



**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

A Focused Policy Review of  
Ireland's Bilateral Diplomatic Mission Network  
in the  
United States of America

May 2017

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## Glossary

<b>Appropriations in Aid</b>	These are receipts which may be retained by the Department to offset expenditure instead of being paid into the Exchequer Account of the Central Fund
<b>Cost of Living Allowance</b>	The Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) which is designed to estimate and defray costs associated with a higher cost of living at the post abroad. The department uses the services of an independent London based firm, Employment Conditions Abroad (ECA) to provide cost of living indices for the various locations required COLA only becomes payable at posts with a higher cost of living index than Dublin
<b>Local Post Allowance</b>	Assistance for the additional indirect costs arising from the representational role of officers such additional and adequate clothing, costs associated with local climatic conditions, standards and expected culturally and otherwise in the local environment
<b>Diplomatic Bag</b>	A bag or container with certain legal protections used for carrying official correspondence or other items between the missions and HQ. Each Mission receives and sends a diplomatic bag on a weekly basis.
<b>HQ staff</b>	Departmental staff on posting in the US (both DFAT and General Civil Service)
<b>Ireland House</b>	The colocation of Ireland's state agencies with a diplomatic mission providing a single face of Ireland
<b>Local staff</b>	Staff recruited locally, these staff are not entitled to Irish State pension contributions
<b>Representational Costs</b>	Expenditure involved with official representational work carried out by diplomatic officers serving abroad. The parameters of the scheme are clearly defined. Expenditure must be vouched and kept within agreed individual or Mission ceilings. The ceilings are reviewed and determined on an annual basis to ensure a targeted approach to the expenditure in line with the business objectives of the Missions.
<b>Standard Consular services</b>	Non-emergency consular services such as the processing of passport and visa applications, and the registering of foreign births
<b>Consular Assistance Area</b>	The geographical area for which a mission has the responsibility of providing consular assistance to Irish citizens.

## Acronyms

BEA	Bureau of Economic Analysis
CG	Consulate General
COLA	Cost of Living Allowance
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DJEI	Department of Job Enterprise and Innovation
DPER	Department of Public expenditure and Reform
E&A	Evaluation and Audit
EI	Enterprise Ireland
ETC	Emergency Travel Certificate
EU	European Union
ESP	Emigrant Support Programme
FBR	Foreign Births Registration
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HOM	Head of Mission
HQ	Headquarters
IIPC	Irish Immigration and Pastoral Center
LMT	Ireland's Local Market Team
LPA	Local Post Allowance
IUKA	Ireland, United Kingdom and Americas
MER	Mission Event Reporting
PDCO	Public Diplomacy & Communications Officer
SPD	St Patrick's Day
TOR	Terms of Reference
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USA	United States of America

## Executive Summary

### [Introduction](#)

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is the primary institution of Government through which Ireland's foreign policy, values and interests are promoted and pursued internationally, and through which Ireland builds and maintains relations with other states and multilateral organisations.

In view of promoting and protecting Ireland's interests, Ireland maintains a global network of bilateral diplomatic missions. Seven of these missions are in the United States of America. Comprising an Embassy in Washington and six Consulates General in six major cities, Ireland's diplomatic mission network in the US is the primary instrument for maintaining Ireland's bilateral relationship with the USA. In collaboration with Ireland's state agencies, the diplomatic network is also a key instrument for promoting Ireland's economic interests with the US whilst at the same time delivering a range of services and supports to Irish citizens, Irish Americans and Irish community organisations.

### [Focus and Purpose of the Review](#)

Drawing upon the template Terms of Reference for the review of expenditure as set out in the Irish Government's Public Spending Code, this review examined the work of Ireland's bilateral diplomatic network in the United States of America for the years 2011-2015 inclusive, a period that coincided with the start of a new Programme for Government and a new Statement of Strategy for DFAT. In addition to helping provide accountability to the Irish public in general, this review aims to help inform decisions in relation to the future allocation of resources and to how the mission network might more effectively and more efficiently maintain and develop Ireland's bilateral relationship with the US, promote Ireland's economic interests and deliver services to Irish citizens.

The review was undertaken by the Evaluation and Audit Unit of the DFAT and advised by a Reference Group which included representatives from DFAT and from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

### [Key Findings](#)

#### Relevance

The missions' focus on the provision of services, the promotion of Ireland's trade/economic interests and, in general, the fostering of relations between Ireland and US closely accords with key Government objectives and strategies, and with the high level goals of the Department's current and most recent Statements of Strategy. The individual missions in the network are appropriately



located in areas of high potential benefit to Ireland. Overall, it is clearly relevant that Ireland should have a significant diplomatic presence in the US and thus warranting the allocation of public funding.

## Effectiveness

- *Serving Strategic Needs*

In terms of serving strategic needs, for the years covered by this review the evidence indicates that the network has been particularly effective: in fostering and maintaining Ireland's relationship with the US at the highest levels of political, administrative, economic and academic life; in the promotion of Ireland as a high value destination for foreign direct investment and as a trading partner; and in connecting Ireland to business leaders and key people in public, social and political life in the US. The quality and commitment of mission staff is considered by the non-DFAT people interviewed as part of this review to be the primary factor enhancing the effectiveness of the missions.

- *Serving Practical Needs*

In terms of serving practical needs, the evidence indicates that the network has been very effective in providing consular services and consular assistance. In addition, the missions play a key role in facilitating diaspora-related initiatives such as the Emigrant Support Programme. By linking closely with the Irish diaspora and with those having an affinity with Ireland, the missions have effectively leveraged the capacities of different groups in ways that are mutually beneficial.

## Efficiency

The nature of the work of the missions and its associated objectives does not lend itself to the quantitative measurement of efficiencies in an absolute sense. However, viewed from the perspective of the levels of activity and the volumes of services provided, overall there is a high return relative to the numbers of staff and the overall costs of the mission network. In addition, the level of staffing at Ireland's missions is notably smaller than that of the missions of other countries which are broadly comparable in the context of the USA. Given the mission network's high level of services and its many other activities, all of this suggests that efficiencies are being achieved and that there is value-for-money even though the degree of these efficiencies and of the value-for-money cannot be definitively ascertained.

## Issues for Ongoing Consideration

1. *Ensuring Coherence and Complementarity*

The effectiveness of the US mission network will be much shaped by how the work of the network is coherent with and complementary of the work of other Government Departments and Ireland's

State Agencies, especially the latter with whom there is a formal arrangement through the Local Market Team. Ensuring maximum coherence and complementarity between the mission network and the State Agencies on the ground in the US is reliant on the strategic direction provided by the respective HQs in Dublin. Given the fact that Ireland's State Agencies are well established in the US, the complementarity the missions can optimally offer in relation to trade and investment is that of strategically linking a trade and investment agenda to other agendas such as the peace process in Northern Ireland, or the promotion and protection of Ireland's reputation in the United States, particularly in relation to our corporation tax regime.

Internal to DFAT, it is of high importance that the missions give ongoing consideration to ensuring business planning is aligned with DFAT's priorities.

## 2. Maintaining Visibility

At a policy level, working to bring about peace and reconciliation in Ireland helped give Ireland visibility both within the Irish diaspora and with the US administration. This measure of visibility has arguably lessened given progress that has been made in recent years. Peace and reconciliation in Ireland is less of a rallying point for Irish groups in the US than it once was. The potential consequences of Brexit for Northern Ireland and the Peace Process, recent developments in relation to the Northern Ireland Executive and a new US administration, underline the need for continued close attention by the mission network to these important issues.

At the individual level, providing consular services has been a very important point of contact between the missions and the individual, indirectly serving to give Ireland a measure of visibility. Whereas the planned changes to the way in which services are provided by Ireland's missions worldwide are expected to deliver a high level of customer service and greater administrative efficiencies, these may result in diminishing visibility.

Changes, whether at the policy level or the individual level, present a challenge for the mission network as to how it can maintain Ireland's visibility in the US. Consideration of how best to maintain Ireland's visibility might include further developing culture as a focus for how the network continues to engage with Irish-America. The promotion of culture will likely have other indirect benefits such as the promotion of tourism and education in Ireland, and serving to connect an often diverse or disparate Irish community.

## 3. Attentiveness to Changing Demographics

The demographics of Irish-America are changing with Irish-America becoming more heterogeneous and, to an increasing degree, generationally more distant from Ireland. In addition, the demographics of recent Irish emigration into the US have been changing with many of the new Irish emigrants to the US tending to be young and well educated. Given the changes and the increasing diversity, it is all the more important that the mission network continues to review and adjust

accordingly its outreach policy to Irish emigrants and to Irish American communities, organisations and networks.

In addition to the changing demographics of Irish-America, changes are taking place in the profile of American society as a whole. These changes show signs of American society being less open to and less welcoming of immigrants. Consideration of how the mission network continues to promote Ireland's interests must take account of the fact that Ireland's calling card may not be as welcome as it once was.

#### 4. Prioritising

The missions are very busy. Demands on mission staffs are many and increasingly complex, not least because of the increasing heterogeneity of Irish-America and the competing social and economic interests which contribute to an environment which may not be as open to Ireland as had once been the case.

The existing high demands on staff and limited resources are such that priority actions for the mission network need to be regularly reviewed and agreed. Given human resource constraints and the fact that Ireland's State Agencies are well established in the US and appear to be generally well resourced, the prioritisation should ensure that the particular role of the missions in relation to Ireland's economic objectives and policies is clearly identified and supported.

More widely, the prioritisation should keep a focus on how the missions might optimally collaborate with individuals and networks, people who are already playing important roles in promoting the interests and values of Ireland and of Irish-America. The prioritisation might also differentiate between those things the missions should be pursuing and those things that might need protecting or defending.

#### 5. Resourcing

- *Staffing*

The level of staffing of Ireland's mission network in the US is very modest when compared to the staffing of the US missions of some other EU countries whose interests in the US are broadly comparable to that of Ireland. In the next few years there will be some notable changes from what the missions have ordinarily undertaken up until now. Changes such as the way passport applications and renewals will be handled will tend to move the focus of the missions' work more towards outreach and less towards the delivery of services. These upcoming changes are an opportunity for the US missions to review the staffing profile and skills mix of their staffs and opportunities for reskilling.

- *Single-Diplomat Missions*

In 2009 an internal review of Ireland's US mission network made a recommendation to Government to extend Ireland's diplomatic presence into Southern states by opening new Consulates in Atlanta and Austin, major cities of high economic and investment potential for Ireland. Both of the new Consulates were opened as single-diplomat missions.

The model of a single-diplomat mission is used by Ireland in the staffing of some of its European missions. Though having some clear drawbacks and thus not a preferred model for resident diplomatic representation, a single-diplomat mission can prove satisfactory in geographically small countries where there is small demand for consular services, where trade and investment opportunities are limited, and where the primary function of the mission is essentially the promotion and maintenance of strong bilateral relations. These conditions are not the case for the missions in Atlanta and Austin, both of which have immediate responsibility for covering seven states, each of which is geographically large, some of which have a large Irish diaspora, and many of which have high levels of economic opportunity to which the missions are expected to respond. Both Consulates have a very high workload.

All things taken into consideration, it is the view of this review that the current single-diplomat arrangements at the consulates in Atlanta and Austin carry significant risks to effectiveness and sustainability such that these missions each warrant an additional diplomatic staff member if Ireland is to maintain the missions in the longer term.

- *Human Resource Management*

Unlike Ireland's diplomatic representation in other countries, Ireland's seven missions in the US constitute a network led by the Ambassador in Washington. Even though each of the seven missions has its particularities, the fact of constituting a network provides an opportunity to consider a cross-network approach to certain areas of human resource management. A cross-network approach would help obviate risks to staff morale that could arise from issues associated with differences between one mission and another. It should be noted, however, that any moves towards a cross-network approach in the area of human resources management would have resource implications for the mission at which a function or responsibility is concentrated.

- *Work/Life balance*

The missions are extremely busy and officers commonly work very long hours, including regular weekend work. Though the high commitment of staff is an important factor in helping ensure the effectiveness of the missions, the potential negative effects of long work hours need to be carefully monitored and regularly assessed both from the perspective of health and safety, and risks to operational effectiveness. The need for this monitoring and assessment is all the more important in the context of the two single-diplomat missions. Clear contingency arrangements need to be in place, and reviewed regularly, to cater for situations where an officer might become unavailable for duty for whatever reason.

## 6. Assessing performance

The comprehensive data in relation to consular services and the high levels of activity as reported by the missions themselves and as recorded in mission event reports do not adequately quantify the time and effort associated with this work. Whereas much of the work of the missions is hard to assess even when there is very detailed data available, there is a continuing need to seek ways to improve performance assessment. Key Performance Indicators need to be very specific, be likely to have the necessary data for future assessment and should, ideally, cover each of the core aspects of the missions' work.

Applicable to the entire DFAT mission network, the identification of performance measurement indicators should take account of the fact that a number of the missions' higher level objectives are shared in some degree with other actors such as Ireland's State Agencies. Rather than being confined to strict attribution, the choice of performance indicators should give consideration to the fact that it is often the case that the work of the missions makes contributions to particular outcomes. Choosing performance indicators that are focused only on activities that can be strictly attributed to the work of a mission may result in a failure to demonstrate important contributions made by the mission.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

This Chapter sets out the background to the Report and situates Ireland’s mission network in the USA within the wider network of Ireland’s diplomatic missions globally. It then sets out the purpose of the Review and the methodology used, and describes the structure of the Report.

### 1.1 The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is the primary institution of Government through which Ireland’s foreign policy, values and interests are promoted and pursued internationally, and through which Ireland builds and maintains relations with other states and multilateral organisations. The diplomatic missions are essentially the extension of the State beyond Ireland’s borders, providing services to Irish citizens, supporting Irish economic interests and promoting Irish Government policies through a broad range of activities.

Currently, Ireland maintains 82 diplomatic missions worldwide of which 60 are *bilateral diplomatic missions*<sup>1</sup>, eleven are *consulates general*<sup>2</sup>, 8 are *permanent representations* to multilateral organisations<sup>3</sup>, two are representative offices in Northern Ireland, and there is a representative office to the Palestinian National Authority.

Though trade promotion and economic diplomacy have long been explicit and core features of the work of Ireland’s missions abroad, responsibility for trade promotion was only formally assigned to DFAT in 2011<sup>4</sup>.

### 1.2 The US mission network

Comprising an embassy in Washington and six Consulates General, Ireland’s diplomatic mission network in the US<sup>5</sup> is the primary instrument for maintaining Ireland’s bilateral relationship with the USA. In collaboration with Ireland’s state agencies, the diplomatic network is also a primary instrument for promoting Ireland’s economic interests with the US whilst at the same time delivering a range of services to Irish citizens, Irish Americans, Irish community organisations and

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<sup>1</sup> Technically, the term “embassy” refers to the diplomatic delegation itself that is accredited to a country. The place in which the delegation works is technically the “chancery”. The term “bilateral diplomatic mission” embraces both.

<sup>2</sup> A Consulate General is a representative office in a country, but ultimate responsibility for relations with the receiving state lies with an ambassador resident in the host country or elsewhere.

<sup>3</sup> Examples: the United Nations (UN); the Council of Europe; the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

<sup>4</sup> Responsibility for trade policy remains with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

<sup>5</sup> Washington (opened 1924); Boston (1929); New York (1930); San Francisco (1933); Chicago (1934); Atlanta (2010); and Austin (2015).

advocating on their behalf. The network of 7 diplomatic missions is complemented by 11 Honorary Consuls<sup>6</sup>.

A 2009 Irish Embassy strategy for engagement with the US identified the US as playing a central role in Ireland's economic development and in the ongoing peace process in Northern Ireland. Launched by the Taoiseach in March 2009<sup>7</sup>, the strategy emphasised the economic relationship between Ireland and the US as a priority, an emphasis that was reiterated in a review of that strategy in 2014. Given the significance of Ireland's multifaceted relationship with the United States and, in keeping with the spirit of the Irish Government's Public Spending Code, the Department decided to undertake this review of the US bilateral mission network.

### 1.3 Purpose of the review

The overall purpose of the review is to provide an assessment of the work of the 7 bilateral missions that comprise Ireland's mission network in the United States of America<sup>8</sup>. In addition to helping provide accountability to the Irish public in general, this assessment will serve to inform decisions in relation to future resource allocations and how the mission network might more effectively and more efficiently maintain and develop Ireland's bilateral relationship with the US, promote Ireland's economic interests and deliver services to Irish citizens<sup>9</sup>.

### 1.4 Methodology

The FPA was undertaken by the Evaluation and Audit Unit of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and involved the gathering of quantitative and qualitative information which was then analysed to inform a judgement. The exercise was advised by a Reference Group comprising representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER).

The assessment comprised three broad phases:

1. An initial scoping of the exercise
2. A detailed review of documentation and the gathering of quantitative and qualitative information
3. Data analyses and report writing.

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<sup>6</sup> Ireland's global network of Honorary Consuls is managed by Consular Division in Dublin and the US Honorary Consuls are not reviewed as part of this exercise.

<sup>7</sup> Presented to Government in a Memorandum for the Information of Government, March 2009

<sup>8</sup> Consideration will not be given to Ireland's Permanent Mission to the United Nations which is located in New York.

<sup>9</sup> Though subsequent to the initiation of this assessment, the review will also help inform the development of a new cross-sectoral, whole-of-Government strategy for the Americas. Cf. "A Programme for a Partnership Government", May 2016, page 145.

### 1.4.1 Initial Scoping

The initial scoping entailed:

- Preliminary informal interviews to gain clarity as to how the missions plan and operate
- An initial review of departmental strategy documents and of the business plans of the missions in the US network
- Identification of sources of information that would be available to inform the assessment

Because the work of a diplomatic mission does not easily lend itself to quantitative measurement it became evident that, in addition to the available input and output quantitative data, there would need to be substantial use made of qualitative information and that there would need to be a rigorous approach to gathering such information.

The initial scoping concluded with the finalisation of the Terms of Reference and of the overall approach. This was done with the support of the Reference Group.

### 1.4.2 Review of Documentation and Information Gathering

The documentation review included examination of key strategy documents and the annual business plans of the US missions. The gathering of quantitative data drew from:

- Mission expenditure and income data
- Human resourcing data
- Mission Events' Reports (DFAT's system for reporting mission activities)
- Consular Services records
- Consular Assistance records
- Mission activity data
- Annual St Patrick's Day reports
- Other relevant data sets, including data in relation to the operations of other foreign services

Contextual data was drawn from a wide variety of sources including the Central Statistics' Office, the US Census Bureau, the Higher Education Authority and Tourism Ireland.

The gathering of qualitative data was undertaken by interview. Specifically, three groups of interviewee were identified, namely:

- DFAT staff (24 interviews)
- State Agency staff and staff from other Government Departments (12 interviews)
- People from the private and community sectors (32 interviews)



Interviews were conducted in Ireland and at a sample of the missions in the US<sup>10</sup>. Interviewees were chosen based on their level of interaction with the work of the missions and their likely knowledge of how the missions serve Irish interests. The identification of potential interviewees drew from an examination of the more recent Mission Events' Reports lodged by the missions and of people mentioned therein. In the case of people to be interviewed in the US, the list was finalised in consultation with the local missions. Care was taken to meet people from a variety of backgrounds and all of whom showed evidence of being clearly familiar with the work of the missions or a least familiar with key aspects of the missions' work. In most cases interviews took place face-to-face. Because of particular circumstances a few interviews took place by Video Conference or by telephone.

Separate semi-structured questionnaires were prepared for each of the three groups of people to be interviewed (the semi-structured interviews are given in Appendix 4). The interview structure sought to explore the key issues of the ToR and care was taken to avoid leading questions. Interviewees were allowed answer questions in whatever way they wished. Interviewers looked for the apparent degree of knowledge by the interviewees of the work of the missions. In judging the significance or otherwise of what interviewees said, cognisance was taken of the apparent conviction with which an answer or an opinion was given. Particular attention was given to listening for evidence of possible deadweight and for evidence of contribution to particular outcomes. To help maximise the accuracy of the record of what interviewees shared, each interview was conducted by two people. Notes were taken at each interview and then brought together to interpret the information and the frequency of responses.

### 1.4.3 Data Analysis and Report Writing

Given the fact that much of the work of the missions is, in varying degrees, undertaken in collaboration with others or is complementary of the work of others, or may have multiple contributing variables, analysis of the qualitative information was approached from a perspective of the plausible contribution that the missions made to achieving objectives<sup>11</sup>.

## 1.5 Challenges and Limitations

In deciding an approach and methodology for this assessment account had to be taken of the following:

- The Key Performance Indicators (KPI) identified in the missions' business plans did not lend themselves to ease of measurement<sup>12</sup>. For the most part, the KPIs either make broad reference to measures such as stronger trade and increased FDI and tourism, or they speak

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<sup>10</sup> Interviews took place between December 2015 and March 2016. Interviews in US took place in early February at locations in Atlanta, Boston, New York, San Francisco and Washington.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. [http://betterevaluation.org/resources/guide/addressing\\_attribution\\_through\\_contribution\\_analysis](http://betterevaluation.org/resources/guide/addressing_attribution_through_contribution_analysis)

<sup>12</sup> The inclusion of KPIs in the business planning process commenced in 2013.

in broad terms of qualitative outcomes such as deeper engagement with the diaspora and closer cooperation with State Agencies.

