



Integrated Country Strategy

IRELAND

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Embassy Dublin will focus our efforts on protecting and advancing U.S. interests by: 1) deepening our shared responsibility and cooperation for international stability and security; 2) promoting economic and trade policies to build back better our increasingly interconnected economies for the shared prosperity of the American and Irish peoples; and 3) increasing Irish understanding, support, and leadership on shared strategic priorities by utilizing public diplomacy tools across the Mission.

Ireland is a thriving, prosperous European country with close bilateral ties to the United States based on strong, historical bonds, close people-to-people ties, and shared values. The Mission strives to strengthen and expand this highly beneficial “two-way street” of trade, investment, and tourism flowing in both directions across the Atlantic. Ireland remains the only country that enjoys a standing annual meeting with the U.S. President, held every March around St. Patrick’s Day. In recent years, we have moved beyond a mere celebration of the relationship into an opportunity to reinforce a broad range of mutual policy interests. The United States continues to contribute to Ireland’s economic success and political stability, including through regular dialogue and a robust slate of exchanges in commerce, culture, education, and other areas. Ireland, in turn, offers an important gateway into the European Union (EU).

Ireland is becoming more aware of the need for greater political will and resources to address the challenges posed by cyber threats and malign actions from state and non-state actors. Millions of American visitors and the presence of more than 900 American companies – including leading technology, pharmaceutical, and financial services companies – make Ireland a target rich environment for those seeking to harm U.S. interests and citizens. Embassy Dublin has made protecting U.S. citizens and commercial entities our top priority. We will encourage Ireland to contribute and coordinate on information-sharing related to cyber threats and malign actions by adversarial states. Mission engagement and broader U.S. government assistance is already helping Ireland significantly increase its cyber security capacity. We will continue to work with the Irish government to increase its capability to protect its own infrastructure and vital American interests from cyber-attacks.

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Ireland places great value on multilateralism. Embassy Dublin will work with the Irish government to ensure it continues to play an influential global role on peacekeeping missions and other U.S. policy objectives. We will work closely with Ireland on the UN Security Council to strengthen the international order, promote our shared values of democracy and human rights, and to address international security challenges including climate change. Despite its historic neutrality, Ireland cooperates on key security matters, such as providing access for U.S. military aircraft at Shannon Airport. Ireland's small military could benefit from greater participation in the EU's common security and defense policy as well as increased Partnership for Peace cooperation with NATO. Though Ireland is not a NATO member, we will assist to identify areas where its assets can help share the burden of confronting global security challenges.

Ireland remains committed to an open, globally competitive, export-driven economy, fueled by massive foreign direct investment (FDI). Despite a global economic slowdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Ireland remains well-positioned to continue benefitting from FDI, especially U.S. investment. Conversely, through our SelectUSA Program, we will continue to promote increased Irish investment into the United States to strengthen the country's position as one of America's top 10 foreign investors.

Ireland's role in the EU has only grown in importance after Brexit, where it is now the only English-speaking country. We will work with Ireland to advance U.S. goals within the EU on the many issues where we share interests, including economic, financial, and digital governance. For more than a generation, the United States has committed to support the peace and reconciliation processes and devolved political institutions in Northern Ireland, and we will continue to safeguard the achievements of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreements and to support peace and stability on the island.

2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: Shared responsibility for international stability and security.

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Protect and promote the gains of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and foster robust cross-border cooperation with Northern Ireland.
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** Ireland strengthens and modernizes domestic security structures to build resiliency against cyber threats, malign influence, and transnational threats.
- **Mission Objective 1.3:** Enhance multilateral engagements and bilateral cooperation in the face of strategic competition with the People's Republic of China (PRC) and other authoritarian states.

Mission Goal 2: Promote economic and trade policies to build back better our increasingly interconnected economies for the shared prosperity of the American and Irish peoples.

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Increase U.S. exports to Ireland and Irish investment in the United States across strategic sectors to jointly strengthen economic ties for shared prosperity.
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Support Ireland's efforts to modernize and develop the necessary tools to protect its national strategic assets and infrastructure from malign foreign investment and untrustworthy vendors (e.g., foreign investment screening, etc.), which will also better protect U.S. economic equities in country and the region.
- **Mission Objective 2.3:** Partner with Ireland to amplify our shared free trade and market goals in regional and international fora, especially how to influence EU policy decision making.

