #Stockholm this evening as part of his Nordic capitals tour!
#GoGreen4PatricksDay
pic.twitter.com/AiuLM7ujQV



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Tourism Ireland promotion in Nordic region using Lego figure of St. Patrick

In Glasgow, for example, the Consulate organised a tourism networking event, addressed by Minister McHugh, with a special focus on tourism to the Northwest of Ireland and along the Wild Atlantic Way, with participation by representatives of Donegal Airport and City of Derry Airport. The Embassy in Budapest organised a photo exhibition in the lobby of the Bank Centre in Budapest, inviting a well-known Hungarian photographer to put on display his photos of typical Irish landscapes and images of Irish cities. In San Francisco, Minister Donohoe's presence generated additional coverage for the announcement by Aer Lingus that it was extending its service to

Dublin from five to seven flights a week, while Minister Ring strongly promoted the announcement by Ethiopian Airlines of a new direct service between Los Angeles, Dublin and Addis Ababa. In Slovakia, Minister English promoted the opening of a new Ryanair base at Bratislava Airport.

#GoGreenforPatricksDay

This was the sixth year of Tourism Ireland's 'Global Greening' initiative, which was bigger than ever, shining a spotlight on the island of Ireland around the world. Tourism Ireland and the Embassy network arranged for more than 180 iconic buildings and landmarks to be illuminated in green to celebrate our national day, capitalising on Ireland's heightened profile around 17 March.

First-time 'greenings' secured by the Embassy network in 2015 included the Colosseum in Rome, the Basilica of Sacré-Cœur in the Montmartre district of Paris, Nelson's Column in London and Edinburgh Castle. A number of African sites also took part in this year's Global Greening for the first time, including the ancient Stele (obelisk) of Axum in Ethiopia and the Equator Sign and Line in Uganda. Other first-time 'greenings' included the iconic polar exploration ship Fram in Oslo, the Place de l'Étoile in Beirut, the Ada bridge in Belgrade, the Jumeirah Etihad Towers building in Abu Dhabi, and City Hall in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Each year, this initiative reaps enormous dividends, particularly in terms of international media exposure, which provides an invaluable boost to Tourism Ireland's promotional drive at a critical time of year. In 2015, publicity generated by the Global Greening initiative and related St. Patrick's Day promotions was estimated to be worth almost €10 million in equivalent advertising value.



A selection of 'Greenings' around the world: Brazil, China, Ethiopia, Italy, Niagara Falls, New Zealand, Uganda and Wales.

Communicating key messages about Ireland's economic progress

A key objective of Government during the St. Patrick's Day period was to promote awareness of Ireland's economic progress among influential decision-makers and opinion-leaders. At networking events across the world organised by the Embassy network, Ministers and Ambassadors were able to convey coordinated promotional messages to key contacts, including foreign Government and official contacts, senior business executives, Irish community leaders and international media. In addition to speeches, promotional video material and other presentational aids were also used, incorporating messaging provided by the State agencies.

The messages conveyed in 2015 addressed Ireland's economic recovery, which saw Ireland record the highest growth rate in the EU in 2014; successful efforts to stabilise the public finances and reduce debt levels; Ireland's strengths as a competitive location for sourcing goods and for foreign direct investment; our reputation in science and technology and R&D; our strong offering as a globally-recognised centre for international financial services; and Ireland's attractions as a tourism and study destination.

Promoting Ireland through our Culture



Harpist at St. Patrick's Day event in Ottawa



Currach regatta in Barcelona



Programme for Irish Week in Moscow

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht - through Culture Ireland - supported more than 340 cultural events around the world, ranging from a Currach regatta in Barcelona to traditional Irish musicians playing to local people in the Makuru slum in Eastern Nairobi.

Parades & Festivals

The Irish diaspora organised parades across the globe for St. Patrick's Day, in most cases with the support of local Embassies and Consulates. It is estimated that parades were attended by a total of over **7 million people**, and watched by millions more on TV.



St. Patrick's Day parade in San Francisco



Pipers at the St. Patrick's Day parade in Vancouver

Ministers attended parades right across the US, from Atlanta, Boston, New York and Savannah in the East to San Francisco in the West, and from Houston on the Gulf of Mexico to Chicago on the Great Lakes. A large parade was held on the other side of the great lakes in Toronto. Embassy officials also attended a large number of parades in smaller cities and towns on the weekends before and after St. Patrick's Day.