- The missions, especially the Embassy in Washington (which has an additional policy role in terms of engaging with the Federal Government and the U.S. Congress), very much function as an instrument of foreign policy, representing, monitoring, reporting, influencing and messaging on a range of foreign and economic/trade policy issues.
- Outcomes with regard to the missions' work are substantially qualitative in nature
- There are also challenges in being able to establish a causal relationship between a mission's inputs and outcomes
- An initial scoping for the review indicated that the available quantitative data does not permit a strictly quantitative assessment of cost efficiency.
- Missions operate in contexts that are not always directly comparable, thus making it difficult to meaningfully compare missions in terms of performance
- The quantitative information often gives insufficient data with regard to the scale or time required for certain outputs.

These issues aside, there were clear disaggregated expenditure data managed centrally that were available to the review team and missions were able to extract from their records details at the output level of the different types of services provided. Missions were also able to provide estimates of the overall level of effort that they gave to different aspects of their work.

In generating the qualitative information, the use of semi-structured interviews helped provide a degree of rigour and consistency for the gathering and recording of information for later analysis. The credibility of the overall response was enhanced by having a relatively large and varied sample size. The issue of a possible bias was mitigated by categorising different groupings of interviewees and, in particular, clearly separating responses of internal (DFAT) interviewees from external (non-DFAT) interviewees.

## 1.6 Structure of the report

The report is structured along the lines of the logic underlying the work of the mission network and what the network seeks to achieve. Thus, having provided some key contextual information, including the policy environment relevant to the work of the network (Chapter 2), the report briefly sets out the rationale for the network and its objectives (Chapter 3). Chapter 4 then gives detail of the resourcing of the network (the inputs) and in Chapter 5 details what the network did in the years 2011-2015 (the outputs and delivering on objectives). Chapter 6 then draws conclusions and highlights issues for management's consideration.

## Chapter 2: Context: Ireland and the USA

This chapter provides some key contextual information with regard to the relationship between Ireland and the United States of America. Starting with some facts in relation to people and trade, the chapter then outlines relevant aspects of the policy environment within which the Ireland's US mission network functions.

### 2.1 People

Since before the founding of the Irish State there have been very close relations between Ireland and the US. These close relations continue to the present day. US Census Bureau data (2013) show that more 10% of the total US population (more than 33 million people) identify themselves as being of Irish descent. Another 2.9 million identify as being of Scotch-Irish ancestry. The combined figure, represents a very significant percentage of the nearly 70 million people around the world claiming Irish ancestry and heritage (Global Irish, Ireland's Diaspora Policy, 2015).

### 2.2 A Trade Partner

The US is Ireland's second largest trading partner after the UK. As can be seen in Table 1 below Ireland's exports (goods and services) represents approximately 15% of total exports.

**Table 1: Irish Exports to the US**

Year	Total Irish Exports (€m)	Exports to US (€m)	Exports to US as % of Total Irish Exports
2011	174,659	27,880	16%
2012	179,038	26,740	15%
2013	181,884	27,767	15%
2014	194,365	29,209	15%
2015	234,012	35,937	15%

Source: CSO 2016

### 2.3 Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

Ireland is a significant destination for US Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and, as shown in Table 2 below, US FDI into Ireland accounts for a significant percentage of US FDI into Europe. For Ireland, the US is by far the largest source of FDI, currently accounting for more 70% of Ireland's annual FDI.

Table 2: US Foreign Direct Investment into Ireland

Year	US Direct Investment in Ireland \$m	US Direct Investment in Ireland as % of rest of world	US Direct Investment in Ireland as % of Europe
2011	184,804	4.6%	8.2%
2012	212,411	4.8%	8.7%
2013	220,670	4.8%	8.5%
2014	279,730	5.8%	10.1%
2015	343,382	6.8%	11.6%

Source: US Bureau of Economic Account; US Direct Investment Abroad, 2016

## 2.4 Tourism

Despite being geographically distant from Ireland, the United States is the island of Ireland’s second largest tourism generating market with more than 1.3 million US visitors coming to Ireland in 2015. US visitors represented 15% of total overseas visitors to Ireland in that year (Fáilte Ireland, Overseas visitors to Ireland)

Table 3: Visitors to Ireland, 2011-2015

Year	Total Number of Visitors ('000)	Number of US Visitors ('000)	% of Total	% Increase Year-on-Year
2011	6,240	811	13%	
2012	6,286	833	13%	3%
2013	6,686	924	14%	11%
2014	7,105	1,005	14%	9%
2015	8,036	1,129	14%	13%

Source: Fáilte Ireland tourism facts 2015, 2016

## 2.5 Education

The US is the largest single country of origin for international students in Irish higher education institutions. Students from the US comprise 19% of full time international students studying in Ireland ([www.heai.ie](http://www.heai.ie)). In gross terms, the number of US students choosing Ireland as a full time higher education destination and the number of US “study abroad” students<sup>13</sup> coming to Ireland have been increasing year-on-year since 2011 (see Table 4 below).

<sup>13</sup> The Study Abroad programme gives US students the opportunity to study for one semester (or one year) in a country outside of the US. The academic credits earned count towards their degree in their home university or college. Ireland is the 7<sup>th</sup> most popular destination globally for US Study Abroad students.

**Table 4 Third Level US Students in Ireland**

Year	Number of Full Time Non-Irish 3 <sup>rd</sup> Level Students	Number of Full Time US 3 <sup>rd</sup> Level students in Ireland	Number of US “Study Abroad” students in Ireland	Total Number of US students in Ireland	% Change Year on Year
10-Nov	11,466	2,594	7,007	9,586	1%
11-Dec	10,571	2,255	7,640	9,895	3%
Dec-13	13,160	2,371	8,084	10,455	6%
13/14	16,508	3,110	8,823	11,933	14%
14/15	18,243	3,419	10,230	13,649	14%

Sources: www.heai.ie and the Institute of International Education’s, “Open Doors”

## 2.6 Policy Environment

### 2.6.1 Promoting Ireland’s Economic Interests

The Government’s 2011 Trade, Tourism and Investment strategy<sup>14</sup> sets out a two-pronged approach to achieving Ireland’s trade, tourism and investment objectives. The strategy focuses on four specific markets one of which is the US. The strategy also focusses on 10 specific sectors. These sectors include tourism, food, life sciences and software, four areas that are significant sectors in Ireland’s trade relationship with the US.

The 2011 Programme for Government emphasised a need for Ireland’s economic recovery to be export-led, including the long term development of new markets. In addition to maximising growth in exports and the creation of new jobs directly associated with exporting enterprises, the Programme for Government aimed to attract investments into Ireland. In view of these trade and investment objectives, the Programme tasked the diplomatic network with aiding the repair of Ireland’s reputation through a transparent and responsible approach to winning inward investment as well as promoting and marketing Ireland as a country with which to do business.

The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation’s Statement of Strategy 2011-2014 emphasises the importance of export growth for achieving economic growth, stating, “We will focus on high growth overseas markets and liaise closely with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in building business relationships with those markets. The establishment of the Export Trade Council brings a new cross government focus on the challenges of building exports and opening up new markets”.

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine’s strategy, “*Food Wise 2025, A 10-year vision for the Irish agri-food industry*”, strongly focuses on export growth and, among other things, identifies a special potential in the US for expanding the market for Irish beverages. In view of helping access and develop international export markets and recognising the critical role embassies

<sup>14</sup> “Trading and Investing in a Smart Economy: A Strategy and Action Plan for Irish Trade, Tourism and Investment to 2015”

play, the strategy aims at enhancing linkages with the embassy network in order to support the Irish agri-food sector.

The Government's 2011 strategy for the International Financial Services' Industry in Ireland, 2011-2016, acknowledges of the DFAT playing a key role in the dissemination of information through the embassy network

### 2.6.2 People

Identifying a unique and mutually beneficial relationship between Ireland and its global diaspora, Ireland's 2015 Diaspora Policy articulates a Government commitment to supporting those who have left Ireland and to connecting those who wish to maintain links to Ireland and with others of Irish heritage.

The Diaspora Policy sets out objectives for serving the needs of the Irish people around the world, including:

- Supporting Irish emigrants and helping meet welfare needs
- Connecting with the Irish diaspora so as to benefit the island of Ireland
- Improving communication and connectivity between Ireland and its diaspora
- Deepening links with the diaspora and promoting a deeper understanding of Ireland globally through the commemoration of key historical events in Ireland.

Prior to the formulation of the Diaspora Policy, Embassy Washington's 2009 strategy, "Ireland and America: Challenges and Opportunities in a New Context", specifically tasked the US Mission Network with cultivating and nurturing the two-way relationship in a sensitive and mutually beneficial way. This was reaffirmed in a 2014 review of the 2009 strategy (p.3).

### 2.6.3 Tourism

The 2011 Programme for Government emphasises the importance of Ireland's tourism product, including improving air travel connectivity into Ireland and enhancing the marketing of Ireland as a tourist destination. The 2011 strategy, "Trading and Investing in a Smart Economy: A Strategy and Action Plan for Irish Trade, Tourism and Investment to 2015", targeted an increase in overseas visitors to 8 million by 2015 of which 1.2m would be from North America.

Tourism Ireland's US market strategic plan, "Make Ireland Jump Out", targeted visitor growth of 20% over the 2013-15 period. The plan aimed to: drive interest in Ireland as a destination; encourage consumers to consider Ireland and; get consumers to book a visit to Ireland.

Given the large Irish diaspora in the US, the "Make Ireland Jump Out" review identifies the Irish Diaspora as a key target group for marketing, emphasising, for example, the opportunity presented by The Gathering (2013) and how its legacy might be maintained.

#### 2.6.4 Education

The 2011 Programme for Government targeted the development of the Education Ireland brand as a means of creating jobs in the sector, while Ireland's international education strategy for 2010-2015, *"Investing in Global Relationships"*, made a commitment to increasing the direct economic contribution of international education to the Irish economy from €682 million in 2010 to €900 million in 2015.

Similar to Tourism Ireland's strategic approach, the 2010-2015 education strategy targets the Irish diaspora as a potential market, recognising that there is a significant pool of people who may have a latent interest in, or connection to, Ireland which could be activated by the opportunity to study in Ireland<sup>15</sup>.

#### 2.6.5 DFAT Statements of Strategy, 2011-2014

The 2011-2014 DFAT Statement of Strategy gives a priority to supporting the Government's focus on economic renewal and the promotion of growth and investment. In fostering the international dimension of Ireland's economic growth, the Statement of Strategy speaks of the Department working in cooperation with the State Agencies, other Departments, Irish business and the Global Irish Network (Statement of Strategy p. 4 and p. 6) and the United States is specifically mentioned as a "traditional Friend".

Priority is also given to support for and protection of Irish citizens abroad and to working in partnership with the Irish diaspora in support of the Government's political, economic and cultural priorities. An explicit link is made between support for the diaspora and for cultural promotion with an economic agenda and with developing Ireland's profile internationally. All Government Departments and Agencies are identified as partners of DFAT.

#### 2.6.6 The Global Island: Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World, 2015

The Global Island, launched in January 2015 sets out Ireland's foreign policy priorities. The document reflects the changing global environment and highlights the need for Ireland's foreign policy to adapt. It identifies five priority areas; people, values, prosperity, Ireland's place in Europe and influence. In addition to these overarching priority areas, the policy speaks of the need to maintain engagement with the US administration on a range of issues, including trade, investment and immigration reform. In varying degrees all of these priorities are expressly addressed in the 2015 business plans for the US missions.

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<sup>15</sup> According to US Census Bureau data (2014) an estimated 22.5% of Irish-American Americans are under the age 18 years of age.

### 2.6.7 DFAT Statement of Strategy, 2015-2017

The 2015-2017 Statement of Strategy reiterates the priority given to supporting Ireland's economic recovery and prosperity. Priority is also given to serving Irish people at home and abroad, and to working for a fairer, more just, secure and sustainable world. Emphasis is given to the implementation of the Government's Trade, Tourism and Investment strategy overseen by the Export Trade Council. Emphasis is also given to supporting the International Financial Services Strategy. Specifically, the Department and mission network is tasked with:

- Effective contribution to job creation, exports, inward investment and tourism and education in Ireland
- Maintaining strong bilateral relations to promote our economic interests abroad

This is very much in keeping with *Enterprise 2025*, Ireland's National Enterprise Policy, which, along with Enterprise Ireland and IDA, tasks DFAT's mission network with taking a more structured approach to dissemination of in-market intelligence in order to maximise opportunities.



## Chapter 3: Objectives of the US Mission Network

This chapter briefly outlines the rationale and objectives of the network and how it is configured, and concludes with key findings in relation to the objectives and rationale of the US mission network.

### 3.1 Rationale for the Mission Network

Articulated in a March 2009 memorandum for the information of Government, the rationale for Ireland's mission network in the US is grounded in a recognition that the United States is of central importance to the promotion of Ireland's interests in almost every sphere. This rationale is re-articulated in a January 2014 Memo to Government which sought a decision, among other things, to open a Consulate General in Austin, Texas. This 2014 memo highlights the importance of having missions in key locations in the US with the purpose of promoting Ireland's economic, trade and cultural interests, and of working in support of the priorities set by the Export Trade Council.

### 3.2 Network Objectives

The 2009 document, "Ireland and America: Challenges and Opportunities in a New Context" has served as the mission network's core strategy<sup>16</sup>. In the strategy's endorsement by Government<sup>17</sup>, the objectives of Ireland's Embassy and Consulates in the US are named as:

- A revitalised relationship between Ireland and the United States
- A strong and mutually beneficial economic relationship
- A deep and enduring engagement with the Irish diaspora
- A vibrant Irish community with new possibilities for young people to work, gain experience and live in the United States
- A strong partnership with the Irish American community and with US authorities in caring for the 'forgotten' Irish
- Continued strong partnership with the US Administration and Congress in support of the peace process in Northern Ireland.

The strategy gives a first priority to Ireland's economic relationship with the US as Ireland's second largest trading partner and largest export market. High priority is also given to exploring new ways of building and maintaining Ireland's unique and diverse relationship with Irish America in a way that is mutually beneficial. Key actions of the strategy included:

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<sup>16</sup> This strategy was developed as a direct response to a request made by the Taoiseach in July 2008 for the Embassy in Washington to conduct a strategic review of relations between Ireland and the United States.

<sup>17</sup> Memorandum for the Information of the Government, Strategic Review of Relations between Ireland and the United States of America, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

- Developing and expanding business networks to take advantage of new opportunities
- Supporting the Irish community in the US
- Providing quality services to Irish citizens
- Strengthening the links with the Irish diaspora
- Connecting emerging leaders in the US with counterparts in Ireland, including expanding opportunities for US students to study in Ireland
- Building Ireland's 'brand' in the US, including the promotion of Irish culture
- Building a closer political partnership around issues of mutual interest and concern.

These objectives and actions were reaffirmed, and in some cases amplified and up-dated, by the 2014 review of the strategy which gives first priority to advancing the economic relationship between Ireland and the US, acknowledging the highly competitive environment within which the missions are working in building this relationship. In continuing to support Irish-America, the 2014 review gives an emphasis to supporting immigration reform<sup>18</sup>. The 2014 Review was endorsed and launched by the then Tánaiste in March 2014.

Diagram 1 on the following page illustrates a Theory of Change for the work of the network<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> "Ireland and America: Challenges and Opportunities in a New Context", page 16.

<sup>19</sup> This was constructed by the review team drawing from business plans and reports, and in consultation with the Embassy Washington.

Diagram 1: US Mission Network: A Theory of Change

Objective: Ireland’s interests and the interests of its citizens advanced in the USA through services to citizens and the fostering of strong bilateral relations				
Inputs	Actions/Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Immediate Objectives
Human resource and staff time  Financial resources	The provision of consular services	Passports processed: Visas Processed	Consular services and consular assistance needs addressed	Assured availability of consular services and consular assistance  A vibrant Irish American community that is supportive of Ireland and its political, economic and cultural priorities and values
	The provision of consular assistance to Irish citizens	Acute needs of Irish citizens assisted		
	Promoting and protecting the interests of Irish citizens in the US, including as they relate to US immigration issues	Varied engagements with a focus on promoting and protecting the interests of Irish citizens in the US	The needs and interests of Irish citizens in the US supported	
	Supporting the Irish diaspora and with Irish-American organisations and networks	Varied formal and informal engagements with the Irish diaspora and with Irish-American organisations and networks	Connections with the Irish Diaspora are maintained and fostered.	
Human resource and staff time  Financial resources	Supporting and promoting Irish culture, arts and creative industries	Varied events or engagements with a focus on Irish cultural interests supported	Irish culture, arts and creative industries are promoted	Strengthened bilateral relationships between Ireland and the United States
	Engaging with officials, administrators, politicians and key people in civil society in relation to Ireland’s interests	Varied formal and informal engagements with officials, administrators, politicians and key people in civil society	Bilateral relations with the USA are maintained and fostered	
Human resource and staff time  Financial resources	Promoting the Irish Government’s position and policies in relation to Northern Ireland, tackling poverty and inequality, and promoting human rights	Varied engagements highlighting Irish Government’s position and policies in relation to Northern Ireland, tackling poverty and inequality, and promoting human rights	Contributions made to the promotion of peace in Northern Ireland and to the protection of human rights internationally	Contribution to a strengthened and mutually beneficial economic relationship between Ireland and the US
	Economic messaging and on-going support to state agencies, including providing leadership to Ireland’s Local Market Team (LMT) in the USA and supporting ministerial and high level missions	Formal and informal economic messaging and supports provided to events and other engagements with a focus on promoting trade, investment, tourism and international education in Ireland	Ireland’s economic interests and reputation in the US are promoted and assurance provided to investors and trading partners	
	Organising, supporting and facilitating events throughout the year which incorporate trade, investment, tourism and international education elements. A particular focus on events surrounding St. Patrick’s Day.	Events throughout the year celebrating Irish culture and promoting Irish identity organised/supported/facilitated, with a particular focus on the St. Patrick’s Day season.	Contributions made to Ireland’s efforts in relation to job creation, exports, inward investment, tourism and education in Ireland	
	Monitoring and representation in relation to legislative and administrative developments likely to affect Ireland’s exports, inward investment and other key interests	Legislative and administrative developments likely to affect Ireland’s exports, inward investment and other key interests monitored, reported and represented		
	Promoting third level education in Ireland and harnessing the goodwill and interest of Irish university alumni	Relevant events organised and contacts maintained		
	➡	➡	➡	➡

Assumptions

1. Diplomatic missions can open doors that other entities cannot or might find it hard to do
2. Diplomatic missions can enable the work of others by dint of their diplomatic status and the connections they have with official and administrative structures in US

### 3.3 Mission Network Configuration

Ireland’s US mission network comprises an Embassy in Washington and six Consulates General. Dating back to the 1920s and 1930s, the missions in Washington, Boston, Chicago, New York and San Francisco initially served to maintain the bilateral relationship between the US and Ireland and to serve the needs of the Irish in America. Economic and trade-related matters are the primary purpose for the more recently opened single-diplomat missions in Atlanta (2010) and Austin (2015)<sup>20</sup>.

Leadership of the mission network is provided by the Ambassador in Washington who, in addition to convening an annual two-day meeting of Heads of Missions in DC to discuss strategic issues and priorities, holds a monthly videoconference involving the Embassy and the six Consulates. The Ambassador also maintains contact with the Missions on a one-to-one basis. The geographical areas of responsibility for each mission and the core services they offer is outlined in Table 5 below.

**Table 5: Ireland’s US Missions: Consular Assistance and Consular Service Areas**

Mission	Standard Consular Services <sup>21</sup> Area	Consular Assistance Area
<b>Washington</b>	Maryland, Virginia, Washington DC, Caribbean (excluding Jamaica and the Bahamas)	Maryland, Virginia, Washington DC
<b>Austin</b>	Not applicable	Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas
<b>Atlanta</b>	Not applicable	Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North & South Carolina, Tennessee
<b>Boston</b>	Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont	Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont
<b>Chicago</b>	Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Ohio, North & South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin	Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, North & South Dakota, Wisconsin
<b>New York</b>	Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, North & South Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia	Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia
<b>San Francisco</b>	Alaska, Arizona, California, Guam, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming	Alaska, Arizona, California, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

Data Source: US Mission Network

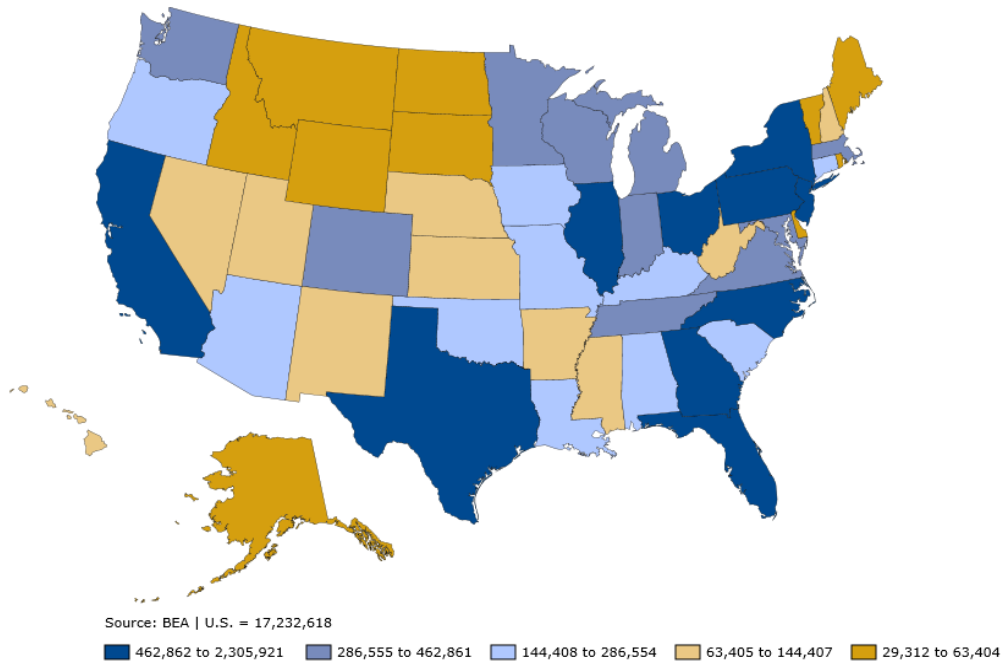
As can be seen in Diagram 2 that follows, all of the missions are located in states with high levels of economic activity. California, Texas, New York, Illinois, Georgia and Massachusetts are the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> largest US state economies respectively. If it were to be an independent country, Texas would be the 12<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world.