- **Mission Objective 2.4:** Maintain Ireland’s participation in the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) and facilitate legitimate travel to the United States to include reinvigorating interest and participation in the J1 Summer Work and Travel and other exchange programs to increase travel to, and investment in, the United States by Irish citizens.

Mission Goal 3: Increase Irish understanding, support, and leadership on shared strategic priorities, utilizing public diplomacy tools across the Mission.

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Prioritize the use of public diplomacy tools—including media, internal and external programming, and exchanges—in all sections to encourage Irish leadership when confronting the joint challenges around diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA), climate change, and the full range of goals outlined in Goals 1 and 2.
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Build upon the deep historical and cultural ties to promote Irish leadership and collaboration with the United States and our key policy priorities, as well as develop a new generation of Irish opinion leaders who are invested in the United States.

Management Objective 1: Champion a fair and inclusive workplace that invites and nurtures diverse and equitable staffing by adopting Department of State best practices regarding DEIA initiatives that focus on building an inclusive workforce reflecting the true diversity of both the United States and Ireland.

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1 | Shared responsibility for international stability and security.

Description | This goal directly supports the first vital national interest identified in the 2021 Interim National Security Strategy to protect the security of the American people by working with likeminded countries, such as Ireland, based on shared interests and values to counter the malign actions of our adversaries and confront transnational threats. Embassy Dublin will continue to work with Ireland to promote a shared responsibility for international stability and security by protecting and promoting the gains of the Good Friday Agreement to enhance regional stability. Embassy Dublin will work with Ireland to strengthen and modernize its domestic security structures and build resiliency against cyber threats and malign actions from transnational threats and strengthen Ireland's security cooperation in Europe in partnership with the EU and NATO and internationally through UN peacekeeping operations. Finally, Embassy Dublin will work with Ireland to counter the efforts of the PRC and other authoritarian states to challenge a stable and open international system.

Objective 1.1 | Protect and promote the gains of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and foster robust cross-border cooperation with Northern Ireland.

- **Objective 1.1 Justification** | The United States played a key role in helping to broker the historic Belfast/Good Friday Agreement in 1998 that ended nearly three decades of intercommunal violence in Northern Ireland. The United States has a strong interest in continuing its role as an honest broker of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement to promote peace and stability on the island of Ireland and in the region.
- **Objective 1.1 Linkages** | A peaceful and stable Northern Ireland is Ireland's highest national security interest. Joint efforts to protect and promote the gains of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement is the cornerstone of the U.S.-Irish relationship that will allow us to work with Ireland to promote peace and security in the wider region and in Europe.

- **Objective 1.1 Risks** | The United States must ensure that it continues to act in a fair and balanced manner to protect its honest broker status in its dealings with the two traditions and in its interactions with the Irish and UK governments.

Objective 1.2 | Ireland strengthens and modernizes domestic security structures to build resiliency against cyber threats, malign influence, and transnational threats.

- **Objective 1.2 Justification** | The U.S. top national security priority is the protection of the American public which is best achieved by working in partnership with likeminded countries such as Ireland. Ireland strengthening its domestic security structures will enhance the security of the U.S. by helping to counter common threats.
- **Objective 1.2 Linkages** | A stronger and more capable Ireland able to defend itself against these threats will help keep American companies based in Ireland safer and will result in Ireland requiring less security assistance from the United States.
- **Objective 1.2 Risks** | Ireland's history of military neutrality and its public's opposition to close ties with NATO risks causing Ireland to continue to underinvest in its security infrastructure, which keeps Ireland vulnerable to hostile states and transnational crime.

Objective 1.3 | Enhance multilateral engagements and bilateral cooperation in the face of strategic competition with the PRC and other authoritarian states.

- **Objective 1.3 Justification** | Countering Russian, PRC, and other authoritarian states malign influence in the region and in Ireland will enhance the security of the American public.
- **Objective 1.3 Linkages** | Ireland is an active member of multinational institutions and strong advocate for human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. Ireland taking public stances against actions by authoritarian states that seek to undermine the rules-based international order will strengthen U.S. security.
- **Objective 1.3 Risks** | The United States needs to frame its push for cooperation in terms of protecting and advancing international law and norms and not as an extension of its bilateral interests.