Closer to home, parades were held across the length and breadth of Britain. The London St. Patrick's Day Parade and Festival culminated in a five-hour celebration of Irish music, song, dance, food and film in Trafalgar Square, attended by over 95,000 people. Around Europe, parades were held in numerous locations, including Berlin, Bucharest, Budapest, Copenhagen, Malta, and Vienna. A very well-attended parade was also held once again in Moscow. In Munich, home to the largest parade in Germany, the 20th St. Patrick's Day parade was marked with a concert, *Journey to Ireland*, commissioned by the German-Irish Friendship Society, which depicted the history of Irish dancing from the 18th century up to modern times.

In Tokyo, the St. Patrick's Day parade proceeded along one of the most prestigious shopping streets in central Tokyo, while twelve other parades were also held around Japan. Other parades in Asia included Sydney, Pattaya (Thailand), Singapore and Penang (Malaysia). Hong Kong held its first St. Patrick's Day parade, organised on the initiative of the newly-opened Irish Consulate, with the participation of more than 20 groups.

Irish festivals celebrating diverse aspects of our arts, heritage and culture were held in many cities across the globe to coincide with St. Patrick's Day. In Paris, the Irish Cultural Centre hosted a diverse programme of cultural events over four days. In Scotland, the long established Coatbridge Irish Festival (the largest in Britain outside of London) drew about 15,000 people, and the Glasgow Irish Festival about 12,000. 2015 was the third year of Moscow's Irish week, which also included an Irish film festival. In the Asia-Pacific region, Irish festivals were held in Beijing, Shanghai, Tokyo and Seoul. In Buenos Aires, the Admiral Brown Irish Society organised the now traditional festival in a central downtown location. Other cities where Irish festivals were organised included Amsterdam and The Hague, Belgrade, Ostrava in the Czech Republic and Oulu, in Finland.

Irish film festivals were also organised in a number of locations, including Boston, Budapest, Eger (Hungary), Copenhagen, Mexico City and Nairobi.



Minister Humphreys at parade and festival in London



Minister Murphy at the unveiling in Brussels of the iconic 'Manneken Pis' statue, dressed in Irish costume

Yeats2015

2015 marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of William Butler Yeats. St. Patrick's Day provided an excellent platform for Ministers and Embassy officials to bring this important anniversary to the attention of overseas audiences. In Washington, the traditional crystal bowl of shamrock presented by the Taoiseach to President Obama was engraved with a quote from WB Yeats, who was also referenced in the Taoiseach's speech. Minister Jan O'Sullivan opened a "Commemorations of 150 Years of Yeats" conference at the University of São Paulo, while Minister Kelly opened two art exhibitions inspired by Yeats' poetry at galleries in Beijing, and promoted Yeats 2015 in an interview with a Chinese television station. In Moscow, Minister Lynch participated in a Yeats celebration at the State Library for Foreign Literature. The Ambassador in London recited Yeats to a crowd of over 8,500 people at the St. Patrick's Day Festival in Trafalgar Square.



Minister O'Sullivan at a conference on WB Yeats at the University of São Paulo

An Opportunity to Celebrate Bilateral Relations and Build Ireland's Profile

Our national day affords an excellent opportunity to celebrate and to deepen our bilateral relations with countries around the globe, helping enormously to build Ireland's profile in countries without a large Irish diaspora.

2015 marks the **40th anniversary of Diplomatic Relations with Mexico**, Ireland's largest trading partner in Latin America. To mark the occasion, the Embassy put together a programme of 19 events around St. Patrick's Day, including a significant public diplomacy effort. In Mexico City, both Houses of Congress turned green to mark the anniversary, as well as the iconic *Angel de la Independencia* monument. The busy *Zapata* metro station in Mexico City, which caters for one million passengers per day, was renamed *San Patricio* for St. Patrick's Day. The Gloaming played a major concert in Mexico City, with support from Culture Ireland, and an Irish film festival took place at the *Cinoteca Nacional*. Other events took place in Guadalajara and Puerto Vallarta.



Minister Varadkar at renaming of 'Zapata' metro station as 'San Patricio' on 17 March 2015

The **Beijing Irish Festival** ran from 10-28 March 2015, with a total of 23 events, including the Beijing Irish Ball, organised by the Irish Network China; a concert by Sharon Shannon and her band in the Forbidden City; performances by a chamber ensemble from the Royal Irish Academy of Music at the Central Conservatory of Music and at Tsinghua University; nine separate performances by Irish traditional musicians, Cuisle; two visual arts exhibitions inspired by the poetry of WB Yeats; participation in an international literary festival by two Irish writers; performances by Irish pianist Cathal Breslin and folk singer Cara Dillon; and the 'greening' of a section of the Great Wall of China. In Bangkok, Thailand, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Embassy jointly hosted a St. Patrick's Day reception on 17 March, an event which also marked **40 years of diplomatic relations between Ireland and Thailand**. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand attended, along with 300 other guests drawn from politics, the business world, academia and civil society.