<sup>20</sup> In the case of the Austin mission, the relevant Memo to Government specifically speaks of it working to support the Government’s trade strategy and the priorities set by the Export Trade Council.

<sup>21</sup> Standard Consular Services entail the provision of non-emergency consular services such as the routine processing of passport and visa applications, and the registering of foreign births

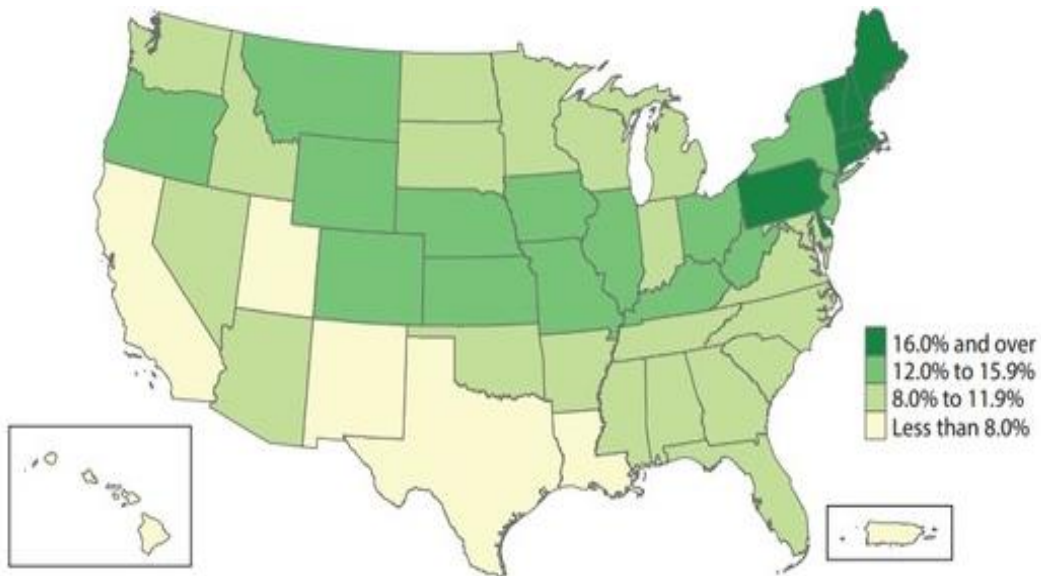
Diagram 2: Economic Activity by State

Gross domestic product (GDP) by state (millions of current dollars) - All industry total, 2014



Somewhat similar to being present in states with high economic activity, with the exceptions of California and Texas, Ireland’s missions are located in states with high percentages of people who identify as being of Irish descent. However, in terms of gross numbers, California is the US state with the highest number of people identifying as being of Irish descent (nearly 2.5m) and Texas is 7<sup>th</sup> highest (nearly 1.9m)<sup>22</sup>.

Diagram 3: Americans identifying as being of Irish Descent by State (%)



<sup>22</sup> Source: US Census Bureau, 2016

### 3.4 Honorary Consuls

The work of the seven missions that comprise Ireland’s diplomatic network in the US is complemented by 11 Honorary Consuls based as follows:

**Table 6: Ireland’s Honorary Consulates in the US**

1	Charlotte, North Carolina	7	New Orleans, Louisiana
2	Denver, Colorado	8	Orlando, Florida
3	Hawaii (Wai’anae, Honolulu County)	9	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
4	Houston, Texas	10	Seattle, Washington
5	Las Vegas, Nevada	11	St Louis, Missouri
6	Los Angeles, California		

The primary function of the Honorary Consuls is to provide consular services and assistance to Irish citizens in their area of accreditation. They also serve as a focal point for the local Irish community and they may assist with trade promotion and in making arrangements for official visits<sup>23</sup>.

Overall responsibility for managing the network of Honorary Consuls rests with Consular Division in Dublin. In the US, primary responsibility for supervising the activities and performance of Honorary Consuls rests with the mission with responsibility for the geographical area in which the Honorary Consul is resident<sup>24</sup>. Between 2011 and 2015 the average cost of the full Honorary Consul network in the US was a little less than €10,500 per year<sup>25</sup>.

### 3.5 Objectives of the US Mission Network - Conclusions

The objectives of the US mission network as articulated in the 2009 US missions’ strategy, reviewed and updated in 2014, are very much in keeping with key Government policies and strategies, and with DFAT’s Statements of Strategy (see Chapter 2 above).

The locations of the diplomatic missions very much accord with where there are concentrations of people of Irish heritage and with where there are high levels of economic activity and an associated potential benefit to Ireland, Irish citizens and people having an affinity with Ireland.

Given the fact that there are more than 33 million Americans who identify as being of Irish ancestry, an affinity that can be of high mutual benefit, and given the economic importance to Ireland of its relationship with the US, it is reasonable and appropriate that Ireland should have a significant Irish diplomatic footprint in the US.

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<sup>23</sup> See, *Terms and Conditions for Honorary Consuls and their Supervision by Missions*, DFAT May 2015

<sup>24</sup> Atlanta Consulate (2 Honorary Consuls), Austin (3), Chicago (1), New York (1) and San Francisco (4).

<sup>25</sup> Source of data: Finance Division. In addition, these costs are charged to Consular Division in Dublin and are not paid from the budgets of the US missions.

## Chapter 4: Resourcing of the US Mission Network

This chapter gives details of the resourcing of the US mission network, both staffing and financing.

### 4.1 Staffing

As of February 2016, from a total of 1,091.8 DFAT staff<sup>26</sup>, 272 were on posting at Ireland's 80 missions globally. Of these 272 staff on posting, 21 were serving at Ireland's 7 bilateral missions in the US (7.7% of DFAT staff on posting). Table 7 below gives the detail of the total staffing at Ireland's 7 US missions for the years 2011-2015, detail that includes officers from other Government Departments posted to the embassy in Washington.

**Table 7: US mission Network Staffing, 2011-2015**

Mission	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Washington Embassy					
<i>HQ Staff</i>	12*	12	11	10	11**
<i>Local Staff</i>	9	9	9	9	9
Atlanta - CG					
<i>HQ Staff</i>	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Local Staff</i>	1	1	1	1	1
Austin - CG					
<i>HQ Staff</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	1
<i>Local Staff</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	2
Boston - CG					
<i>HQ Staff</i>	2	2	2	2	2
<i>Local Staff</i>	3	3	3	3	3
Chicago - CG					
<i>HQ Staff</i>	2	2	2	2	2
<i>Local Staff</i>	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4
New York - CG					
<i>HQ Staff</i>	5	5	4	4	4
<i>Local Staff</i>	13***	13***	13***	12***	12.5***
San Francisco - CG					
<i>HQ Staff</i>	2	1.5	1.5	2	2
<i>Local Staff</i>	3	3.5	3.5	4	4
<i>Total HQ Staff</i>	24	23.5	21.5	22	23
<i>Total Local Staff</i>	32.4	32.9	32.9	34.4	34.9
<i>Total Staff</i>	56.4	56.4	54.4	55.4	57.9

Source: Ireland's US Mission Network

\* This comprised 6 Diplomatic staff from DFAT, 1 Executive Officer and 2 Clerical Officers from DFAT, and 3 Officers from the Departments of Justice, Agriculture and Communications respectively.

\*\* This comprised 7 Diplomatic staff from DFAT, 1 Executive Officer and 1 Clerical Officer from DFAT, and 2 Officers from the Departments of Justice and Agriculture respectively.

\*\*\*In New York CG one full time local staff member also serves as receptionist for the state agencies that are co-located with the Consulate General.

<sup>26</sup> In June 2011 there was 1,266.95 (full-time equivalents) DFAT staff. Source: DFAT Human Resource records

As can be seen from Table 7, between 2011 and 2015 there was a small increase in the total number of staff at Ireland’s US missions and a small decrease in total number of HQ staff on posting even though there was an increase from six to seven in the total number of missions over the period.

- 2011 (6 missions): 24 HQ staff on posting and 32.4 locally employed staff
- 2015 (7 missions): 23 HQ staff on posting and 34.9 locally employed staff

Whereas the gross numbers of staff changed little between 2011 and 2015, by comparison the profile of the grades was different to that at the beginning of Ireland’s financial crisis in 2008 when the senior diplomatic staffing of the network comprised a Head of Mission (Ambassador), 3 Counsellors/Principal Officers and 4 First Secretaries/Assistant Principal Officers. However, in 2011 the senior diplomatic staffing at the same six missions comprised a Head of Mission, 2 Counsellor and 6 First Secretaries/Assistant Principal Officers. In addition, in 2014 the embassy in Washington lost a post at the level of First Secretary from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

## 4.2 Overall Costs:

Table 8 below gives an overview of the total costs (actual expenditure year-on-year) of running the US mission network, 2011 to 2015 inclusive. These costs comprise staff costs, mission premises’ costs, travel costs, representational costs, rental costs<sup>27</sup>, and costs associated with the running of offices and the maintenance of communications.

**Table 8: Total Costs US Mission Network, 2011-2015**

Mission	2011 Total Costs €	2012 Total Costs €	2013 Total Costs €	2014 Total Costs €	2015 Total Costs €	Total Costs 2011-2015
Washington Embassy	2,210,740	2,447,869	2,247,709	2,218,106	2,244,260	<b>11,368,684</b>
Atlanta - CG	244,016	279,100	311,034	315,722	377,648	<b>1,527,520</b>
Austin - CG	N/A	N/A	N/A	61,367	517,631	<b>578,997</b>
Boston - CG	570,105	521,922	550,510	584,261	728,475	<b>2,955,272</b>
Chicago - CG	632,047	472,975	493,180	573,135	659,017	<b>2,830,355</b>
New York - CG	2,395,438	2,406,432	2,165,101	2,315,113	2,765,419	<b>12,047,502</b>
San Francisco - CG	514,410	508,818	546,265	641,808	833,016	<b>3,044,317</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6,566,756</b>	<b>6,637,114</b>	<b>6,313,799</b>	<b>6,709,513</b>	<b>8,125,466</b>	<b>34,352,648</b>

Source: DFAT Finance Division

As can be determined from Table 8, the Embassy in Washington and the Consulate in New York account for more than 60% of the total costs of the network. Excluding the large missions in Washington and New York, in 2015 the average cost of the 5 smaller missions was approximately €623,000 per mission. Excluding the large missions in London, Paris and Berlin, this compares with

<sup>27</sup> Unlike Washington where Ireland owns the Chancery and official residence, all other premises and residences are rented.



an average cost of approximately €766,000 for Ireland’s remaining 27 bilateral embassies in Europe<sup>28</sup>.

Excluding receipts from Consular Services (see section 4.3 below), in 2015 the overall cost of Ireland’s US mission network was approximately 8.5% of the cost of Ireland’s mission network worldwide (82 missions including the secretariats in Armagh and Belfast).

### 4.3 Receipts:

Whereas maintaining the missions incurs costs, receipts are generated from the provision of services such as the processing of passports and visas. In the case of the Consulates in Atlanta and Austin these receipts are very small given the fact that they do not process passport or visa applications. By contrast, in the case of the Consulate in San Francisco receipts from consular services represented between 52% and 70% of the total mission costs in each of the five years 2011-2015, averaging 60% of total costs per year for the 5-year period. Though representing an income from services provided, these receipts, termed “Appropriations in Aid”, are not funds that can be used in addition to the approved annual budget. Rather, the money serves to offset funds that would otherwise be provided from the exchequer. Total costs of the US missions compared with total receipts are given in Table 9 below (all 7 missions).

Table 9: Total Costs and Total Receipts, US Mission Network, 2011-2015

	2011 (€)	2012 (€)	2013 (€)	2014 (€)	2015 (€)	2011-2015 (€)
Total Costs	6,566,756	6,637,114	6,313,799	6,709,513	8,125,466	34,252,648
Total Receipts	1,144,822	1,244,401	1,378,252	1,397,204	1,851,447	7,016,126
Receipts as a % of Total Costs	17.5%	18.8%	21.9%	20.9%	22.8%	20.5%

Data Source: DFAT Finance Division

### 4.4 Staff costs

#### Total Staff Costs

Table 10: Staff Costs of the US Bilateral Mission Network 2011-2015 (€)

Year	DFAT-HQ Staff		Local Staff		Total Staff Costs
	No. of Staff	Cost of Staff	No. of Staff	Cost of Staff	
2011	22	3,231,499	32.4	1,312,247	<b>4,543,746</b>
2012	21.5	3,083,119	32.9	1,410,087	<b>4,493,205</b>
2013	19.5	2,720,342	32.9	1,434,190	<b>4,154,532</b>
2014	20	2,798,442	34.4	1,435,355	<b>4,233,797</b>
2015	21	3,191,417	34.9	1,889,196	<b>5,080,613</b>
<b>Totals</b>		<b>15,024,819</b>		<b>7,481,075</b>	<b>22,505,894</b>

Data Sources: US Missions and DFAT Finance Division

<sup>28</sup> 8 of the 27 embassies concerned are single-diplomat missions.

## DFAT-HQ Staff Costs

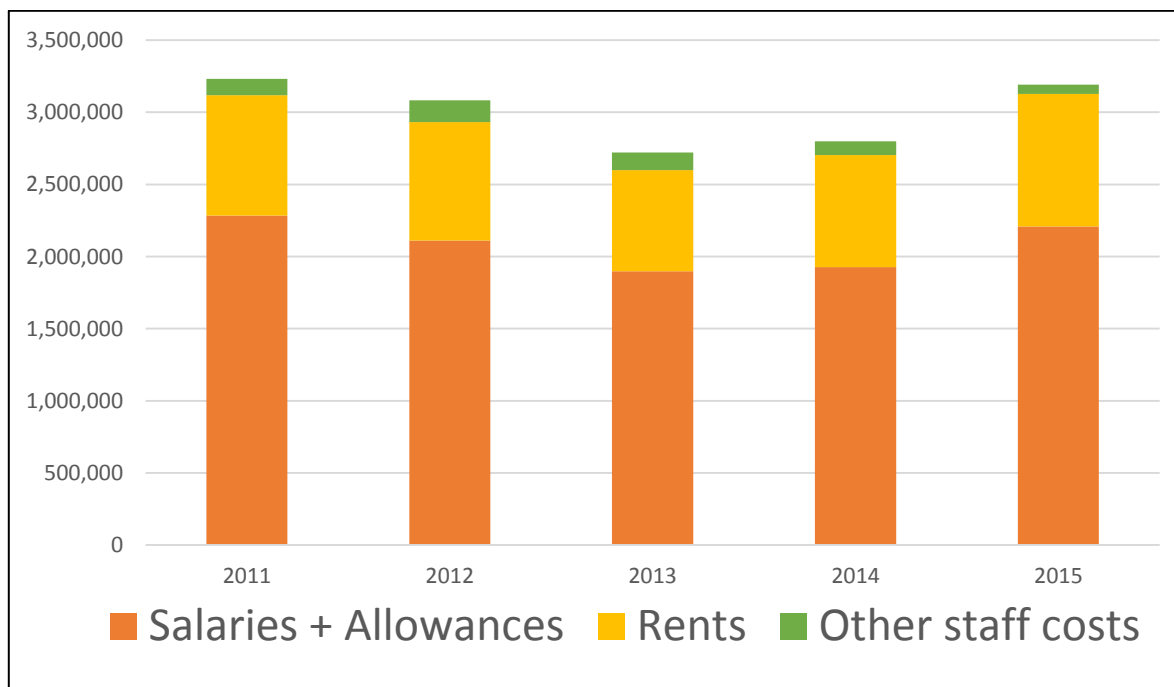
Table 11: DFAT-HQ Staff Costs, US Mission Network, 2011-2015 (€)

Year	No. of DFAT-HQ Staff	Costs of DFAT-HQ Staff			Total DFAT-HQ Staff Costs
		Salaries + Allowances	Rents (staff accommodation)	Other HQ staff costs	
2011	22	2,285,005	834,027	112,467	<b>3,231,499</b>
2012	21.5	2,111,840	819,834	151,445	<b>3,083,119</b>
2013	19.5	1,897,703	700,835	121,804	<b>2,720,342</b>
2014	20	1,926,737	775,735	95,970	<b>2,798,442</b>
2015	21	2,207,831	919,612	63,974	<b>3,191,417</b>
<b>Totals 2011-2015</b>		<b>10,429,116</b>	<b>4,050,043</b>	<b>545,660</b>	<b>15,024,819</b>

Data Source: DFAT Finance Division

As can be determined from Table 11 above, between 2011 and 2015 the average cost per DFAT-HQ officer varies from nearly €147,000 in 2011, to €136,000 in 2013, to nearly €152,000 in 2015. These differences in average costs are primarily a result of variations in relation to the costs associated with *salaries + allowances*<sup>29</sup> and with rents for staff accommodation. The increased rental costs for 2015 directly correlate with the strengthening in 2015 by approximately 18% of the US Dollar against the Euro. “Other HQ Staff Costs”, which include education costs, medical, security and furnishing allowances, have declined by more than 43% between 2011 and 2015.

Diagram 4: DFAT-HQ Staff Costs Illustrated



Data Source: DFAT IUKA Division

<sup>29</sup> DFAT HQ-Staff on posting to the US qualify for Foreign Service Allowances comprising a Local Post Allowance and a Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) which is designed to defray, as may be the case, costs associated with a higher cost of living at the post abroad. Allowances typically vary depending on the grade of the officers concerned at any one time.

## 4.6 Operational Costs

Operational costs primarily involve mission premises costs (including maintenance), official travel and transport costs, and representational costs. Detail of these costs is given in Table 12 below.

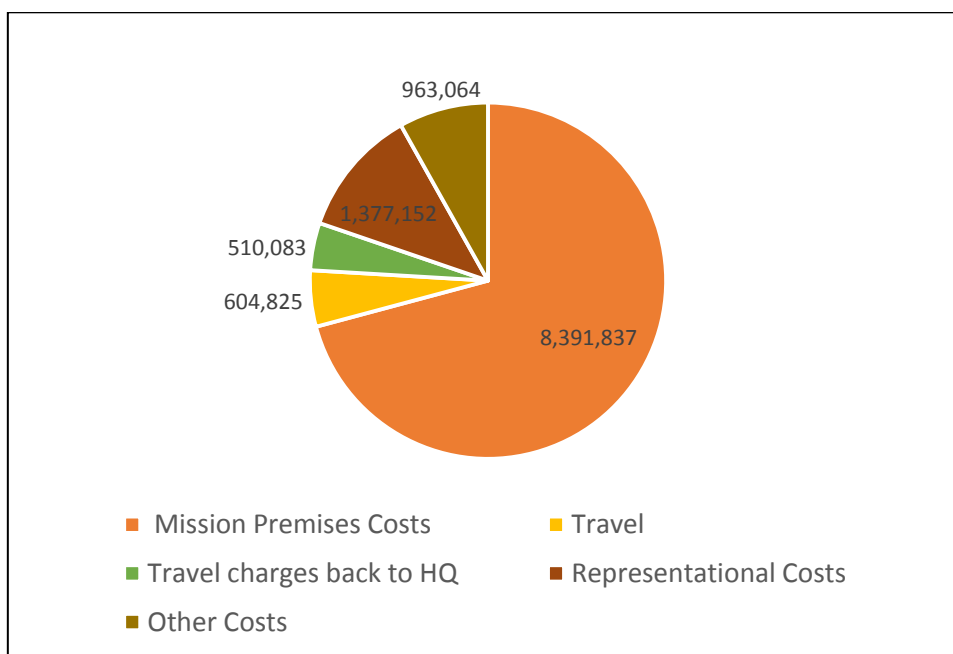
**Table 12: Operational Costs (excluding staff costs), US Mission Network, 2011-2015**

Year	Mission Premises Costs	Travel	Travel & Subsistence to HQ	Representational Costs	Other Costs	Total Operational Costs
2011	1,395,961	80,552	85,968	288,678	172,058	<b>2,023,217</b>
2012	1,470,646	107,168	89,492	285,255	191,347	<b>2,143,909</b>
2013	1,502,612	122,236	104,059	254,566	175,793	<b>2,159,267</b>
2014	1,784,915	124,084	91,910	250,748	224,058	<b>2,475,714</b>
2015	2,237,702	170,785	138,653	297,905	199,808	<b>3,044,854</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8,391,837</b>	<b>604,825</b>	<b>510,083</b>	<b>1,377,152</b>	<b>963,064</b>	<b>11,846,754</b>

Data Source: DFAT Finance Division

The “other costs” given above primarily involve office running costs (supplies and equipment), ICT and communications (including the costs of confidentially conveying official correspondence or other items, such as passports and visas, between headquarters in Dublin and the missions – the commonly termed, “diplomatic bag”).