Mission Goal 2 | Promote economic and trade policies to build back better our increasingly interconnected economies for the shared prosperity of the American and Irish peoples.

Description | This goal directly supports the second vital national interest identified in the 2021 Interim National Security Strategy to expand economic prosperity and opportunity so that U.S. trade and economic policies benefit all Americans by expanding the U.S. middle class. The United States continues to be Ireland's largest bilateral trading partner and U.S. companies play a vital role in Ireland's economy. This beneficial economic and commercial relationship continues to be based upon shared values, including support for free market and trade principles founded on transparency, the rule-of-law, and level playing fields.

Objective 2.1 | Increase U.S. exports to Ireland and Irish investment in the United States across strategic sectors to jointly strengthen economic ties for shared prosperity.

- **Objective 2.1 Justification** | This goal directly supports the second vital national interest identified in the 2021 Interim National Security Strategy to “expand economic prosperity and opportunity.”
- **Objective 2.1 Linkages** | More Irish investment in the United States, increased U.S. exports to Ireland, and the use of Ireland as an entry point for U.S. companies (to sell their products and services across the EU market and beyond) will create and support more U.S. jobs in line with the Administration's Build Back Better priorities.
- **Objective 2.1 Risks** | The role and place the United States currently holds in Ireland's economy may be challenged by other foreign actors expanding their economic footprint and influence in country, especially if they are values and policies that run counter to U.S. goals and equities. Also, U.S. companies may be less eager to continue investing in Ireland if the country does not keep pace modernizing its national and strategic infrastructure, security capabilities, and regulatory agencies.

Objective 2.2 | Support Ireland's efforts to modernize and develop the necessary tools to protect its national strategic assets and infrastructure from malign foreign investment and

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untrustworthy vendors (e.g., foreign investment screening, etc.), which will also better protect U.S. economic equities in country and the region.

- **Objective 2.2 Justification** | The U.S. economy is increasingly interlinked with the Irish economy, especially with the largest and leading U.S. technology companies having their European and international headquarters. As a result, Irish regulators play an outsized role in transatlantic digital economy issues like data protection.
- **Objective 2.2 Linkages** | Ireland's growing economic importance, lack of a foreign investment screening mechanism (ISM) legislation, and underdeveloped cyber and other security capabilities make it a permissive and target rich environment for malign actors.
- **Objective 2.2 Risks** | Dealing with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may continue to use up the government's bandwidth, thereby delaying progress in passing the necessary legislation.

Objective 2.3 | Partner with Ireland to amplify our shared free trade and market goals in regional and international fora, especially how to influence EU policy decision making.

- **Objective 2.3 Justification** | With the United Kingdom no longer in the European Union (EU), Ireland has become a more important interlocutor for the United States, especially as it is the only remaining English-speaking country with a common-law background like the United States.
- **Objective 2.3 Linkages** | Ireland has strong transatlantic and EU *bona fides*, making it a useful bridge for U.S.-EU policy discussions. Ireland is considered by the EU and its member states as a staunch EU supporter while also being known for sharing many U.S. values such as its pro-free market and free trade policy principles. On matters of top-tier importance (i.e., its export driven and FDI attracting economic model), Ireland has shown its ability to take difficult public policy positions.
- **Objective 2.3 Risks** | Ireland has historically been reluctant to take the lead in internal EU policy debates, especially when it means being in opposition to large members like France or Germany. Ireland has also been reluctant to visibly deviate from or go beyond

EU consensus, especially regarding the PRC and other large countries where Ireland has growing economic equities.

Objective 2.4 | Maintain Ireland's participation in the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) and facilitate legitimate travel to the United States to include reinvigorating interest and participation in the J1 Summer Work and Travel and other exchange programs to increase travel to, and investment in, the United States by Irish citizens.