Minister Howlin meets Pres. Bill Clinton in Tokyo

In Japan, Minister Howlin attended a **St. Patrick's Day reception organised by the US Ambassador, Caroline Kennedy**, at which the guest of honour was President Bill Clinton. Ambassador Kennedy's promotion of her Irish heritage and the presence of an Irish Minister were extremely useful in raising Ireland's profile in Japan. In Yangon (Myanmar), an Embassy official from Hanoi attended the first ever St. Patrick's Day event there, attended by 430 people, and featuring performances by Irish musicians and a small céilí.

Connecting with the Diaspora

The voice of Ireland is hugely amplified by the many millions around the globe who are Irish by birth, by descent or by affinity, and St. Patrick's Day presents an excellent opportunity to strengthen ties and create new ties with Ireland's diaspora. In countries with large diasporas - notably the United States and the United Kingdom - St. Patrick's Day celebrations take place throughout almost the entire month of March and every effort is made to ensure that the Government is represented at as many events as possible, in acknowledgement of the work being done by so many dedicated Irish clubs, societies and associations. Ministerial itineraries also typically included participation in celebrations organised by Irish diaspora groups overseas, as well as more formal meetings with Irish community groups to discuss issues of concern, including immigration reform, employment, housing and healthcare.



Minister Fitzgerald celebrating with members of the St. Patrick's Society of Singapore



Minister Deenihan at the launch of the exhibition 'Ireland: Crossroads of Art and Design, 1690-1840' at the Art Institute of Chicago

During engagements in the United States, Minister Deenihan and other Ministers highlighted the publication in early March of ***Global Irish – Ireland's Diaspora Policy***, the first comprehensive statement of Government policy on the diaspora. The Taoiseach, the Tánaiste, Minister Deenihan and other ministers visiting locations with large Irish diasporas briefed Irish community audiences and key arts, cultural and academic contacts on the Government's plans to mark the 100th anniversary of the 1916 Rising - both in Ireland and overseas - with a view to encouraging collaboration and partnerships.

In many parts of the world, the **Gaelic games** continue to play a key role in celebrations of St. Patrick's Day, bringing together members of the Irish diaspora and others with an affinity for Ireland. During his visit to New Zealand, Minister White attended the New Zealand GAA national

championships, while Minister Murphy presented medals to the Junior Team at the annual GAA festival in Brussels. In Munich, Minister Harris met with members of the Munich Columcilles GAA team, while on the other side of the Atlantic, Minister Coffey participated in a reception hosted by the Consulate in Chicago for the St. Louis GAA Club. In Hong Kong, the Gaelic Dragons GAA club and a local Australian rules team battled it out for the Jim Stynes Cup, and the Consul General had the pleasure of awarding the trophy to the Gaelic Dragons.



Minister White at the New Zealand GAA National Championships

Irish Networks



Magazine in Shanghai

The Embassy network works with colleagues from Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland and the other State agencies, to maintain, grow and energise Irish networks worldwide, including Irish business, professional and alumni networks, as well as chambers of commerce. Events around St. Patrick's Day provided an opportunity for the Government to convey thanks to members of all such networks who actively promote business links with Ireland or provide other important supports to Irish communities. The occasion also saw the launch of new networks: in Toyko, Minister Howlin attended the launch of a new Friends of Ireland Advisory Group, while a new Irish-Estonian Business Network was also launched during the period.

The St. Patrick's Day period also presented a welcome opportunity to engage with and to express thanks to long-standing partners and friends of Ireland, including members of the Global Irish Network, the Worldwide Ireland Funds, the Ireland Funds Young Leaders, Cooperation Ireland, the Irish Network – USA Chapters, and other organisations, many voluntary, working to support Irish communities. The President's St. Patrick's Day message was, as always, used widely and to great effect in this context by the Embassy network.

For the first time, the Consulate General in San Francisco organised its annual St. Patrick's Day reception in Silicon Valley, home to a substantial number of young Irish professionals working in some of the major global tech companies. Minister Donohoe participated in the event, which was supported by Tourism Ireland and Enterprise Ireland, and which helped to strengthen Team Ireland's connections with the local Irish community. In Basel, Switzerland, a hub for the pharmaceutical industry, which employs many Irish expatriates, Minister Kevin Humphreys was guest of honour at a lunch organised by the Basel Irish Club and the Basel Chapter of the Irish Business Network.

Engaging with International Media

To complement direct contacts with thousands of political, commercial and Irish community contacts, the Embassy network worked to ensure that the messages of the Ministerial visits and St. Patrick's Day promotional events reached the widest audience possible. The Taoiseach, Tánaiste, Ministers and Ambassadors were interviewed on national television and radio stations across the world, including in London, Tokyo, Shanghai, Hong Kong, New York, Atlanta and Silicon Valley.