**Diagram 5: Operational Costs 2011-2015, Illustrated**



Data Source: DFAT Finance Division

## 4.6 Staff and Operational Costs

**Table 13: US Mission Network Costs: Breakdown by Category of Expenditure (€)**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	% Change 2011-2015
<b>Operational costs</b>	<b>2,023,217</b>	<b>2,143,909</b>	<b>2,159,267</b>	<b>2,479,532</b>	<b>3,044,854</b>	<b>50%</b>
<i>of which Mission Premises Costs</i>	1,395,961	1,470,646	1,502,612	1,784,915	2,237,702	60%
<i>of which Representational Costs</i>	288,678	285,255	254,566	254,566	297,905	3%
<i>of which Travel Costs</i>	166,519	196,660	226,296	215,994	309,438	86%
<i>Other Costs</i>	172,058	191,347	175,793	224,058	199,808	16%
<b>DFAT-HQ Staff costs</b>	<b>3,231,500</b>	<b>3,083,119</b>	<b>2,720,342</b>	<b>2,798,443</b>	<b>3,191,417</b>	<b>-1%</b>
<i>of which salaries and maintenance costs</i>	2,397,472	2,263,285	2,019,507	2,022,708	2,271,805	-5%
<i>of which housing costs</i>	834,027	819,834	700,835	775,735	919,612	10%
<b>Local staff costs</b>	<b>1,312,247</b>	<b>1,410,087</b>	<b>1,434,190</b>	<b>1,435,355</b>	<b>1,889,196</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,566,964</b>	<b>6,637,114</b>	<b>6,313,799</b>	<b>6,713,330</b>	<b>8,125,466</b>	<b>24%</b>

Data Source: DFAT Finance Division

The 2015 increase in local staff costs is primarily a result of the strengthening of the US Dollar (illustrated below) and additional staff for the new consulate in Austin that was opened in 2014, and not to factors such as changing rates of remuneration. Similarly, the 2015 increase in operational costs closely correlates with the decreased value of the Euro against the Dollar. Most of the increase in DFAT-HQ costs is associated with housing and maintenance costs, costs which are largely denominated in Dollars.

**Diagram 6: US Dollar/ Euro Exchange rate**

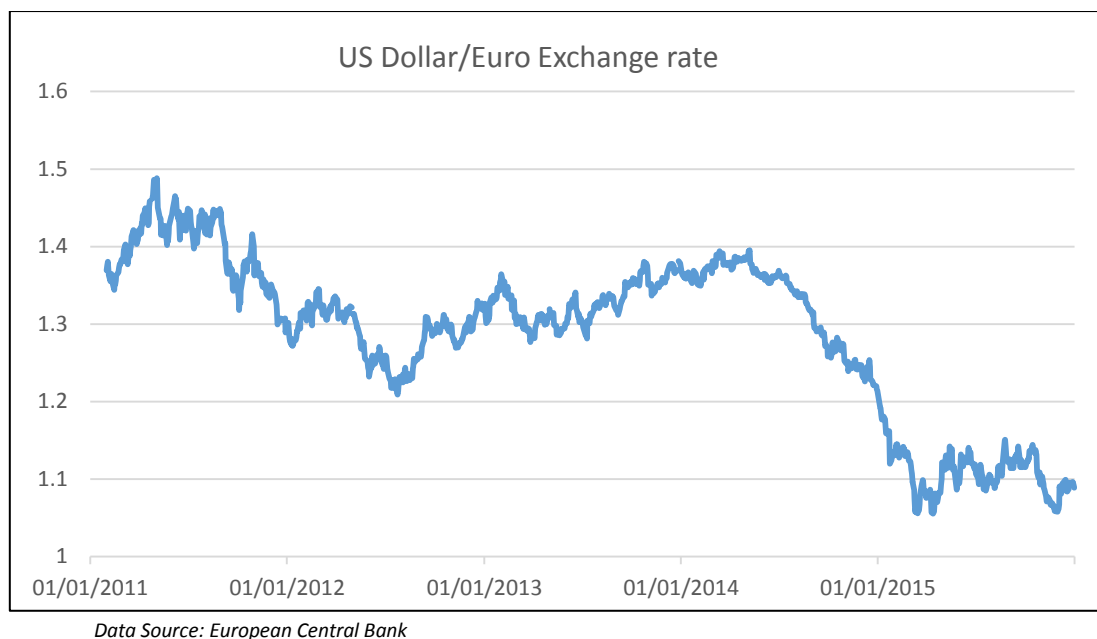
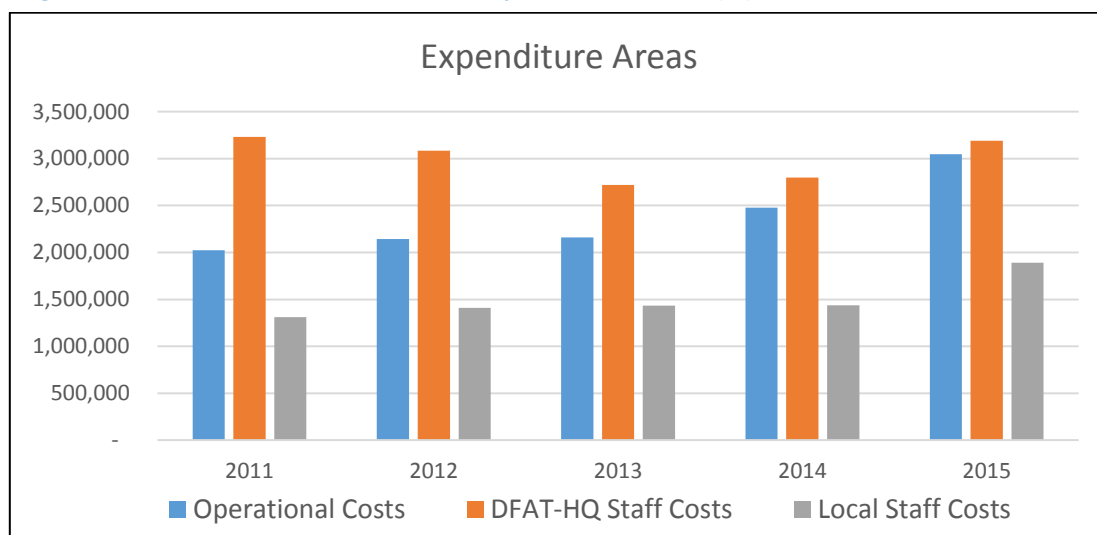


Diagram 7: US Mission Network Costs, Areas of Expenditure Illustrated (€s)



#### 4.7 Headquarters Supports

The operations of the US missions are supported by an Americas section which is located within the Ireland, United Kingdom and Americas Division. A sub-section within the Americas section has lead responsibility for DFAT-HQ’s engagement with Ireland’s missions in the United States and Canada. This responsibility includes:

- Political relations with the US (Administration and Congress)
- Being lead unit at HQ for the Embassy Washington and the six Consulates General and main interlocutor with the US Embassy in Dublin
- Trade and economic relations with the US
- Immigration reform
- EU-US relations

- Inward and outward official visits between the USA and Ireland
- Liaison with other Irish Government Departments in relation to US matters

Two diplomatic officers are specifically dedicated to matters in relation to the US missions and to Ireland’s embassy in Canada.

## 4.8 Resourcing of the US Mission Network – Key Findings

### 4.8.1 Staffing:

There has been relatively little change in the overall numbers of staff over the period of the review. The most significant changes are the withdrawal of a First Secretary post in New York thereby reducing the diplomatic staff in the Consulate in New York from four to three, a reduction which inevitably puts extra pressure on an already very busy mission, and the loss of the post at the level of First Secretary from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

Staffing at Ireland’s missions is modest when compared to the staffing at the US missions of Italy, The Netherlands and Sweden<sup>30</sup>. In all three instances staffing at their embassies in Washington alone is close to or exceeds the total staffing across all 7 of Ireland’s missions in the US.

**Table 14: Staffing at selected EU Member State Missions in the USA, 2015 (Excluding interns)**

Country	Missions	Expatriate/ HQ Staff	Local Staff	Total No. Missions	Total Staff
Italy*	Embassy Washington	29	26		
	8 Consulates	60	63		
	Totals	<b>89</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>178</b>
The Netherlands	Embassy Washington	39	41		
	4 Consulates	11	51**		
	Totals	<b>50</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>142</b>
Sweden	Embassy Washington	24	29		
	1 Consulate	2	5		
	Totals	<b>26</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>60</b>
Ireland	Embassy Washington	11***	9		
	6 Consulates	12	25.9		
	Totals	<b>23</b>	<b>34.9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>57.9</b>

\*In addition, Italy has 5 Italian Cultural Institutes across the USA staffed by 14 home-based staff and 20 locally hired staff

\*\* This figure includes locally recruited staff of the Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency which has offices in three of the four Consulates

\*\*\* Including 7 Diplomatic staff from DFAT, 1 Executive Officer and 1 Clerical Officer from DFAT, and an officer from each of the Departments of Agriculture and Justice

(Data Source: Embassy of Ireland, Washington)

<sup>30</sup> These countries were identified on the basis of the volumes of trade and having a substantial diaspora in the US. The total estimated Irish Diaspora in the US (33.3m) exceeds the combined estimated Diasporas of Italy (17.3m), The Netherlands (4.3m) and Sweden (3.9m).

#### 4.8.2 Staff Costs

Between 2011 and 2014 there was little change in the overall gross costs of the network. The 21% increased gross costs between 2014 and 2015 is roughly balanced by the fact that there was the addition of a new mission, Austin, with associated start-up costs, and the fact that between December 2014 and December 2015 there was the decline of approximately 18% in the value of the Euro against the US Dollar. The increase in the value of the US Dollar accounts in large measure for the increase in receipts from consular services, 2014-2015.

In 2015 the missions in Washington and New York accounted for more than 61% of the total network expenditure, a fact which reflects the size of these missions and their high cost locations.

Between 2011-2015 total receipts of the mission network was equivalent to 20.5% of total gross expenditure even though two of the seven missions do not provide consular services, services which incur relevant charges. In San Francisco receipts averaged a little over 60% of total expenditure for the Consulate year-on-year between 2011 and 2015.

## Chapter 5: Activities and Outputs - Delivering on Objectives

This chapter gives detail of the work and outputs of the mission network and highlights key findings. The chapter concludes with an opinion with regard to the achievement of objectives and briefly comments upon factors that enabled the delivery of the work. The opinion is offered from the perspective of the contributions made by the missions. Public diplomacy work or, for example, the facilitating of high level visits do not produce outcomes that can be attributed solely to the missions. Even in the case of the processing of passports there are others who are involved and thus, in the strict sense, their delivery cannot be wholly attributed to a particular mission.

### 5.1 Promoting Ireland and its Interests in the United States

In keeping with the purpose of diplomatic missions described in the Vienna Convention<sup>31</sup>, the missions are the primary instruments by which Ireland maintains bilateral relations with the US. In addition, from the vantage point of closeness to key people and institutions, the missions serve to ascertain and analyse developments within the US and then report back to Ireland. Given the multi-faceted nature of helping build and maintain bilateral relations with the US, it is to be expected that the missions engage in a broad range of activities with varying degrees of complexity and sensitivity. This work of building bilateral relations is an ongoing network-wide activity requiring engagement at the federal level and across 50 state Governments and administrations, and including major municipalities.

#### 5.1.1 Mission Activities

Annual Business Plans and reports from the missions show that the work of the missions is much focused on making connections with and between people having shared Irish interests; on connecting with people at the highest levels of political and public life; and on communicating messages about Ireland, messages in relation to the Irish economy, Irish trade policy, Irish culture, tourism, education, etc. At a strategic level, the mission network's 2009 strategy and subsequent review in 2014 gives priority to maintaining Ireland-US relations. The reported political and public diplomacy activities of the missions reflect this. At a more practical level, the missions are perceived as having a 'convening power'<sup>32</sup> and to be able to add-value and status to events by dint of being a diplomatic mission<sup>33</sup>. Whether serving a strategic or practical function, it can be seen from reports that the activities of the missions commonly serve multiple purposes.

In June 2013 DFAT introduced a new system to help quantify and improve the reporting by missions of their work and activities. Called the Mission Event Reports (MER)<sup>34</sup>, this aimed to capture what the missions had achieved as a result of events undertaken by the missions, or events in which they

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. Article 3 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations

<sup>32</sup> In 14 of 32 non-DFAT people interviewed as part of this review spontaneously commented to this effect.

<sup>33</sup> In 20 of 32 interviews

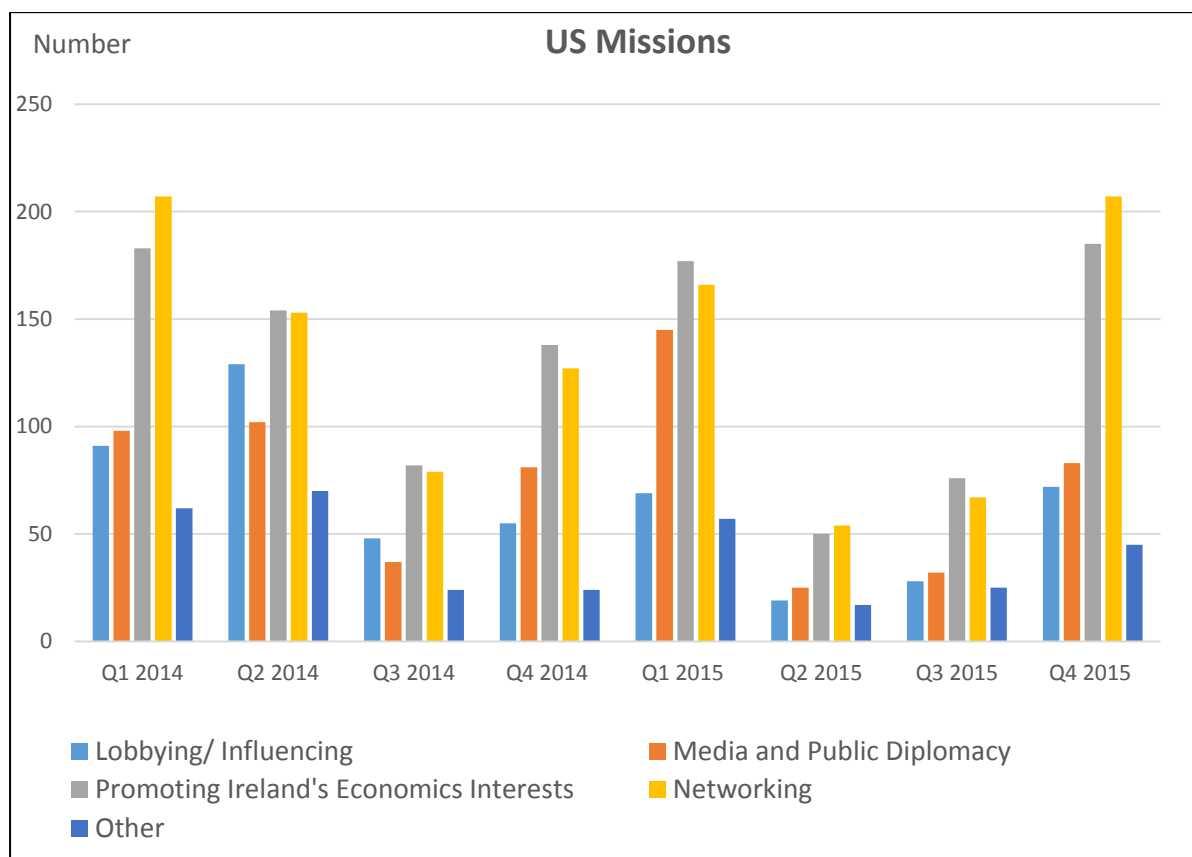
<sup>34</sup> Initially piloted in a small number of bilateral missions, including the US missions



were involved. The MER format offers the writer of an event report five categories whereby the focus of the activity can be described. As activities might be described under more than one category, the event report might tag more than one of the five categories offered.

Up until December 2015 the US missions lodged 1,329 mission reports and of these, 1,226 were lodged in the years 2014 and 2015. The focus and volume of these activities by yearly quarter is illustrated in Diagram 8 below where it can be seen that activities commonly associated with maintaining diplomatic relations, such as networking and promoting Ireland’s economic interests, not surprisingly feature very prominently given the network’s core function of building and maintaining the bilateral relationship with the US politically, economically and socially.

Diagram 8: Mission Events’ Reports, US Missions: Focus of Activities



Source: Mission Events’ Reports/Americas’ Unit, IUKA Division, DFAT

The MER event reporting format which was introduced in 2013 focused on generating a narrative about what was done or what happened at an event being reported. In this regard the MER system has been a useful tool for reporting and enabling an analysis of a mission’s activities. However, because the initial MER reporting format had a primary focus on outputs rather than outcomes<sup>35</sup>, most of the network’s event reports give little information in relation to what actually resulted or of intended follow-up. Despite the MER format having had a focus on outputs, the US mission network

<sup>35</sup> Overseen by DFAT’s Knowledge Management and Innovation Taskforce and drawing upon the experience of using the initial MER format, a new mission event reporting portal for use by all missions was launched in December 2016.

MER reports sometimes name anticipated results and often describe how participants responded to the event being reported.

### 5.1.2 Promoting Ireland's Economic Interests

One of the high levels goals of DFAT's Statement of Strategy, 2015-2017, is to contribute to the advancement of Ireland's prosperity. In view of this, the strategy commits the missions to economic messaging, supporting Irish businesses, supporting trade and investment initiatives, and facilitating high level visits. Reflective of this commitment is the fact that the annual plans<sup>36</sup> of all missions in the US network identify the advancement of Ireland's economic interests either as a 'Priority Objective' or a 'High Level Goal'<sup>37</sup>. Many of the anticipated outcomes named in business plans concern successful messaging about Ireland's economy, economic diplomacy outcomes that would be complementary of the work of Ireland's trade and investment promotion agencies. All of the plans identify strong collaborative relations with Ireland's State Agencies as a critical success factor.

Activity reports show that a key and continuing aspect of the work of all missions in the network is the promotion of Irish economic interests. This promotional work typically involves engaging with key contacts, public messaging, and the planning of and participation in various events. These events provide opportunities to highlight the advantages of Ireland: as a choice location for foreign direct investment; as a source of goods and services for the US market; as a tourism destination; and as a place offering quality higher education. The work of individual missions is complemented by the Ambassador's regular travel throughout the US which creates opportunities for high-level contacts and messaging. Overall, the network's work in promoting Irish economic interests is undertaken in support of and often in direct collaboration with Ireland's State Agencies active in the US market.

The high priority given to maximising the economic aspects of all high level visits is very evident in the efforts involved in the planning of events around the St Patrick's Day period when the Taoiseach and Ministers avail of an annual opportunity to promote Ireland's economic interests at the highest levels in Washington, and also at State and local levels. Again, this is done in close collaboration with Ireland's State Agencies.

The Embassy in Washington has a particular responsibility for the monitoring of and, as necessary, engagement with US administrative and legislative developments which have the potential to impact on Ireland's economic interests. Areas where this has been particularly prominent has been on corporation tax issues; the development of US trade policy; and particularly as it concerns the EU-US TTIP negotiations, data flows and security, and on gaining US market access for Irish beef and lamb.

The high priority and importance given by the missions to the promotion of Ireland's economic interests is evident from the fact that between June 2013 and the end of 2015 more than 1,000 of the 1,300+ Mission Event Reports are categorised as, "Promoting Ireland's Economic Interests" (see Diagram 8)<sup>38</sup>. Many of the reported events involve engagements with key decision-makers and many can be seen to directly complement the work of the State Agencies. Complementarity can also be

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<sup>36</sup> Since 2013 inclusive when the current planning format began to take shape.

<sup>37</sup> For the most part, however, the associated performance indicators do not lend themselves to ease of measurement and the indicators are sometimes named using qualitative language that is very subjective.

<sup>38</sup> It should be noted that the MER system allows for an event to be categorised under more than one heading.

seen in the leadership provided to the Local Market Team by the Ambassador<sup>39</sup>, in the messaging and intelligence gathering of the Economic Counsellor, and in the work of the Agriculture Counsellor.

Overall, mission records show that between 2011 and 2015 the missions hosted or facilitated more than 1,900 trade or investment related events and meetings, and directly facilitated nearly 190 trade/business introductions.

Reflective of the fact that up to the end of 2015 more than 75% of the US network's Mission Event Reports were categorised as "Promoting Ireland's Economic Interests", of the people interviewed as part of this review, the value and importance of missions' work in promoting Ireland's economic interests was most emphasised by DFAT interviewees. However, most non-DFAT state sector interviewees explicitly spoke of the missions as being of clear benefit to their work. This was largely in terms of the missions being able to help them in making connections; or by giving status to an event which in turn attracts a high value audience; or by providing insight on issues whether the issues be regulatory, political or otherwise.