- **Objective 2.4 Justification** | Travel to the United States by Irish under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) and through J1 BridgeUSA exchange programs is vital to maintaining and expanding Irish foreign direct investment in the United States and promoting the United States by affording foreign students and exchange visitors from Ireland the opportunity to study, live and work in the United States.
- **Objective 2.4 Linkages** | Ireland the United States enjoy strong economic and cultural ties with the United States remaining a destination of choice for Irish FDI, students, and visitors.
- **Objective 2.4 Risks** | The Government of Ireland is not fully compliant with HSPD-6 as required by the Department of Homeland Security for VWP participating countries, and interest in J1 BridgeUSA Programs has waned as the COVID-19 pandemic prevented the Embassy from facilitating J1 programs in 2020 and 2021.

Mission Goal 3 | Increase Irish understanding, support, and leadership on shared strategic priorities, utilizing public diplomacy tools across the Mission.

Description | Post will leverage the media, American cultural organizations and individuals, and opportunities around travel to and from the United States to expand the people-to-people bonds to encourage Irish leadership when confronting joint strategic challenges. Our approach will include a specific focus on engaging with and advocating for American interests and values within the Irish youth population and emerging leaders, recognizing that Ireland boasts the largest per capita youth demographic in the EU, including a growing and increasingly multicultural immigrant population.

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Objective 3.1 | Prioritize the use of public diplomacy tools—including media, internal and external programming, and exchanges—in all sections to encourage Irish leadership when confronting the joint challenges around DEIA, climate change, and the full range of goals outlined in Goals 1 and 2.

- **Objective 3.1 Justification** | While Ireland has emerged as a wealthy, developed nation, it often remains reluctant to demonstrate leadership when confronting joint strategic challenges. Post will continue to work to encourage Irish leaders to play a more constructive roles internationally by deploying a wide range of public diplomacy tools.
- **Objective 3.1 Linkages** | Many Irish have experience with the United States, including studying or participating in various exchange programs. These alumni are key actors, able to engage on areas of mutual strategic importance.
- **Objective 3.1 Risks** | Young Irish, especially recent immigrants to Ireland, may have limited experience with or exposure to the United States and its values. This phenomenon may be exacerbated by the limited number of people-to-people exchanges that took place during the pandemic.

Objective 3.2 | Build upon the deep historical and cultural ties to promote Irish leadership and collaboration with the United States and our key policy priorities, as well as develop a new generation of Irish opinion leaders who are invested in the United States.

- **Objective 3.2 Justification** | Post will continue to encourage Irish leadership to collaborate increasingly with the United States on key policy priorities. As immigration to Ireland has increased dramatically over the past 20 years, changing Irish demographics, engaging with new generations is of increasing importance.
- **Objective 3.2 Linkages** | Post has developed a broad range of diplomatic and defense ties, existing multilateral partnerships, public affairs programming, and consular tools to help achieve this objective.
- **Objective 3.2 Risks** | New generations of Irish citizens may not resonate with the United States and its culture, as may have been the case for previous generations.

4. Management Objective

Management Objective 1 | Champion a fair and inclusive workplace that invites and nurtures diverse and equitable staffing by adopting Department of State best practices regarding DEIA initiatives that focus on building an inclusive workforce reflecting the true diversity of both the United States and Ireland.

- **Objective 1 Justification** | DEIA initiatives are vitally important to the Mission and achieving USG goals. The Irish workforce is highly homogenous, with over 92 percent of the population from a white ethnic or cultural background. The USG workforce, while making strides in diversity, also suffers from a lack of diverse viewpoints. Without a fully diverse staff providing a wide range of experience and viewpoints, the Mission is unable to achieve the full potential of our impact and is at a competitive disadvantage in an era of strategic competition. Hiring practices that promote diversity attract more candidates and strengthen innovation, and workplace policies that support inclusion and accessibility and ensure full participation is possible and welcomed.
- **Objective 1 Linkages** | Ireland's position as the only English-speaking country in the EU provides an opportunity for diverse candidates to join the Irish workforce and bring their unique skill sets and viewpoints to the Mission in Locally Employed (LE) Staff roles. Within the USDH hiring process, modeling best practices from the EUR Bureau as well as proactively identifying and eliminating unconscious bias in hiring managers will better identify qualified candidates from a more diverse pool.
- **Objective 1 Risks** | The lack of diverse qualified candidates in Ireland will provide challenges in achieving staffing goals in LE Staff hiring. Actively seeking diverse candidates without educating current LE Staff on the benefits of diversity could lead to misunderstandings about the benefits of working within a diverse and inclusive workforce.