The Embassy network engaged with representatives of international media through interviews, media events and background briefings, and has recorded more than 450 separate international media reports on Ireland over the St. Patrick's Day period, many of which resulted from Embassy promotional activities. In Paris, for example, during Minister Bruton's visit, the Embassy arranged a two-hour round-table briefing for 10 leading journalists and commentators from French and international news media. This meeting contributed to positive coverage of Ireland in articles in *Le Monde* and *Libération* in the days that followed, and will have helped to inform accurate coverage of Ireland by the other media in the period since. Interviews and coverage of St. Patrick's Day were also carried on international media such as CNN and Sky News, which are broadcast to over 350 million homes and hotel rooms.

Key messages promoting trade, tourism and investment were also communicated by Ministers and Ambassadors through opinion articles and interviews with newspapers and business publications. These were published in media in all corners of the globe, from the Boston Globe and the Statesman (Austin) to the Irish Post (UK) and Gazeta Wyborcza (Poland); from the Korea Herald and Mainichi Shimbun (Japan), to the Khaleej Times (UAE), Vanguard (Nigeria), and the Kenya Business News.

The Embassy network also made extensive use of social media to promote Ireland and deliver key messages over the St. Patrick's Day period.



Taoiseach interviewed on CNN on St. Patrick's Day

Trade and Promotion Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
July 2015

2015 St. Patrick's Day Programme

Office Holder	Destination(s)
Taoiseach, Enda Kenny T.D.	USA (Washington D.C., Atlanta, Austin)
Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton T.D.	USA (Boston, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia)
Brendan Howlin T.D., Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform	South Korea (Seoul), Japan (Tokyo, Osaka, Sendai, Takasago, Kyoto)
Richard Bruton T.D., Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation	France (Paris)
Simon Coveney T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food & Marine, Minister for Defence	Italy (Rome)
Frances Fitzgerald T.D., Minister for Justice & Equality	Singapore
James Reilly T.D., Minister for Children & Youth Affairs	United Arab Emirates (Abu Dhabi, Dubai), India (New Delhi)
Leo Varadkar T.D., Minister for Health	Mexico (Mexico City)
Charles Flanagan T.D., Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade	Canada (Toronto)
Jan O'Sullivan T.D., Minister for Education and Skills	Brazil (Brasilia, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Campinas)
Alan Kelly T.D., Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government	China (Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong)
Alex White T.D., Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources	New Zealand (Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, New Plymouth)
Paschal Donohoe T.D., Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport	USA (San Francisco, Silicon Valley, San José)

Heather Humphreys T.D., Minister for Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht	UK (London), USA (New York)
Paul Kehoe T.D., Government Chief Whip, Minister of State at the Departments of the Taoiseach and Defence	USA (Houston, Savannah)
Ged Nash T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Jobs Enterprise and Innovation	Sweden (Stockholm)
Jimmy Deenihan T.D., Minister of State at the Departments of the Taoiseach, and Foreign Affairs and Trade	USA (Chicago, Milwaukee)
Michael Ring T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport	USA (Phoenix, Los Angeles)
Kathleen Lynch T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Health	Russia (Moscow)
Tom Hayes T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine	Australia (Canberra, Sydney, Perth, Brisbane, Melbourne)
Sean Sherlock T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Ethiopia (Addis Ababa, Ziway)
Damien English T.D., Minister of State at the Departments of Education and Skills and Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation	Denmark (Copenhagen), Slovakia (Bratislava)
Joe McHugh T.D., Minister of State at the Departments of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht and Communications, Energy and Natural Resources	Scotland (Edinburgh, Glasgow, Coatbridge)
Paudie Coffey T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government	USA (St. Louis, Indianapolis)
Simon Harris T.D., Minister of State at the Departments of Finance; Public Expenditure and Reform; Taoiseach	Germany (Berlin, Munich, Cologne, Stuttgart, Zülpich)

Kevin Humphreys T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Social Protection	Croatia (Zagreb), Switzerland (Basel, Geneva)
Dara Murphy T.D., Minister of State at the Departments of the Taoiseach and Foreign Affairs and Trade	Belgium (Brussels)
Aodhán Ó Ríordáin T.D., Minister of State at the Departments of Justice and Equality; Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht; Health	Hungary (Budapest)
Ann Phelan T.D., Minister of State at the Departments of Agriculture; Food and Marine; Environment Community and Local Government; Transport, Tourism and Sport	The Netherlands (The Hague, Amsterdam)