Offering a different perspective regarding contributions made by the mission network to promoting Ireland's economic interests, business sector interviewees identified Ireland's support of its communities abroad as an influencing factor in establishing Ireland's brand in the minds of economic decision-makers. Business sector interviewees particularly valued the missions as being the authoritative voice of the Irish Government in relation to its economic policy and its positions on trade matters. This, they said, gave them a level of assurance they wouldn't otherwise get.

### 5.1.3 Supporting Immigration Reform

A key objective for Ireland in its relationship with the US is to see reforms of US immigration laws such that Irish people would have greater opportunity to legally migrate to the US for work and such that the status of the undocumented Irish already in the US would be resolved. For the full period covered by this review, immigration reform has been a priority policy area for the mission network. In the 2015 mission business plans, for example, support for the Irish diaspora is a 'Priority Business Unit Outcome' for all 7 missions, and in the case of the embassy in Washington and the Consulate in Boston, prioritisation is specifically given to supporting US immigration reform.

As described in Mission Event Reports and by event data shared with the review team, the missions' activities in relation to immigration reform are very much in the areas of advocacy with legislators and officials, and in support for immigrant support networks and others representing immigrant issues. The missions' support for immigrant support networks is complemented by funding provided through the Emigrant Support Programme managed from Dublin though in close collaboration with the individual missions in the network. In some instances, the successful lobbying for legislative changes and the strengthening of immigrant rights, such as in California, are reported as having been helped by a longstanding tradition of close cooperation between Latino and Irish lobby groups.

Between 2011 and 2015 the mission network cumulatively reported involvement with more than 300 immigration-specific advocacy meetings and reported giving more than 75 immigration-specific briefings/interviews. Reports indicate that the embassy in Washington has been most active on the issue of immigration reform availing of opportunities as they arise to engage with the Administration

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<sup>39</sup> A role mandated by the Export Trade Council.

and with Congress, including during high level visits. However, as many mission events might be categorised in multiple ways and serve multiple objectives, the level of activity by other missions in relation to immigration reform might be understated aside from the fact that gross numbers of events do not necessarily reflect the significance of a particular event<sup>40</sup> or the level of effort that may have been involved.

#### 5.1.4 Facilitating High Level Visits

Records show that in the period 2011-2015 the missions facilitated 87 visits by Irish Government ministers to the US and, in addition, facilitated visits into Ireland of senior public representatives. Preparations for a high level visit usually begin months in advance. As with many of the activities of the missions, it is not possible to measure the time and effort involved merely from the numbers of visits facilitated. Of the 87 ministerial visits, 34 were associated with St Patrick's Day (SPD) celebrations and five of these were high level visits to Washington by the Taoiseach. SPD visits by Ministers are typically 3-4 days long, though one such visit spanned 14 days and involved events in Pennsylvania, Seattle and Anchorage, Alaska. Any one SPD visit involves the organisation or facilitation by the relevant mission of multiple events and engagements. Ministerial visits and the missions immediately responsible for the ministers' programmes are given in Table 15 below.

**Table 15: Ministerial Visits to the US, 2011-2015**

Mission	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Totals
Embassy Washington	4	4	10	7	5	30
Atlanta Consulate	1	1	1	1	3	6
Austin Consulate	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	4	5
Boston Consulate		3	3	3	2	11
Chicago Consulate	2	3	7	5	5	22
New York Consulate	4	8	5	6	5	28
San Francisco Consulate		1	2	2	5	10
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>112</b>

*Source Reported by Missions*

As well as to ministerial visits there were two Presidential visits. One was a 4-day visit to New York and Boston and the other was an 8-day visit to the West Coast (2015). Again, such visits would have involved much advance planning and time on the part of the missions<sup>41</sup>.

In addition to the Ambassador's own programme of travel throughout the US, it is established practice that the Ambassador accompanies and assists the President, the Taoiseach, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade during their visits.

Overall, mission network records show that, cumulatively, between 2011 and 2015 the seven missions hosted or organised nearly 1,100 events or meetings directly related to high level visits (including visits of senior officials from Ireland).

<sup>40</sup> A case in point is a March 2014 address highlighting Irish immigrant issues given to the Massachusetts Senate by the Consul General in Boston.

<sup>41</sup> In some of the interviews with DFAT staff it was commented that planning for a high level visit is made difficult if notice of the visit is short, or if it coincides with another high level visit or some major event.

### 5.1.5 Celebrating St Patrick's Day

Every year the US missions organise or help facilitate an extensive programme of events celebrating St Patrick's Day (SPD). In a country having such a strong affinity with Ireland, this is seen by the Irish Government as a unique opportunity to foster and strengthen relations between Ireland and the US, and to promote Irish interests. Preparations for the celebrations commence months in advance and are undertaken in partnership with Irish-American organisations and with Ireland's State Agencies. It is commonly the case that SPD events involve the participation of the Taoiseach and/or an Irish Government minister. Though the annual SPD celebrations are usually focussed on a relatively short period of time in the second half of March, the overall programme of events may span up to four weeks, requiring a whole-of-mission effort. By way of an example, Box 1 below gives a brief overview of key events organised, hosted and supported by the mission network in 2015<sup>42</sup>.

#### Box 1: St Patrick's Day, 2015

##### ***St Patrick's Day 2015 – Promoting Ireland's interest in the US***

Over the 2015 St. Patrick's Day period, the US mission network organised or hosted a programme of more than 80 formal events promoting Ireland and its values and attended by nearly 10,500 guests of the missions. In addition, the missions supported/attended nearly 150 community events celebrating Irish identity and culture, and with Tourism Ireland helped arrange for more than 180 buildings and landmarks to be illuminated in green on St Patrick's Day.

An important aspect of the annual St Patrick's Day programme is the participation of Irish Government ministers. In 2015 ministerial participation comprised Taoiseach Enda Kenny, Tánaiste Joan Burton and five other ministers, with official visits to 14 cities. In Washington, the Taoiseach met with political leaders at the highest levels, including President Obama and Vice-President Biden, as well as the then Speaker of the House, Boehner, and other Congressional Leaders. Organised by the missions, seven ministerial programmes involved more than 140 engagements, including a formal White House reception for the Taoiseach hosted by President Obama and a lunch hosted by the Speaker of the House.

A key objective of Government during the St. Patrick's Day period was to promote awareness of Ireland's economic progress among key decision-makers. To this end over 25 high level meetings were organised across the network and over 50 business events were organised with almost 9,000 attendees. New York alone organised 15 events. In Washington, the Taoiseach spoke at a roundtable meeting organised by the US Chamber of Commerce and addressed a lunch for business leaders involving approximately 350 contacts of Ireland's state agencies. In San Francisco, the Consulate organised its annual St. Patrick's Day reception in Silicon Valley, home to a large number of young Irish professionals. In Atlanta the Taoiseach programme included an interview on CNN and a roundtable with IDA client companies. In Austin, the Taoiseach became the first Head of Government to attend and speak at *South by Southwest Interactive* - the world's largest technology gathering - and promoted Ireland as a global tech hub to an audience of key influencers. In Washington, the Taoiseach highlighted education in Ireland as an 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 event showcasing research activities in Ireland.

The wide range of events generated much media attention both in the US and in Ireland. Reports of the events were covered in over 20 US television features with an estimated audience of up to 20 million. In addition, there were more than 10 radio features and 35 reports in print media.

<sup>42</sup> Source of event data: 2015 St Patrick's Day mission reports

### 5.1.6 Promoting Irish Culture

The promotion of Irish culture and the performing arts is an ongoing aspect of the work of the missions. An analysis of the Mission Event Reports shows that of the more than 1,300 US missions' records up to the end of 2015, a little more than 150 were categorised as having a cultural focus. This categorisation reflects the missions' business plans where for 2015 and 2016 in which it is estimated that the missions' work in relation to promoting Irish culture and the arts absorbs approximately 10% of the total work effort of the missions. As with other activities, an event promoting Irish culture may serve multiple objectives. Similarly, other mission events may not be categorised as having a cultural focus, but may have a strong relationship to promoting Irish culture.

The missions do not have their own dedicated budgets for cultural events. Representational activities may have a cultural focus. The Emigrant Support Programme (ESP) has provided direct grants to Irish cultural and arts' centres in the US, and these supports much rely on a close relationship between the US missions and the organisations concerned. For example, ESP's ongoing support for the Irish Cultural Center of New England or support for the Irish Arts Center New York involves the Consulates in Boston and New York respectively. Whereas a mission helps facilitate the support provided by the ESP, it cannot itself avail of ESP funding. However, missions were able to avail of funding for cultural activities from two HQ budget lines managed by Trade Division in Dublin.

The *Embassy Initiatives Budget* has been the main Departmental source of funding for the missions' cultural activities, activities which also serve to support other objectives in some degree. A smaller *Information Budget* supported things such as the movement of exhibitions or the costs of a guest speaker at an event<sup>43</sup>. In the case of the *Embassy Initiatives Budget*, grants typically range between €500 and €7,000. Grants provided by the *Information Budget* are typically less than €1,000 and may be less than €200. The aggregate year-on-year detail of this funding is given in Table 16 below.

**Table 16: HQ Support to US Missions' Cultural Activities**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Totals
Embassy Initiatives Budget	32,214	29,660	19,973	49,490	58,290	189,627
Information Budget	823	1,193	882	12,136	10,502	25,536
Totals	33,037	30,853	20,855	61,626	68,792	215,163

Data Source: DFAT Trade Division

As a state agency, which closed its only office in the US, in Los Angeles, in 2012, the Irish Film Board commented that it relies much on the mission network for making contacts and advancing the interests of Ireland's film industry in the US<sup>44</sup>. Aside from facilitating connections, the missions host events such as the twice yearly reception highlighting the Irish film industry that is hosted by the Consul General in New York; the week long programme of events that the Consulate in San Francisco coordinates around the Academy Awards; and the work that all of the missions undertake to promote and assist the various Irish Film Festivals which take place annually in the US.

<sup>43</sup> This budget line funds the costs of presenting Shamrock to the US President on St Patrick's Day.

<sup>44</sup> Notable in this regard are the missions in Washington, New York, San Francisco and, more recently, Austin.

### 5.1.7 Communicating Ireland

An analysis of Mission Events’ Reports shows that networking, connecting and communicating feature very prominently in the work of the US missions. The 2009 strategy, “Ireland and America: Challenges and Opportunities in a New Context”, had recommended a review of the network’s overall media strategy. This was a recognition of the growing importance of communications in how public diplomacy is conducted. The subsequent 2014 internal review of the strategy concluded that, whereas the mission network and the state agencies had done much to embrace social media, the importance of outreach through social media warranted dedicated resources to help maximise opportunities and to improve the coordination of messaging across the network.

#### *Public Diplomacy & Communications Officer*

In response to the conclusions of the 2014 review and as part of a new communications strategy (2015), in September 2015 the Embassy in Washington established the position a full-time Public Diplomacy & Communications Officer (PDCO) at First Secretary level. Though previously there had been press officers at the missions in Washington and New York, the remit of the PDCO embraces a wider range of media and is linked to the public diplomacy work of the mission network as whole.

#### *Mission Network Coordination*

A primary function of the PDCO is the coordination of Ireland’s public diplomacy, media relations and messaging across the US. Based in the embassy in Washington, the PDCO is a resource for all seven missions in the network. Monthly video conferences within the mission network specify key media outputs for the coming month. In addition, the PDCO assists with drafting website content for the Consulates, particularly on web features. For examples, the Officer assisted the Consulate in New York with media requirements for the visits of the President, the Taoiseach and the Minister for Foreign Affairs in September 2015, and also the Consulate in San Francisco for the visit of the President to the West Coast in October 2015. In helping maintain and update the missions’ websites, the PDCO is supported by the *Web & Digital* unit within DFAT’s Communications Unit in Dublin.

As mentioned earlier above, the celebrations around St Patrick’s Day offer a unique opportunity for the mission network to communicate messages about Ireland at a time of the year when there is heightened interest in Ireland. Indicative of this interest and of the effectiveness of the network’s new communications’ strategy, Table 17 below shows the number of visits to the network’s websites over the St Patrick’s Day period for the years 2015 and 2016. As can be seen in the table, there was a significant increase in website visits between 2015 and 2016 for six of the seven missions.

**Table 17: Visits to the Network’s Websites over the St Patrick’s Day period, 2015 and 2016**

	Embassy	Atlanta	Boston	Chicago	SF	New York	Austin	Total
9-23 March 2015	3,551	333	1,345	1,124	1,293	2,728	450	10,824
9-23 March 2016	6,041	411	1,655	1,448	1,738	4,069	387	15,749
% Change	70%	23%	23%	29%	34%	49%	-14%	46%

Source: DFAT Communication Unit

## *Social Media*

Twitter<sup>45</sup>, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram accounts are maintained by the PDCO with the Consulates maintaining their individual Tweeter accounts. Collectively, by February 2016 the Embassy and Consulates had more than 40,000 followers on Twitter. By April 2016 the Embassy Facebook account had more than 10,000 followers having increased from a little over 5,500 in September 2015. Since the creation of the post of PDCO the month-on-month rate of increase of Facebook followers has increased from an average of 462 per month to 564 per month, and an overall increase since September 2015 of 81%<sup>46</sup>.

When the social media accounts of the Italian, The Netherlands and Swedish Embassies in Washington are compared to those of Ireland, Ireland fares well despite having less staff dedicated to communications<sup>47</sup>. As of February 2016 none of these Embassies have a LinkedIn account and Ireland had more Twitter followers than Italy and Sweden though less than that of The Netherlands. Compared with the 13,700 followers of the Irish Embassy's Twitter account, Italy and Sweden had a little over 8,500 and 6,700 Twitter followers respectively. However, The Netherlands had more than 15,500 followers. Compared to Ireland's more than 10,000 Facebook followers, Sweden had less than 1,000 followers while Italy and The Netherlands had more than 17,000 and 24,000 respectively.

## *Promoting Ireland's 2016 Commemorations*

The 2016 commemorations programme represented a public diplomacy opportunity for the US mission network. Throughout 2014 and 2015 the missions were much involved in the preparation of a nationwide 2016 centenary programme involving more than 200 events. This included the Embassy in Washington playing a key role in the preparations for a high profile three-week Irish Arts Festival at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC. Titled "Ireland 100", the overall programme was to be an opportunity to strengthen bilateral ties with the US and to promote Ireland, especially in the areas of tourism, trade and investment. Accordingly, a communications strategy for the US centenary programme was prepared and in January 2016 Ireland's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade launched a full-colour fifty-page booklet prepared by the Embassy and detailing the events taking place across the US. Working with the Web & Digital unit and the Americas Unit in Dublin, the Embassy prepared an infographic for the launch. This was reported by the Embassy as having been very well received in the US. On social media, there were more than 60,000 impressions on Twitter for tweets issued by the CPDO on the day of the launch. The launch of the programme was the first event profiled in the Embassy's Instagram account.

## 5.2 Services to Citizens

The provision of Consular Services and Consular Assistance is a major feature of the work of the missions. Standard consular services, such as the processing of passports and of visa applications,

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<sup>45</sup> Being a preferred platform used by media professionals, Twitter is a particular focus for all of the missions.

<sup>46</sup> Source: DFAT Communications Unit.

<sup>47</sup> In January 2016, the Washington embassies of Italy, The Netherlands and Sweden had 3.5, 6 and 3 staff respectively dedicated to press and communications' issues. Source: Embassy of Ireland, Washington.



are provided by five of Ireland's seven missions<sup>48</sup>. Each mission takes responsibility for a group of US States and, in the case of the missions in Washington and San Francisco, for territories outside of the USA. All seven missions are on call 24-hours a day to provide consular assistance to Irish citizens<sup>49</sup>. In the cases of the Consulates in Atlanta and Austin, this effectively means the Consul Generals are on call at all times. For the years 2014 and 2015, the missions' Annual Business Plans estimate that the provision of these services absorbs between 15% and 30% of the total work effort of the missions, highest for those missions providing passport and visa processing services.

### 5.2.1 Consular Services:

The most common consular services provided by the missions have been the processing of passports, the processing of visas and Foreign Births Registrations (FBR). The volumes of these particular services are detailed in Table 18 below.

**Table 18: Ireland's US Missions: Primary Consular Services Provided, 2011-2015**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total 2011-2015
<b>Boston</b>						
Passports processed	1,790	1,794	1,746	1,623	1,798	<b>8,751</b>
Visas processed	189	200	190	209	249	<b>1,037</b>
FBRs approved	435	561	261	250	302	<b>1,809</b>
<b>Chicago</b>						
Passports processed	1,739	1,637	1,908	1,749	1,638	<b>8,671</b>
Visas processed	500	491	511	537	433	<b>2,472</b>
FBRs approved	422	428	212	65	39	<b>1,166</b>
<b>New York</b>						
Passports processed	4,868	5,126	4,911	5,441	5,984	<b>26,330</b>
Visas processed	878	824	789	796	921	<b>4,122</b>
FBRs approved	1,137	513	597	131	160	<b>2,538</b>
<b>San Francisco</b>						
Passports processed	3,219	3,029	3,065	3,247	3,660	<b>16,220</b>
Visas processed	469	576	569	697	956	<b>3,267</b>
FBRs approved	148	149	65	54	0*	<b>416</b>
<b>Washington</b>						
Passports processed	737	748	708	846	962	<b>4,001</b>
Visas processed	256	247	289	216	291	<b>1,299</b>
FBRs approved	117	110	134	140	83	<b>584</b>
<b>Total</b>						
Total Passports Processed	12,353	12,334	12,338	12,906	14,042	<b>63,973</b>
Total Visas processed	2,292	2,338	2,348	2,455	2,850	<b>12,283</b>
Total FBRs approved	2,259	1,761	1,269	640	584	<b>6,513</b>

Data Sources: US Missions and the Passport Service, Balbriggan

<sup>48</sup> The two single-diplomat missions of Atlanta and Austin do not provide standard consular services. However, these missions report that the answering of phone/e-mail queries on consular services and the dispatching of passport application forms absorb significant staff resources.

<sup>49</sup> Consular assistance may also be provided to citizens of EU member states that do not have representation and, in certain circumstances, to citizens of non-EU member states.

As can be seen in table 18, after a period of little change year-on-year in the aggregate number of passports issued across the five missions that process passports from 2011 – 2014, in 2015 there was a significant increase in passport applications at the Consulates in New York and San Francisco, 10% and 13% respectively. Of the nearly 64,000 passport applications over the 5 years, more than 26,000 were processed by New York alone.

As regards the processing of visas, between 2011 and 2015 there was an increase of more than 24% in the number of visas processed, with a 16% increase between 2014 and 2015 alone. Much of the overall increase is accounted for by the Consulate in San Francisco where there were 956 applications in 2015 compared to 697 in 2014, a 37% increase in one year, and where there having been 469 applications in 2011, an increase of more than 100% over the five years under review.

The 14,042 passports processed by the US mission network in 2015 represents 15% of the 94,617 passports processed by Ireland's foreign missions globally. Only the passport office in London with 47% of all passports processed by Ireland's overseas missions exceeds the 15% of the US network, with Ireland's two missions in Australia, Canberra and Sydney, together accounting for 11.4%<sup>50</sup>.

It was very evident to the review team (from interviews and observation, and from the data in Table 18 above) that the large volumes of passport and visa applications put high demands on the relatively small staffs of the Consulates. Unlike the passport office in London which has staff dedicated solely to the processing of passports<sup>51</sup>, staffs at the Embassy and the Consulates share multiple duties. This carries the risk of a backlog developing should an emergency arise, or should there be a surge in the demand for services, or should there be an absence or temporary shortage of staff<sup>52</sup>. In 2014 a backlog did develop at the Consulate in Chicago. Though this backlog is now being cleared, by early 2016 applicants for dual citizenship passports<sup>53</sup> at the Consulate in Chicago had had to be informed to expect to receive their passport in more than nine months, rather than the targeted six months for the processing of a dual passport<sup>54</sup>.

In addition to the processing of passports, the missions also issue emergency travel certificates (ETC) and temporary passports enabling the bearers to travel across international borders. ETCs are issued in the event of a passport being stolen, lost or in some way accidentally destroyed. More than 2,000 such documents were issued by the US missions between 2011 and 2015. Combined with the total of 63,973 passports processed by the Ireland's US missions in the five year period under review, this brings to more than 66,000 the number of identity documents processed or issued by the network. Almost half of the ETCs and temporary passports were issued either by the Consulate in New York

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<sup>50</sup> Source: Passport Service, Balbriggan

<sup>51</sup> The passport office in London has 10 permanent staff and 4 temporary clerical officers. In addition, a Department of Justice officer is dedicated to the processing of visas.

<sup>52</sup> DFAT staff at two missions observed to the review team that they and colleagues have had difficulties taking leave due to the demands of work. In one instance, local staff was also having difficulty finding opportunities to take leave and leave was accumulating as a result.

<sup>53</sup> It has been a practice to give priority to applicants who have single citizenship (Irish) as these people are 100% reliant on their Irish passport for travel purposes.

<sup>54</sup> Aside from putting much pressure on staff, the problem of the backlog was reported as causing a significant reputational risk due to perceptions that staff are underperforming when the reality was quite the contrary.

(760 issued) or the Consulate in San Francisco (239 issued). Atlanta and Austin Consulates issued 68 and 13 such documents respectively.

While the Atlanta and Austin Consulates do not have responsibility for the provision of ordinary consular services in the group of states for which they have an immediate responsibility (see Table 5, page 22 above), in practice they are drawn into issues related to the provision of ordinary consular services<sup>55</sup>. Not surprisingly, people seeking a service call their nearest diplomatic mission which may be Atlanta or Austin. Time is then spent redirecting the enquirer, or direction is given as to what the person needs to do, or there is a need to respond to supplementary queries. All of these queries can only be ignored at the risk of reputational damage. Based upon estimates in the missions' business plans, issues in relation to consular assistance and to consular services absorb up to 15% of the total work effort of the Consulates in Atlanta and Austin. In one-diplomat missions, serious consular emergencies involving Irish citizens may occupy staff full-time for several days to the exclusion of almost all other work.

Since 2011 the processing of FBRs has been incrementally undertaken in Ireland and the figures in Table 18 above reflect this fact. Originally a temporary arrangement, the processing of FBRs in Ireland was a response to a backlog in the processing of FBRs, particularly at the San Francisco and New York Consulates, and then more recently at the Consulate in Chicago. Given the backlogs and a need for the small mission teams to prioritise more strategic functions and demands such as dealing with the increasing number of passport and visa applications, a decision to process all FBRs in Ireland has since been made. This work is now being undertaken by an FBR unit in Consular Division, Dublin.

### 5.2.2 Consular Assistance:

An important feature of the work of all seven missions in the mission network is the provision of consular assistance. Drawing upon data from *Cabhair*<sup>56</sup>, the Department's database for recording and tracking consular assistance cases, Tables 19 and 20 below gives details of the Consular Assistance cases handled by the missions between 2011 and 2015 inclusive.

**Table 19: Numbers of Consular Assistance Cases handled by the US Mission Network, 2011-2015**

Mission	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Totals
Washington Embassy	12	9	8	16	6	51
Atlanta - CG	15	24	14	18	20	91
Austin - CG	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7	7
Boston - CG	20	13	23	20	23	99
Chicago - CG	7	11	7	13	12	51
New York - CG	31	33	31	21	32	148
San Francisco - CG	26	28	24	24	32	134
<b>Totals</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>581</b>

Data Source: *Cabhair* database

<sup>55</sup> These two missions do provide emergency consular services such as issuing emergency travel documents in the event, for example, of the loss or theft of a passport.

<sup>56</sup> The *Cabhair* system was introduced in 2009 and aims to provide a comprehensive electronic database of all consular cases. It is currently being updated to enable the better recording and tracking of consular cases.

**Table 20: Consular Assistance Cases by case type handled by the US Mission Network, 2011-2015**

Case Type	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	TOTAL
Accident/Illness	11	6	9	9	17	52
Arrest	22	32	19	28	29	130
Child Abduction	0	3	2	3	0	8
Death	22	22	25	29	29	127
Deportation	16	16	19	11	12	74
Medical	8	4	4	7	6	29
Welfare	13	14	12	12	14	65
Prisoner	0	4	4	5	4	17
Psychiatric	1	4	2	1	5	13
Other	18	13	11	7	17	66
<b>Totals</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>581</b>

*Data Source: Cabhair database*

As can be seen from the data in table 19 above, the gross numbers of consular assistance cases increased by approximately 20% in 2015, having changed little between 2011 and 2014. However, the gross numbers do not give an indication of the amount of time and effort that may have been involved with a particular case. The time and effort involved with a single consular assistance emergency can be very considerable. The June 2015 Berkeley tragedy is a case in point (see Box 2 below). In this case it is estimated by the mission that over a period of 3 months the incident absorbed over 50% of the time of the full mission team (6 officers) and substantial amounts of their personal time outside the official working day.

Because a single consular assistance case might protract over days and weeks, and because another consular assistance case can be resolved within a matter of hours, realistically it is not possible to analyse the consular assistance data in Tables 19 and 20 above from the perspective of unit costs. In addition to the inherent difficulties in analysing consular assistance data and the overall effort and costs of providing the assistance, such an analysis is made all the more difficult by the probable under-reporting of the numbers of consular cases. It was commented to the review team that cases which are dealt with very quickly may not be recorded because of the additional administrative work involved at a time when people are under pressure to respond to other things or because they may not be considered substantive enough to warrant a formal record even though they did absorb some time and attention of a mission. Reflective also of the probable under-recording of consular assistance work is a distinction made by one mission between “standard” consular cases and issues related to J1 visas<sup>57</sup>, issues that the mission concerned estimates as absorbing 30% of the time of one officer. For the most part, J1 visa issues are not recorded as consular cases.

<sup>57</sup> A J-1 visa is a non-immigrant visa issued by the United States to students, research scholars and exchange visitors participating in educational and cultural exchange programmes that promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.

### ***Berkeley Tragedy, June 2015***

The collapse of a balcony at an apartment in Berkeley, California, on the 16 June 2015 resulted in the deaths of six Irish students and serious injuries to seven others. The incident required a major consular emergency response in which the Consulate in San Francisco played a central role.

Supported by the Embassy in Washington and by DFAT's Consular Division in Dublin, the Consulate's response gave priority to helping meet the practical needs of those most affected by the incident. This entailed over a three-month period:

- Assisting the families of the dead who travelled to San Francisco from Ireland
- Assisting the seven injured students and their families
- Assisting the other students present when the incident occurred who required support as they came to terms with what had happened

In providing support to these priority groups the *Irish Immigration and Pastoral Center* in San Francisco (IIPC), funded by DFAT through the Emigrant Support Programme, played a key role. As a partner to the response with the Consulate, the IIPC managed more than 100 community volunteers who provided support to the families and students. In managing this support, the IIPC gave 100% of its staff resources to the response in the first 6 weeks following the incident and 50% of its resources in the following 6 weeks. The response was also assisted by the wider Irish community which provided offers of accommodation and transport.

In addition to helping meet the practical needs of the students and their families, the Consulate worked to coordinate responses to national and international media; liaise with insurance companies, US hospitals and health authorities; and liaise with investigating authorities. This work was closely supported by Consular Division which appointed a liaison officer to each family affected and arranged meetings with insurance companies, representatives of the universities, colleges and schools concerned. Consular Division also activated a Crisis Response Centre to manage the large volume of telephone calls from members of the public concerned about potentially affected relatives. These responses were complemented by visits to Berkeley in the aftermath of the incident by the Minister for Diaspora Affairs and by the Ambassador in Washington. Their presence provided additional capacity in relation to managing media demands and representation at memorial events.

Overall, the Consulate estimates that in the three months following the incident, responding to the tragedy absorbed nearly 50% of the time of its officers, both local and diplomatic, and much additional time outside of regular office hours.

### 5.2.3 Emigrant Support Programme

The work of the mission network includes helping facilitate the delivery of DFAT’s Emigrant Support Programme (ESP) with partner organisations in the US. Managed by the Irish Abroad and Global Irish Network Unit in Dublin, the ESP is a key element in Ireland’s support for the Irish diaspora worldwide<sup>58</sup>. Much like the challenge of trying to measure the effort associated with providing consular assistance, the work of the network in relation to the ESP is very difficult to quantify. Regardless, staff at HQ consider the missions to be a critical link between the Irish Abroad unit and the organisations it supports (Table 21 below gives detail of the numbers of organisations supported each year and the aggregate value of the support involved). The missions play a key role in helping the Irish Abroad unit appraise project proposals, help maintain relationships between the Department and the organisations, and they help with the ongoing monitoring of the use of funds. Indicative of the fact that ESP-related work can involve much time, one mission’s business plan estimates that up to 10% of its work effort might be given to ESP-related matters. Over this five year time frame the number of organisations supported has increased by 70%, with greater geographical and sectoral outreach.

**Table 21: ESP: Emigrant Support Programme US Funding (€ millions)**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Number of US Organisations Supported	26	31	27	38	44	
Value of Funding Provided € millions	1.542	1.669	1.572	3.059	2.561	10.403

*Data Source: Irish Abroad Unit*

The application and development of the Emigrant Support Programme by the mission network has been instrumental in the emergence of new partner organisations such as the Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers and the Irish Network USA.

### 5.3 Activities and Outputs – Key Findings

Overall, the work of the network is much focused on fostering the bilateral relationship between Ireland and the United States, and on the provision of services to Irish citizens and to people with an interest in visiting Ireland. This work includes support to the Irish diaspora and the promotion of Ireland’s values and economic interests. Estimated as absorbing between 60 and 80 per cent of the total effort of the different missions<sup>59</sup>, it is evident to the review team that these broad areas of focus are mutually complementary in varying degrees and in varying ways, and that they closely accord with key Government strategies and with the high level goals of the Department’s current and most recent departmental Statements of Strategy.

<sup>58</sup> The ESP is identified as a key strategy of the “Global Irish – Ireland’s Diaspora Policy”, 2015

<sup>59</sup> Source: Annual Business Plans, 2014 and 2015

### 5.3.1 Promoting Ireland and its Interests in the United States

#### *Bilateral Relations*

The political and policy dimensions of Ireland's bilateral relationship with the US ultimately sets the context for the work of the mission network, especially the work of the embassy in Washington. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council and as a dominant global actor in foreign and security policy, the views and positions of the US on issues of peace, security and development have a critical impact globally. Accordingly, it is of the highest importance that the missions serve to monitor, analyse and report on US policy developments. Beyond monitoring, analysing and reporting on policy developments, the Embassy serves to strengthen bilateral cooperation around issues of common interest such as the nexus of development/human rights/reconciliation/peace-building. Where Irish and American policy positions may diverge, the Embassy plays a key role in communicating and explaining Irish policy positions within the context of the broader bilateral relationship.

The mission's core work in relation to: the development and maintenance of contacts with legislators and senior officials; the tracking and reporting to HQ on US foreign policy developments and on issues of strategic importance; the connecting with influential think tanks and policy institutes; the communication of Ireland's policy positions; and the apprising of HQ and the Permanent Representation in Brussels of the US position on key issues within the broader EU-US relationship are all activities that might not be as public or as overt as the economic and social dimensions of the work of the missions. In addition, this policy-related work is not necessarily reported on in the same fashion as would be the case for a trade or community event. In certain respects, the importance and significance of the political and policy dimensions of the work of the mission in the US can be viewed from the perspective of the counterfactual. For example, not to link closely with key people and institutions (at federal and state levels), or not to keep HQ apprised of a wide range of issues risks missing key information with subsequent challenges for Ireland in advocating important policy objectives. In addition, failure to develop and maintain connections with key people and institutions risks sending negative signals and could diminish Ireland's position and influence in the US with resultant negative impacts on issues of high priority for Ireland.

The evidence from reports and interviews shows that many of the activities related to the fostering and maintenance of Ireland's relationship with the US have taken place at the highest levels of political, administrative, economic and academic life. The evidence also shows that, to large extent, this has been done in a way that capitalises on the current high level of goodwill that Ireland enjoys within the US. The goodwill enjoyed by Ireland in the US is clearly illustrated by the annual St Patrick's Day programmes organised by the missions in partnership with a wide range of individuals and organisations from within the Irish-American community and from other Irish Government Departments and state agencies. Whereas the success of most promotional activities is difficult to measure in a definitive sense, it is clear that the missions' activities around the time of St Patrick's Day make significant contributions to maintaining goodwill and promoting Ireland. For example, according to Tourism Ireland's USA market profile more than 20% of US holidaymakers make their decision to visit Ireland in March. This correlates with the high level of publicity generated in the USA around the time of St Patrick's Day. Uniquely, it is a fact that Ireland's national day is given recognition annually throughout the US, including at the highest political levels.

### *Connecting*

Alongside the provision of services and meeting the practical needs of citizens, the evidence from more than 1,200 Mission Event Reports (MER) lodged between 2014 and 2015 shows that the missions have been very active in promoting and representing Ireland's interests and values<sup>60</sup>. Many of the activities are undertaken in partnership with Irish-American organisations and networks, and they involve events and contacts in all 50 states and every major metropolitan centre. The reported level of engagement with Irish-American communities is congruent with responses from people interviewed as part of this review. Nearly all of the community/private sector interviewees commented favourably or very favourably with regard to the "connecting", "convening" and "networking" roles played by the missions – bringing Irish groups together and giving a status to what the groups are doing<sup>61</sup>. The value of a connecting and networking role played by the missions was also explicitly identified by 8 of the 12 non-DFAT state sector interviewees.

### *Promoting Economic and Cultural Interests*

The facts of the US being Ireland's second largest trading partner, of being the largest source of FDI, and of being Ireland's second largest tourism generating market underscores the importance of the missions' multi-faceted work to promote Ireland's economic interests. This work takes account of the fact that Ireland's State Agencies with offices in the US are well established and, by and large, are well resourced<sup>62</sup>. Appropriately, therefore, the role exercised by the US mission network in relation to promoting Ireland's economic interests focusses on networking, messaging and intelligence gathering, of facilitating contacts and of complementing the work of State Agencies.

Periodically, major cultural events can take up a very significant proportion of a Mission's time. For example, the three-week "Ireland 100" Festival held at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC in May/June 2016 involved very extensive work throughout 2015 on the part of the Ambassador and Third Secretary in DC.

### *Communicating*

The rapid development of social media in recent years has brought a new dimension to how people interact and communicate, with implications for how the network conducts its public diplomacy work. The missions have adjusted their ways of communicating in order to maximise the impact of their message. Importantly, having one officer exclusively devoted to communications and media has enabled the network to plan its messaging, coordinate website and social media content, and better prepare for public diplomacy aspects of visits and events.

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<sup>60</sup> The current system of event reporting only came into operation from mid-2013 onwards. However, as the annual plans and activities of the missions prior to that were guided by the same strategy document (2009), it is not unreasonable to assume that similar levels of activities were undertaken by the missions throughout the whole period covered by this review.

<sup>61</sup> Some interviewees clearly identified strongly with the missions, with some interviewees speaking of "our consulate".

<sup>62</sup> An exception to this is Bord Bia which maintains a small office co-located with the Irish Consulate in New York.



### 5.3.2 Consular Services and Consular Assistance

#### *Consular Services*

The provision of Consular Services and Consular Assistance put continuing demands on the work of the missions. Between 2011 and 2014 there was little change in the aggregate numbers of passports processed by the five missions that receive passport applications (approximately 12,000 per year). However, in 2015 the demand for passports increased by nearly 9% from the preceding year.

Between 2011 and 2015 there has been an increase of approximately 24% in the number of visas processed with a 16% increase between 2014 and 2015 alone. A large reduction in the number of Foreign Birth Registrations (FBR) handled by the missions<sup>63</sup> reflects a HQ decision to gradually transfer this function to an FBR Unit in Consular Division in Dublin due to inadequate resources at mission level to handle the volume of applications received.

#### *Consular Assistance*

The gross numbers of consular assistance cases increased by approximately 20% (558) in 2015, having changed little between 2011 and 2014. As observed earlier, the gross number of cases does not reflect the level of effort that may have been involved.

It is clear to the review team that the provision of Consular Services and Consular Assistance is much valued by the community sector people interviewed as part of this review even though only a few explicitly identified the provision of these services as a primary benefit of the mission network. High praise was given to how mission staff responded to people requesting services and to the ease by which people could interact with the missions.

In the case of some of the Consulates, it is clear also that the increase in 2015 in the demand for consular services has put major pressure on the relatively small staffs. Furthermore, it appears that some reputational damage may have resulted from delays associated with the registration of foreign births (FBR) and the processing of passport applications.

#### *Meeting Demands*

Despite these recent problems with regard to FBRs and the processing of passport applications (for which solutions have now been agreed with HQ), overall it appears to the review team that the missions have been substantially effective in providing what they commit to offer in terms of consular services and very effective in providing consular assistance. This is evidenced by the volumes of services provided with relatively small mission teams and the high satisfaction and admiration that was consistently expressed by people interviewed as part of this review.

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<sup>63</sup> See Table 14, page 27

### 5.3.3 Coherence and Complementarity

#### *Visibility*

The missions' work with regard to Consular Services serves not only to provide necessary documents such as passports and visas, but also serves to provide Ireland with a measure of visibility. This measure of visibility is only made possible by having a presence on the ground.

The ability to effectively provide consular assistance is generally enhanced by geographical proximity, understanding of the context and ongoing established relationships with organisations and networks that can be called upon to provide additional support. As with the provision of consular services, the presence of a mission on the ground in itself provides an additionality that would not be achieved by an alternative mechanism.

Whereas both consular services and consular assistance could ultimately be provided through other arrangements such as through a regional centre, these are likely to be qualitatively less beneficial, possibly less timely, and not without having to incur other costs.

#### *Enabling*

The responses of people interviewed as part of this review give no indication that they consider the work of the missions to be duplicative of other actors, or without benefit. To the contrary, as many as 8 out of 33 community/private sector respondents were clearly of the view that certain things<sup>64</sup> would not happen without the work of the missions. Another 11 voiced views that, without the work of the missions, things would not happen to the same degree in terms of benefit<sup>65</sup>, or might only happen with much difficulty.

#### *Facilitating*

While the missions and the state agencies share the common objective of advancing Ireland's economic interests, the missions were seen by interviewees as providing benefits that otherwise might not be possible. In this regard, mention was repeatedly made about the missions' ability to facilitate the making of connections and to providing the cachet of a diplomatic mission which attracts attention and participation. Mention was also made about the particular role the Embassy in Washington can play in relation to regulatory issues. A review of the Mission Events' Reports shows that economic promotion engagements and activities are very much related to attracting interest in Ireland and thus coherent with the trade and investment work of the state agencies.

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<sup>64</sup> Specific examples given were the making of contacts at high level and attracting the participation at events of key people.

<sup>65</sup> Especially as a result of having given status and prestige to events.

## 5.4 Delivering on Objectives

*Ireland's interests and the interests of its citizens advanced in the USA through services to citizens and the fostering of strong bilateral relations*<sup>66</sup>

Almost without exception, interviewees considered the missions to be effective or very effective in doing what they do, particularly in relation to serving the Irish Diaspora, a service that was identified in 29 of the 32 interviews with people from the community/private sector as a primary value of Ireland's US mission network.

The missions' roles in maintaining bilateral relations with the US and in promoting Ireland's economic interests were also identified in interviews as important benefits to Ireland. In exercising these roles, perceptions were generally very positive about how the work of the missions and the work of the State Agencies complemented each other (mentioned in 12 of the 32 interviews). The co-location of the missions with the offices of the state agencies was twice mentioned very favourably (an "Ireland House" arrangement).

The promotion of Ireland's interests in the US is multifaceted and involves multiple actors having broadly shared objectives with a resultant possibility of a duplication of effort. For this reason the review specifically looked for any evidence of overlap or duplication of effort on the part of the missions, a duplication which could be considered deadweight<sup>67</sup>. No such evidence was seen by the review team.

The quality and commitment of mission staff (HQ and local staff) and the cachet that a diplomatic mission can confer were identified by interviewees as the primary factors enabling the missions' effectiveness. A prestige that a diplomatic mission can bring to an event was explicitly referred to in 27 of the 32 interviews with people from the community/private sector<sup>68</sup>. In addition, comment was repeatedly made about the "ease" by which people could engage with the mission staffs.

Risks to effectiveness identified by interviewees include: insufficient resources/staff; failing to be appreciative of the changing demographics of Irish-America; perceptions of Ireland as giving major corporations an opportunity to avoid paying tax in the US and; a danger of Ireland taking for granted the existing high level of goodwill towards Ireland.

In addition to the consistently very positive views shared by interviewees external to DFAT (including interviewees from other Government Departments and the State Agencies), overall, the evidence indicates that the mission network has been effective or very effective in representing Ireland's interests and values, in influencing understanding of Ireland be it at the economic, political or cultural levels, in providing core consular services and assistance, and in nurturing the current high level of goodwill for Ireland in the USA.

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<sup>66</sup> Cf. Theory of Change, p. 21

<sup>67</sup> "Deadweight" taken to mean that there are activities that provide no additional benefit and are thus an inefficient use of resources.

<sup>68</sup> Related to this, one interviewee remarked that the mission "gives people an opportunity to identify as Irish and gives legitimacy to that identity".

## Chapter 6: Conclusions and Considerations for Management

### 6.1 Conclusions

#### 6.1.1 Relevance

The missions' focus on the provision of services, the promotion of Ireland's trade/economic interests and, in general, the fostering of relations between Ireland and US closely accords with key Government objectives and strategies, and with the high level goals of the Department's current and most recent Statements of Strategy. The individual missions in the network are appropriately located in areas of high potential benefit to Ireland. Overall, given the facts that, among other things, the US is Ireland's most important source of foreign direct investment, largest export market for goods and Ireland's largest trading partner in services, and that more than 33 million Americans identify as being of Irish ancestry, it is clearly relevant that Ireland should have a significant diplomatic presence in the US and thus warranting the allocation of public funding.

#### 6.1.2 Effectiveness

##### *Serving Strategic Needs*

In terms of serving Ireland's strategic needs, the feedback from interviewees indicates that the network has been particularly effective: in fostering and maintaining Ireland's relationship with the US at the highest levels of political, administrative, economic and social life: in the promotion of Ireland as a high value destination for foreign direct investment and as a trading partner: and in connecting Ireland to business leaders and key people in public, social and political life in the US. The feedback very specifically identifies the effectiveness of the facilitative role played by the missions and, in certain instances, they being able to do things that otherwise couldn't be done, or might not have been achievable in the same way or within the same timeframe. The quality and commitment of staff (HQ and local) is considered by the non-DFAT people interviewed to be the primary factor enhancing the effectiveness of the missions.

Private sector interviewees spoke of the network being an "authoritative and reliable" voice in relation to the Irish Government's policy positions. This is complemented by perceived good collaborative relationships between the missions and the state agencies, with the missions able to bring to bear a unique 'cachet' often associated with diplomatic missions. The missions are also seen as being very effective in supporting networking opportunities for Irish Interest groups and for the wider Irish diaspora.

##### *Partnering with Irish-American organisations in building bilateral relations*

Interviewees greatly valued the attention given by the missions to engaging with Irish-America, and spoke of how communities, organisations and individuals benefit from the connections that are

made. In return, Ireland benefits from the contributions the Irish-American community can make to helping advance Ireland's policy priorities and providing services to the Irish diaspora.

The outreach by the missions helps to increase understanding in the Irish-American community of the Government's position on the Northern Ireland Peace Process. This in turn contributes to the constructive and well informed engagement by the Administration and Congress on the peace process. At a time when Brexit has created major uncertainty, it is vital for the Irish Government that its message about the importance of retaining the open border with Northern Ireland and preserving the Common Travel Area between Ireland and Britain is clearly conveyed to US interlocutors.

### *Serving Practical Needs*

In terms of serving practical needs, the network was very much admired by interviewees in the way it responds to the needs of Irish citizens and was considered to be very effective in providing consular services and consular assistance. In addition, the missions are seen to play a key role in facilitating diaspora-related initiatives such as the Emigrant Support Programme, a support mechanism that is considered by the community/private sector and the DFAT interviewees to be very effective and very important. By linking closely with the Irish diaspora and with those having an affinity with Ireland, the missions have effectively leveraged the capacities of different groups in ways that are mutually beneficial.

### 6.1.3 Efficiency

The nature of the work of the missions and the associated objectives does not lend itself to the quantitative measurement of efficiencies in an absolute sense. Even in relation to the easily quantifiable activities such as the processing of passports, attempts to measure the efficiency by which the missions deliver this service is not very meaningful because the turnaround times for these services is much dependent on the Passport Office in Dublin and thus the delivery of the services is not entirely within the control of the missions.

Viewed from the perspective of the levels of activity and the volumes of services provided, overall there is a high return relative to the numbers of staff and the overall costs of the mission network (€8.12m gross, €6.27m net, 2015). In addition, the level of staffing at Ireland's missions is notably smaller than that of the missions of other countries which are broadly comparable in the context of the USA (see Table 14, page 32). Given the mission network's high level of services provided and its many other activities, all of this suggests that efficiencies are being achieved and that there is value-for-money even though the degree of these efficiencies and of the value-for-money cannot be definitively ascertained.

## 6.2 Challenges and Considerations for Management

### 6.2.1 Ensuring Coherence and Complementarity

In order to promote Ireland's economic interests in Europe and internationally, the DFAT Statement of Strategy 2011-2014 included a strategy to engage across the full range of the Government's policy priorities in the EU through the mission network and in close cooperation with other Departments, especially the Department of the Taoiseach.

The Programme for Government sets out an integrated approach by Government to develop trade, tourism and investment. A key objective of the Programme for Government has been to increase the number of new jobs directly associated with exporting enterprises by over 150,000, in manufacturing, tourism and internationally trading services, and with the creation of a similar number of new indirect jobs. The DJEI Statement of Strategy 2011-2014 emphasised the importance of export growth for achieving economic growth: "We will focus on high growth overseas markets and liaise closely with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in building business relationships with those markets. The establishment of the Export Trade Council brings a new cross government focus on the challenges of building exports and opening up new markets".

Enterprise 2025, Ireland's National Enterprise Policy tasks DFAT's mission network along with Enterprise Ireland and IDA with taking a more structured approach to dissemination of in-market intelligence in order to maximise opportunities.

The effectiveness of the US mission network will be much shaped by how the work of the network is coherent with and complementary of the work of other Government Departments and State Agencies, especially the latter with whom there is a formal working arrangement through the Local Market Team. Ensuring maximum coherence and complementarity between Diplomatic missions and State Agencies on the ground in the US in turn depends on strategic direction provided by the respective HQs in Dublin. Clarity about roles and the added value each offers is critically important for maximising cooperation and effectiveness on the ground. Given the fact that Ireland's State Agencies are well established and well-resourced in the US, the complementarity the missions can best offer in relation to trade and investment is not that of another technical advisor, but rather that of messaging and representing, and strategically linking a trade and investment agenda to other agendas such as the peace process in Northern Ireland or mitigating a potential danger of Ireland being seen by the US administration and the US public as facilitating major corporations to minimise or avoid taxation within US.

Internal to DFAT, it is of high importance that the missions give ongoing consideration to ensuring business planning is aligned with DFAT's priorities and that these priorities are clearly reflected in business plans.

### 6.2.2 Maintaining Visibility

At a policy level, working to bring about peace and reconciliation in Ireland helped give Ireland visibility both within the Irish diaspora and with the US administration. This measure of visibility has arguably lessened given the progress that has been made in recent years. Peace in Ireland is less of a rallying point for Irish groups than it once was. Nonetheless, the potential consequences of Brexit for Northern Ireland and the Peace Process, recent developments in relation to the Northern Ireland Executive and a new US Administration, underline the need for continued close attention by the mission network to these important issues.

At a personal level, providing consular services has been a very important point of contact between the missions and the individual. Aside from the mechanics of providing a particular consular service, the personal contacts made in the process have served to build goodwill and have served to give Ireland a measure of visibility. Whereas the planned changes to the way services are provided are expected to deliver a high level of customer service and greater administrative efficiencies, these may result in diminishing visibility. Very soon all foreign births' registrations will be processed in Dublin and by late 2018 or early 2019 all passport renewals and applications will be handled online<sup>69</sup>.

Changes, whether at the personal level or the policy level, present a challenge for the mission network as to how it can maintain Ireland's visibility in the US. This is all the more challenging given changes occurring in the profile of Irish-America (see below) and various competing interests.

Consideration of how best to maintain Ireland's visibility might look to further developing culture as a focus for how the network continues to engage with Irish-America. The extensive work undertaken by the mission network in helping plan a 2016 centenary programme in the US has provided a strong basis to develop a narrative around culture for strengthening the bilateral relationship and giving Ireland visibility. The promotion of culture will likely have indirect benefits such as the promotion of education and tourism, and serving to connect an often diverse or disparate Irish community.

### 6.2.3 Attentiveness to Changing Demographics

The demographics of Irish-America are changing, a fact that is acknowledged in the mission network's strategy of 2009 and reiterated in the 2014 review of that strategy. As highlighted by these reviews, Irish-America is becoming more heterogeneous and, to an increasing degree, generationally more distant from Ireland. Given the increasing diversity, it is all the more important that the mission network continues to exercise a 'convening' role for Irish American communities, organisations and networks<sup>70</sup>.

The US missions, in line with Irish Government commitments, share common goals with the wider Irish American community in relation to addressing the situation of the undocumented Irish in the US and creating improved legal access to America for Irish citizens. Achieving these objectives would

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<sup>69</sup> Since Q2 2017 adult passport renewals are available online

<sup>70</sup> The 2014 internal review of the US mission strategy explicitly speaks of a need to focus on young Irish America and to prioritise networks and programmes that engage young people.

help to nurture and renew the Irish American community and sustain the unique relationship between the two countries into the future.

The demographics of recent Irish emigration into the US has also been changing significantly, especially where it has concerned intra-company transfers into the US from subsidiaries of multinational companies in Ireland. Many of the recent Irish emigrants to the US tend to be young and well educated. Engaging with this new and highly-mobile Irish immigrant population has required, and will continue to require, adjustments to outreach policy on the part of the mission network.

In addition to the changing demographics of Irish-America, changes are taking place in the profile of American society as a whole. These changes show signs of American society being less open to and less welcoming of immigrants even though there is, for example, a rapidly growing and ever more influential Hispanic population<sup>71</sup>. Consideration of how the mission network continues to promote Ireland's interests must necessarily take account of the fact that Ireland's calling card may not be as welcome as it once was. Therefore, things such as the access given to Ireland around St Patrick's Day and the current high level of goodwill towards Ireland in the US cannot be taken for granted.

#### 6.2.4 Prioritising

The missions are very busy. Demands on mission staffs are many and increasingly complex, not least because of the increasing heterogeneity of Irish-America and the competing social and economic interests which contribute to an environment which may not be as open to Ireland as had once been the case. It was commented to the review team by a number of DFAT interviewees that because of limited resources they were unable to capitalise on opportunities which could potentially offer significant benefits for Ireland. Unprompted, two non-DFAT interviewees observed that given their limited resources the missions need to maintain a focus on the things that are most advantageous to Ireland's interests and values, and the values of Irish-America.

The existing high demands on staff and limited resources are such that priority actions for the mission network need to be regularly reviewed and agreed, and integrated into the missions' business and operational plans. Given human resource constraints and the fact that the State Agencies are well established and appear to be generally well resourced, the prioritisation should ensure that the particular role of the missions in relation to Ireland's economic objectives and policies is clearly identified and supported.

More widely, the prioritisation should keep a focus on how the missions might optimally collaborate with individuals and networks, people who are already playing important roles in promoting the interests and values of Ireland and of Irish-America. The prioritisation might also differentiate between those things the missions should be pursuing and those things that might need protecting or defending.

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<sup>71</sup> Data from the US Census Bureau shows that in 2014 the Hispanic population in the US was 55 million (17% of total population). The Census Bureau estimates that the Hispanic population will be 119 million in 2060 (28% of total population)



## 6.2.5 Resourcing

### *Staffing*

The level of staffing of Ireland's mission network in the US is very modest when compared to the staffing of the US missions of some other EU countries whose interests in the US are broadly comparable to that of Ireland (see Table 14, page 32). Because the Irish missions operate with small staffs who need to be suitably skilled and flexible, this makes it all the more important as how Ireland plans for the continued staffing of its US missions.

In the next few years there will be some notable changes from what the missions have ordinarily undertaken up until now. Specifically, responsibility for foreign births registrations has had to be transferred to HQ due to inadequate resources within the mission network to meet the demand. In addition, from early 2017 all passport renewals will be done online, and, it is planned, by the end of 2018 or early 2019 all passport applications will be handled online<sup>72</sup>. These changes will tend to move the focus of the missions' work more towards outreach and less towards the delivery of services. These upcoming changes are an opportunity for the US missions to review the skills' mix of their staffs and opportunities for reskilling. In addition to examining opportunities for reskilling, such a review might include considering the value of having, from time to time, short-term locally recruited expertise exercising functions of a technical or policy nature<sup>73</sup>.

The succession planning for diplomatic officers to serve in the US missions, especially to serve in the current single-diplomat missions of Atlanta and Austin, needs to ensure that account is taken of the often highly intensive nature of the work of these missions and take account of officers needing to spend much time away from their ordinary places of residence.

### *Human Resource Management*

Unlike Ireland's missions to any other country, the bilateral missions in the US constitute a network of seven missions led by the Ambassador in Washington<sup>74</sup>. Even though each of the seven missions has its particularities, the fact of constituting a network provides an opportunity to consider a cross-network approach to certain areas of human resource management. For example, whereas a calibration exercise for local staff pay rates in the USA was undertaken in 2016, consideration might be given to standardised job titles and job descriptions and the associated remuneration scales.

Such a standardisation across the network would help obviate risks to staff morale that can arise from issues associated with differences between one mission and another in relation to terms and

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<sup>72</sup> Though from 2019 passport will be handled online, missions can expect to have a lot on enquiries and will continue to provide emergency travel documents as needs arise.

<sup>73</sup> This practice, for example, is already the case with some other foreign such as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

<sup>74</sup> Technically, the term "embassy" refers to the diplomatic delegation itself that is accredited to a country. The Consulates General are thus part of Ireland's "embassy" in the US.

conditions of service, including provisions for retirement. It should be noted, however, that any moves towards a cross-network approach in the area of human resources management would have resource implications for the mission at which a function or responsibility is concentrated.

### *Budgeting*

In Chapter 5, Table 16 gives aggregate detail of HQ funding for cultural activities supported by the missions. This HQ funding draws from two budget lines and can involve very small grants. This raises a question about the practicality and efficiency of such a funding arrangement and leads to a wider question of how best to efficiently resource the representational, cultural, public diplomacy and trade-related activities of the missions. It is appropriate that DFAT management has begun to pilot a new approach to funding promotional, cultural and representational activities of the missions in a manner that links business planning with budgeting and that involves specification of actions that can be subsequently reviewed and audited.

### 6.2.6 Single-Diplomat Missions

Since the 1930s Ireland has had diplomatic representation in Washington, New York, Chicago, Boston and San Francisco. In the 2009 review of the US mission network made a recommendation to Government to extend Ireland's diplomatic presence into Southern states by opening new Consulates in Atlanta and Houston, "major cities of real economic and investment significance and potential for Ireland"<sup>75</sup>. Soon after a Consulate was opened in Atlanta and a 2014 Memo to Government sanctioned the opening of a Consulate in Austin which would primarily focus on promoting Ireland's economic, trade and cultural interests. Both Consulates were opened as single-diplomat missions.

The model of a single-diplomat mission is used by Ireland in the staffing of some of its European missions. Though having some clear drawbacks<sup>76</sup> and thus not a preferred model for resident diplomatic representation, a single-diplomat mission can prove satisfactory in geographically small countries where there is small demand for consular services, where trade and investment opportunities are limited, and where the primary function of the mission is essentially the promotion and maintenance of strong bilateral relations. These conditions are not the case for the missions in Atlanta and Austin both of which have immediate responsibility for seven states each of which is geographically large, some of which have a large Irish diaspora<sup>77</sup>, and many of which have high levels of economic opportunity to which the missions are expected to respond<sup>78</sup>. In addition to having a very high workload, in providing services and responding to opportunities in their areas of

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<sup>75</sup> *Ireland and America: Challenges and Opportunities in a New Context*, p. 32

<sup>76</sup> See the 2013 Value-for-Money Review of Ireland's EU missions, pp 64-65 and DFAT's Review of Operational Matters at Single-Diplomat Missions, 2015.

<sup>77</sup> More than 1.87 million people in Texas are estimated to be of Irish ancestry – US Census Bureau, 2014.

<sup>78</sup> The aggregate state GDPs of each of the seven states covered by Atlanta and Austin exceeds the national GDP of France – US Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2015 and the *World Economic Outlook* report, IMF 2016

responsibility, the Heads of Mission travel a great deal and are frequently away from base. This has associated risks for operational effectiveness and for the wellbeing of staff<sup>79</sup>.

All things taken into consideration, it is the view of the review team that the current single-diplomat arrangements at the consulates in Atlanta and Austin carry significant risks to effectiveness and sustainability such that these missions each warrant an additional diplomatic staff member if Ireland is to maintain the missions in the longer term.

### 6.2.7 Work/Life balance

The network's mission event reporting, the field visits to selected missions, and the feedback from people interviewed as part of this review all highlight the fact that the missions are extremely busy and officers commonly work very long hours, including very regular weekend work. Whereas non-DFAT interviewees freely expressed admiration for the quality and commitment of staff (HQ and locally recruited staff), in some instances the admiration was tinged with caution/concern, particularly in relation to diplomatic staff – is this sustainable in the longer term? In some instances there were also undertones of concern as to whether this is good for individuals. Though the high commitment of staff is an important factor in enhancing the effectiveness of the missions, the potential negative effects of long work hours needs to be carefully monitored and regularly assessed both from the perspective of health and safety, and risks to operational effectiveness. The need for this monitoring and assessment is all the more important in the context of the two single-diplomat missions. Clear contingency arrangements need to be in place, and reviewed regularly, to cater for situations where an officer might become unavailable for duty for whatever reason.

In addition, consideration should be given to putting in place formal arrangements for the provision of consular assistance during periods of annual leave by the Consuls General in the single diplomat missions of Atlanta and Austin. The current situation is such that while on leave the Consul Generals concerned effectively remain on permanent call and may need to break their annual leave to respond to urgent consular cases. Formal arrangements might include the assignment of a diplomatic officer during the summer months to specifically cover consular assistance and other urgent matters that arise in the fourteen states of the consular areas covered by the Atlanta and Austin missions.

### 6.2.8 Assessing performance

The introduction of a new mission event reporting system in mid-2013 for use by missions worldwide enabled the US mission network to generate a large body of information at the output level. This information gives a very good picture as to how and where the missions have focused their efforts, and enables a thematic categorisation of what took place. However, some important areas of mission's work, such as the policy work of the Embassy and the associated reporting, was

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<sup>79</sup> Reports by DFAT interviewees of staff (both HQ and local) not being able to take leave are suggestive of either under-resourcing or overworking.

not particularly well suited to the reporting format. The Department's current work in developing a mission event reporting portal that better categorises the range of work done by the missions and that permits better analyses of output information is to be welcomed. Already recognised by DFAT's Knowledge Management and Innovation Taskforce, consideration will need to be given to developing improved tools for actual performance measurement at the level of outcomes<sup>80</sup>.

Relatedly, the comprehensive data in relation to consular services and the high levels of activity as reported by the missions themselves (2011-2015) and as recorded in mission event reports (June 2013-2015) do not adequately quantify the time and effort associated with this work. Whereas much of the work of the missions is hard to assess even when there is very detailed data available, there is a continuing need to seek ways to improve performance assessment.

In section 1.5 above it was noted that the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) identified in the missions' business plans (2013-2015) do not lend themselves to ease of measurement and have often been very broad and high level, thus making assessment even more difficult. In identifying future KPIs that can effectively and realistically assess performance, consideration should be given to KPIs that are very specific, that are likely to have the necessary data for future assessment (see Appendix 5), and that, ideally, cover each of the core aspects of the missions' work. In addition, the approach to the identification of indicators should consider, as might be appropriate and opportune, consultation with others such as HQ Business Units and State Agencies. The choice of indicators might also distinguish between priority outcomes specific to a mission in a particular year and network-wide priorities that might remain as priorities for multiple years.

Applicable to the entire DFAT mission network, the identification of performance measurement indicators should take account of the fact that a number of the missions' higher level objectives are shared in some degree with other actors such as Ireland's State Agencies. Rather than being confined to strict attribution, the choice of performance indicators should give consideration to the fact that it is often the case that the work of the missions makes contributions to particular outcomes<sup>81</sup>. Choosing performance indicators that are focused only on activities that can be strictly attributed to the work of a mission may result in a failure to demonstrate important contributions made by the mission.

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<sup>80</sup> In gathering information for this review there were some differences between the records maintained at HQ and at the missions in relation to the numbers of passports issued, visas processed and consular assistance cases dealt with.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. <http://www.gov.scot/resource/doc/175356/0116687.pdf>

**Terms of Reference**  
**Focused Policy Assessment,**  
**Ireland's Bilateral Mission Network in the United States of America**

**1. Introduction**

Since before the founding of the Irish State there have been very close relations between Ireland and the United States of America (US). These close relations continue to the present day with more than 38 million Americans identifying as having roots in Ireland. Coupled with this the US is Ireland's largest market for goods export, largest trading partner in services, and largest source of inward investment. The US is a key market for tourism and the largest single market for international students in Irish higher education institutions. A 2009 Irish Embassy strategy for engagement with the US recognised a central role played by the US in Ireland's economic development and path to peace. Emphasising the economic relationship between Ireland and the US as priority, the 2009 strategy speaks of the "incomparable benefit of Irish America". Ireland's mission network in the US is the primary and immediate instrument for maintaining Ireland's bilateral relationship with the USA and, in cooperation with the state agencies, a primary instrument for promoting Ireland's economic interests with the US whilst at the same time delivering a range of services to Irish citizens and advocating on their behalf. Recognising the importance of this relationship the Department has decided to undertake a review of the US bilateral mission network as part of the Value for Money Programme, 2015-2017. The review will be undertaken as a Focused Policy Assessment managed by the Department's Evaluation and Audit Unit.

**2. Purpose**

The overall purpose of the Focused Policy Assessment (FPA) is to provide an evidence-based assessment of the work of the 7 bilateral missions that comprise Ireland's mission network in the United States of America<sup>82</sup>. In addition to helping provide accountability to the Irish public in general, this assessment will serve to inform decisions in relation to future resource allocations and improved value-for-money.

**3. Scope**

Viewed from the perspective of the Irish Government's foreign policy priorities, the FPA will consider the work of the mission network over the period 2011-2015. This period coincides with the Government's current programme for Government, with the Department's most recently completed strategy cycle (2011-2014), and with the Ireland-US relation's strategy document, "Ireland and America: Challenges and Opportunities in a New Context". The value of the expenditure that will be considered is approximately €31.7m.

***Specifically, the FPA will:***

1. Briefly set out the rationale and objectives of the mission network
2. Detail the inputs (including staffing resources) associated with the work of the mission network, including the level and trend of the inputs

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<sup>82</sup> Embassy Washington and six Consulates General: Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Chicago, New York and San Francisco. Consideration will not be given to Ireland's Permanent Mission to the United Nations (PMUN) that is located in New York.

3. Detail the outputs associated with the work of the mission and comment on the efficiency by which these outputs were delivered
4. Assess the extent to which objectives have been achieved and overall effectiveness
5. Assess the level of coherence and complementarity by which the network has worked to achieve its objectives
6. Consider the degree to which the objectives warrant the allocation of public funding on an ongoing basis
7. Examine whether there is scope for alternative approaches to achieving these objectives in a more efficient and/or effective basis, and whether there are potential future indicators that might be used to better monitor performance

#### **4. Methodology**

It is envisaged that the FPA will involve:

- An in-depth desktop review of secondary data, including business plans, annual reports, third party documentation. Specific information includes:
  - Mission Event Reports, including economic and trade reporting
  - Local Market Plan implementation reports
  - Reviews and evaluations
  - Trade, investment, tourism and international education data and trends
  - Numbers of Passports issued and visas processed, 2011-2015
  - Numbers of Consular cases handled, 2011-2015
  - Numbers of Foreign Birth Registrations, 2011-2015
- Analysis of expenditure by missions, 2011-2015 inclusive
- Analysis of human resources deployments, including trends in staffing (possible comparative analysis with selected bilateral missions of other countries)
- Interviews with key informants (primarily customers and clients of the missions)
- Possible use of a customer/client e-questionnaire (survey)

#### **5. Outputs**

A final report with recommendations based on the findings for submission to the Secretary General and the Management Advisory Committee

#### **6. Timescale**

The VFM will be undertaken between November 2015 and June 2016.

Evaluation and Audit Unit  
October 2015

## Appendix 2: List of People Interviewed and/or Consulted

### Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

1. Anderson, Anne Deputy Secretary General, Irish Ambassador to the US
2. Bolger, Marianne First Secretary, Consular Services
3. Bourne, Pat Counsellor, Director of Consular Services
4. Burgess, Niall Secretary General
5. Byrne, Kevin Third Secretary, Vice-Consul, San Francisco
6. Cahalane, Brian First Secretary, Embassy Washington
7. Cahill, Shane Third Secretary, Consulate General New York
8. Conmy, Kevin Counsellor, Director Europe Division (Former deputy Head of Mission, Embassy Washington)
9. Corrigan, Margaret Local Staff, Consulate General New York
10. Cottrell, Meena Local Staff, Consulate General New York
11. Crammond, Dale First Secretary (Dept. of Agriculture), Embassy Washington
12. Deady, Mary Local Staff, Consulate General New York
13. Dowling, Ruaidhri First Secretary, Deputy Director, the Americas Unit
14. Farrell, Adrian First Secretary, Head of Mission, Consulate General Austin
15. Fitzgibbon, Claire Third Secretary, Embassy Washington
16. Gavin, Joe First Secretary (Dept. of Justice), Embassy Washington
17. Gibbons, Alan First Secretary, Embassy Washington
18. Gilbride, Yvonne EO, Embassy Washington
19. Gleeson, Paul Counsellor, Director, Strategy & Performance, (Former HOM Atlanta - CG)
20. Grant, Philip First Secretary, Consul General, San Francisco
21. Hannon, Derek 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary, Western Europe and external Relations
22. Jones, Barbara Counsellor, Consul General, New York
23. Keelan, Jacqueline Local Staff, Consulate General San Francisco
24. Kierse-Donohoe, Diane Local Staff, Consulate General San Francisco
25. Loneragan, Michael Counsellor, Embassy Washington
26. Maguire, Síle Counsellor, Chief of Protocol
27. Michael, Nicholas Third Secretary, Consulate General Chicago
28. McBean, Keith Counsellor, Director, Trade Promotion
29. McBreen, Orla First Secretary, Consul General, Chicago
30. McCabe, Fiona Assistant Principal Officer, Deputy Director, Trade Promotion
31. McKee, Eamon Assistant Secretary, Director General, Trade Division
32. McLaughlin, Feilim Counsellor, Director, the Americas Unit
33. McLaughlin, Sylvia Local Staff, Consulate General San Francisco
34. Miley, Siobhan First Secretary, Embassy Washington
35. Ó Caollaí, Breandán Counsellor, Facility Management/Security/Compliance (Former Consul General, Boston)
36. O’Keeffe, Jillian Former Third Secretary, Consulate General Boston
37. O’Neill, Adrian Second Secretary General and Director General, Ireland, UK and Americas Division
38. Reilly, Hilary First Secretary, Embassy Washington
39. Reilly, Marie Local Staff, Consulate General New York
40. Roche, Emer Assistant Principal, Deputy Director, British-Irish Relations (Former director of Irish Abroad unit)
41. Tyrrell, Kate Third Secretary, Irish Abroad Unit
42. Scherschligt, Cecily Local Staff, Consulate General San Francisco

43. Stephens, Shane First Secretary, Consul General, Atlanta  
 44. Quinlan, Fionnuala First Secretary, Consul General, Boston

#### **Other Government Departments and State Agencies**

45. Battersby, Orla Director of North America, Enterprise Ireland  
 46. Burfield, Paul Head of West Coast Office, Enterprise Ireland  
 47. Brennan, Pdraig Sustainability Development Manager, Bord Bia  
 48. Callinan, John Assistant Secretary, Department of the Taoiseach  
 49. Clarke, Shane Director of Corporate Services, Tourism Ireland  
 50. Coyle, Karen Country Manager USA, Bord Bia  
 51. Curley, Mary Assistant principal Officer, Department of Agriculture  
 52. Ferguson, Mark Chief Executive, Science Foundation Ireland  
 53. Metcalfe, Alison Head of North America, Tourism Ireland  
 54. McGrane, Teresa Chief executive, Irish Film Board  
 55. O'Brien, Nicholas Assistant Secretary, Department of Finance  
 56. Sisk, Christine Director, Culture Ireland

#### **Private Sector/Community Sector**

57. Adams, Alicia Vice President International Programming, The Kennedy Center  
 58. Ahern, Stephen Executive Director, Outreach San Diego  
 59. Boland, Brian Irish Network USA Atlanta and Atlanta GAA  
 60. Brennan Glucksman, Loretta Glucksman Ireland House  
 61. Clarke, Caitriona Aisling Irish Center, New York  
 62. Conboy, Kevin Vice President, Irish American Chamber  
 63. Connelly, Aidan Irish Arts Center, New York  
 64. Crew, Kyle Founder, Arís-Celtic and Irish theatre Company  
 65. Dennehy, Siobhan Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers  
 66. Duffy, Bill President, Irish Chamber Atlanta  
 67. Finnley, Teresa Senior Vice President of Global Marketing, UPS  
 68. Ivory, Pat Head of EU and International Development, Ibec  
 69. Fitzpatrick, Katie Director of Programmes, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce  
 70. Fitzgerald, Dave Chair, St Patrick's Day Parade, Atlanta  
 71. Flannery, Jim Yeats foundation  
 72. Gleeson, Sheila Chairperson, Irish Pastoral Center Dorchester  
 73. Greely, Steve American Ireland fund  
 74. Gunn, Trevor Managing Director, Medtronic  
 75. Hennessy, Sr. Christine New York Project Irish Outreach  
 76. Kell, Judith President, United Irish Cultural Centre  
 77. Kenelly, Celine Director, Irish Pastoral Centre  
 78. King, Niamh Vice President, the Chicago Council  
 79. Nutt, Katie Ireland Desk Officer, US State Department  
 80. McBride, Fr Brendan Irish Immigration Pastoral Centre  
 81. McBride, Tim Senior Vice President for Government Relations, United Technologies  
 82. McCormack, Noreen President, Irish Network Seattle  
 83. McKeever, Simon Chief Director, Irish exporters Association  
 84. Meagher, Tom American Ireland Fund  
 85. Meskill, Paddy Solas Nua  
 86. Mintel, Theresa President & Chief Executive, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce  
 87. Modi, Dave Vice president, Ingersoll Rand  
 88. Moore, Teresa United Irish Cultural Centre  
 89. Muldowney, Marjorie American Ireland Fund



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|-----------------------|---|
| 90. O'Connor, Deirdre | Managing Director, Goldman Sachs                            |
| 91. O'Neill, Karina   | West Coast Representative, UCD                              |
| 92. Quinn, Peter      | Author  |
| 93. Redmond, Mark     | Chief Executive, American Chamber of Commerce Ireland       |
| 94. Rowan, Nick       | Co-Chair, Irish Network-DC                                  |
| 95. Sands, Neil       | Irish Network Bay Area                                      |
| 96. Traghese, Billy   | Communications Director, Office of Congressman Richard Neal |
| 97. Anonymous         | Senior manager, business consulting firm                    |

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## Appendix 4A: Interview Structure (DFAT)

### **Listening for:**

- Evidence that there is clarity about how network is serving strategic interests of Ireland
- Evidence of coherence in the working of the overall mission network
- Evidence in relation the effectiveness or otherwise of the delivery of services
- Any evidence of adding value to the work of other Government Departments and state agencies
- Evidence of a good collaborative relationship with state agencies, especially on-the-ground in the US
- Any evidence of effective support to and information gathering on behalf of other Government Departments and institutions
- Any evidence of dead weight

**Areas of Enquiry:**

As you see it, what is the primary value(s) or benefit(s) of having a mission network in the US?

As you see it, what are the priority areas of the work of the network, the things on which the network should most focus?

As you see it, what factors (*actual things, not theoretical*) enable the mission network:

- To work efficiently
- To work effectively (*break out the different areas of work such as trade promotion, delivering consular service and consular assistance, supporting the Irish diaspora, etc.*)
- To work collaboratively

*(In exploring these factors, try to get a sense of how the interviewee assesses the performance of the missions in relation to efficiency and effectiveness, though particularly the latter)*

*(Should it not emerge, briefly probe the issue of structures/institutional arrangements, including arrangements for collaborative working with the state agencies)*

As you see it, what factors (*actual things, not theoretical*) may be having a negative impact on:

- Efficiency of the mission network
- Effectiveness of the mission network (*break out the different areas of work such as trade promotion, delivering consular service and consular assistance, supporting the Irish diaspora, etc.*)
- Collaborative working (*within the network or external to the network*)

Do you have any views as to possible risks (*actual not theoretical*) facing the mission network in relation to:

- The efficiency by which it functions
- The effectiveness of the network
- Its capacity to work collaboratively (*within the network or external to the network*)
- One Diplomat missions (If not already raised)

Issues to explore if not already touched upon:

- The contributions of Honorary Consuls to the overall effort of the network (particularly explore the counterfactual – not having the Honorary Consuls and how this might impact upon effectiveness, including affecting the work of the permanent missions)
- Given the fact that resources are finite could we get a better return by deploying resources elsewhere? Why?
- How do you measure performance?
- Concentrating services?
- Informal/formal door-opening?
- Something that could be changed?

### **Listening for:**

- Any evidence of adding value to the work of other Government Departments and state agencies – complementarity or otherwise
- Any evidence of the missions’ effectiveness in relation to supporting, facilitating, or gathering information on behalf of other government departments
- Any views about the focus of the missions’ work and their effectiveness
- Any views about efficiency
- Any evidence of good collaborative relationships with state agencies and other Government Departments
- Any views about the counterfactual – what might be the case if the missions weren’t there, or if the missions didn’t do certain things
- Any evidence of dead weight – are there things that would happen or would have happened anyway
- Any views related to or suggestive of collaborative working within the mission network itself and with other Irish Government state agencies or institutions
- Any views in relation to how the missions might better or otherwise function

### **Areas of Enquiry:**

**As you see it, what is the primary value or benefit of Ireland’s mission network in the US in relation to Ireland in broad sense?**

*(If deemed helpful to stimulate a response, drawing attention to some or all of the following might be helpful:*

- *Maintaining and building relations at various levels*
  - *Delivering consular services*
  - *Economic diplomacy and contributing to trade promotion*
  - *Facilitating the work of Government Departments and state agencies, etc.*
  - *Providing consular assistance*
  - *Supporting the Irish community and the Irish diaspora,*
- *(Let the person answer this question in any way they want. Look for specific examples/ways by which the missions are/can be of value or of benefit)*
  - *Don’t spend too much time on the “broad sense” (avoid drifting into a theoretical or speculative discussion). It is probable that the person will automatically move from “Ireland in the broad sense” to their specific area of interest or work. If they don’t then ask a question such as the following:*

**Does the work or aspects of the work of the mission network add value, or be of benefit, to your particular interests or your work?**

- *(Probe whether any “value” or “benefit” mentioned could just as easily be provided through other channels, or whether missions are considered to be uniquely positioned to provide certain supports)*

- *(Probe whether the value or benefits that are provided might be “filling a gap” that might otherwise not be filled)*
- *(Probe issues in relation to any role played by the missions around information gathering or opening doors for things to happen. Explore also whether things like “door opening” may equally apply to Consulate Generals as to the embassy Washington )*
- *(Probe if the work of the interviewee’s agency/Department might be supporting/contributing to the work objectives of the missions)*
- *(If it seems appropriate and only if the person has indicated that they have been helped or could be helped, invite the person to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 the degree to which the interviewees interests have been helped, or could be helped, by a mission(s) explaining that ① would indicate “of little help/ little potential help” and that ⑤ would indicate “of much help/much potential help”. If the person is hesitant or appears to be uncomfortable with offering a rating, quickly say that it is fine if the person prefers not to give an opinion. Then quickly move on)*  
1      2      3      4      5      No opinion

**In your engagements with the mission network how would you rate the ease by which you have been able to engage with the mission network, including, as the case might arise, working collaboratively with the missions?**

- *(Firstly, let the person answer this question orally in any way they want. Look for one or two specific examples if no examples given – examples could be positive or negative)*
- *(If it seems appropriate, invite the person to rate the “ease” on a scale of 1 to 5, explaining that ① would indicate “not at all easy” and that ⑤ would indicate “very easy”. If the person is hesitant or appears to be uncomfortable with offering a rating, quickly say that it is fine if the person prefers not to give an opinion. Then move on)*  
1      2      3      4      5      No opinion
- *(If considered appropriate, ask the person to elaborate their rating)*

If not already done earlier, briefly draw attention to following as broad areas of the missions work

**Broad areas of the missions work include:**

- **Maintaining and building relations at various levels**
- **Delivering consular services**
- **Economic diplomacy and contributing to trade promotion**
- **Facilitating the work of Government Departments and state agencies, etc.**
- **Providing consular assistance**
- **Supporting the Irish community and the Irish diaspora,**

Having done this, continue with the following:



**From what you have seen and experienced in engaging with the mission network in the US, is there anything that stands out for you, perhaps a strength or a weakness, with respect to the effectiveness, or otherwise, by which the missions undertake this work?**

- *(For balance, if the interviewee focuses on strengths, then probe as to whether there are weaknesses, and vice versa)*
- *(Look for examples and probe what the counterfactual would have been had something not been done. Also, might it have happened anyway)*
- *(Probe whether technical expertise, or its lack, might be impacting on effectiveness)*
- *(Probe any evidence of collaborative working both within the network and with other Irish Government actors)*
- *(Explore possible risks in relation to the efficiency and effectiveness of the functioning of the missions both internally and externally (with the state agencies and with other arms of the Irish state))*

**Is there anything about the structuring of the diplomatic missions in the US and/or the focus of their work that you think might be changed in order to better serve the interests of Ireland, or to better serve the work of other Government Departments and agencies?**

- *(If suggestions are given, probe whether the suggestions equally apply to the embassy Washington and to the consulates)*
- *(If suggestions clearly involve more resources, probe whether something might be done to enhance effectiveness/efficiencies without involving additional resources)*

**Finally, ask the interviewee if there is anything that they would like to add with respect to Ireland's diplomatic mission network in the USA.**

## Appendix 4C: Interview Structure (Community and business sector)

### **Listening for:**

- Any evidence of the mission network adding value to the work of organisations (including state agencies) in promoting or advocating values and/or interests important to Ireland
- Any views about the focus of the missions' work and their effectiveness
- Views about efficiency
- Any views about the counterfactual – what might be the case if the missions weren't there, or if the missions didn't do certain things
- Any evidence of dead weight – are there things that would happen or would have happened anyway
- Any views related to or suggestive of collaborative working within the mission network itself and with other Irish Government state agencies or institutions

### **Areas of Enquiry:**

**As you see it, what is the primary value or benefit of Ireland's mission network in the US in relation to Ireland in broad sense?**

*(If deemed helpful to stimulate a response, drawing attention to some or all of the following might be helpful:*

- *Maintaining and building relations at various levels*
  - *Delivering consular services*
  - *Economic diplomacy and contributing to trade promotion*
  - *Facilitating the work of Government Departments and state agencies, etc.*
  - *Providing consular assistance*
  - *Supporting the Irish community and the Irish diaspora,*
- *(Let the person answer this question in any way they want. Look for specific examples/ways by which the missions are/can be of value or of benefit)*
  - *Don't spend too much time on the "broad sense" (avoid drifting into a theoretical or speculative discussion). Without any prompting it is probable that the person will move from "Ireland in the broad sense" to their specific area of interest. If they don't then ask a question such as the following:*

**Do aspects of the work of the mission network add value, or be of benefit, to your particular interests or your work, or to people who share interests such as yours?**

- *(Probe whether any "value" or "benefit" mentioned could just as easily be provided through other channels, or whether missions are considered to be uniquely positioned to provide certain supports)*
- *(Probe whether the value or benefits that are provided might be "filling a gap" that might otherwise not be filled)*

- *(Probe issues in relation to any role played by the missions around information gathering or opening doors for things to happen. Explore also whether things like “door opening” may equally apply to Consulate Generals as to the embassy Washington )*
- *(Probe if the work of the interviewee’s agency/Department might be supporting/contributing to the work objectives of the missions)*
- *(If it seems appropriate and only if the person has indicated that they have been helped or could be helped, invite the person to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 the degree to which the interviewees interests have been helped, or could be helped, by a mission(s) explaining that ① would indicate “of little help/ little potential help” and that ⑤ would indicate “of much help/much potential help”. If the person is hesitant or appears to be uncomfortable with offering a rating, quickly say that it is fine if the person prefers not to give an opinion. Then quickly move on)*

1      2      3      4      5      No opinion

**In your dealings with one of Ireland’s missions, or with Irish diplomats, how would you rate the ease by which you have been able to engage with the embassy or consulate and, as the case might be, to maintain contact?**

- *(Firstly, let the person answer this question orally in any way they want. Look for one or two specific examples if no examples given – examples could be positive or negative)*
- *(If it seems appropriate, invite the person to rate the “ease” on a scale of 1 to 5, explaining that ① would indicate “not at all easy” and that ⑤ would indicate “very easy”. If the person is hesitant or appears to be uncomfortable with offering a rating, quickly say that it is fine if the person prefers not to give an opinion. Then move on)*

1      2      3      4      5      No opinion

- *(If considered appropriate, ask the person to elaborate their rating)*

**Have your dealings with Ireland’s mission(s) influenced to any degree subsequent decision-making on your part (as an individual or as the representative of an organisation)?**

- *(Especially to be asked of interviewees coming from a business/trade/ investment background)*
- *(If, and only if, the person says that there was some influence and if it seems appropriate, invite the person to rate the degree of influence on a scale of 1 to 5, explaining that ① would indicate “influenced to a very small degree” and that ⑤ would indicate “very strongly influenced a decision”)*

1      2      3      4      5      No opinion

- *(If appropriate and opportune, ask the person to elaborate their response)*

**Where a benefit to you or your organisation may have followed from your engagement with the Ireland’s mission(s), might that benefit have transpired anyway?**

1. Probably
2. Probably not

3. Don't know
4. Not applicable

- *(If appropriate and opportune, ask the person to elaborate their response even if they chose "Don't know")*
- *(For people coming from a business/trade background, probe possible views in relation to the respective roles, if any, played by Ireland's state agencies and by the missions)*

**From what you have seen and experienced in engaging with Ireland's mission network, is there anything that stands out for you, perhaps a strength or a weakness, with respect to the effectiveness, or otherwise, of the missions**

- *(For balance, if the interviewee focuses on strengths, then probe as to whether there are weaknesses, and vice versa)*
- *Look for examples and probe what the counterfactual would have been had something not been done. Also, might it have happened anyway)*
- *(If not already mentioned earlier, for people coming from a business/trade background, probe possible views in relation to the respective roles, if any, played by Ireland's state agencies and by the missions)*
- *(For people coming from a business/trade background, listen for views as to whether technical expertise, or its lack, might be impacting on effectiveness)*
- *(Explore possible risks in relation to the efficiency and effectiveness of the functioning of the missions both in its internal functions and how it engages externally. Listen for any views with regard to the resourcing of the missions?)*

**Finally, ask the interviewee if there is anything that they would like to add with respect to Ireland's mission network in the USA.**

## Appendix 5: Potential Performance Measures

- % of organisations\* which assess missions to have made a positive contribution to their activities and the degree of that contribution
- % of organisations that assess networking activity by the mission to have contributed positively to their activities and the degree of that contribution
- % of organisations that assess connections made through the mission to have contributed positively to their activities and the degree of that contribution
- Size and influence of audience reached
  - Specific events
  - Media (traditional, social, etc.)
  - Other
- Estimation of equivalent advertising value of coverage (or estimated audience reached) by pieces attributable to mission
- Number of significant leads generated for state agencies and the result of these leads
- Measure customer service standards against an agreed statement in line with the Government wide Quality Customer Service Initiative, including processing times and results of customer satisfaction surveys

### **\*Organisation:**

- Business concern
- Community group
- Cultural group
- Network