



Germany – Ireland
Joint Plan of Action for Enhanced Bilateral and EU Cooperation
Third Edition – 13 June 2024

I. Principles

Ireland and Germany share many common values and goals, hence increased cooperation is in both our national and our common European interest.

Ireland and Germany have in recent years reinvigorated bilateral relations and will continue to make best use of the existing potential for further strengthening the ties of friendship. As strongly like-minded EU partners, our joint engagement will be more vital than ever in promoting the intertwined processes of enlargement and reform. We will continue to identify even more new opportunities for close co-operation. Our relationship is not limited by our differences in population size and geographical location within the European Union: To the contrary, a close exchange on EU and international affairs can prove particularly relevant against this background.

In the almost six years since the publication of the first version of this plan in November 2018 and the more than three years since the adoption of the second iteration in February 2021, our engagement on bilateral and EU policy issues has notably increased. This provides a strong foundation for the further development of our joint efforts.

Significant potential remains in our relationship while the challenges facing both our countries have multiplied since 2021, in particular the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. Our work continues to be guided by shared principles, which remain unchanged.

1. Shaping the future of the EU

Every day and on almost every subject, Germany and Ireland work well together within the European Union that we have both helped to build. It is vital to us both that we improve and strengthen the functioning of our Union. We are committed to driving EU policies towards the best outcome for the citizens of the Union and to shaping a prosperous and secure Europe. Building on the Granada Declaration we are engaged to take necessary steps to move ahead with the parallel processes of enlargement and reform in view of, inter alia, strengthening the EU's capacity to act and demonstrate leadership in implementing a net zero economy. Our common goal under the Treaties is to continue our paths towards a resilient and sovereign Europe as a stronghold of the rules-based international order, as a security provider for its citizens and as an economic power which upholds the level playing field, both internally and globally. To that end, unity of the EU Member States is of paramount importance. We acknowledge the challenges posed by the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union and reiterate the importance of EU27 unity and acting in our common European interest.

2. Acting like-minded in the world

Ireland and Germany are both committed to a rules-based international system and strong and effective multilateralism, with the United Nations and the United Nations Charter at its core. We support and promote united EU action and policies abroad. We

consider the United Nations to be the key body for legitimate global action. Together, we believe in upholding human rights, open societies, the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the protection of the vulnerable. We share a responsibility to combat climate change and to protect the environment and to address the impact it is having both locally and globally and in particular in the least developed countries in the world who are suffering disproportionately. In our cooperation on foreign and security policy issues, we will continue to engage with each other in a comprehensive and structured basis, underpinned by the guiding principles of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy of advancement of democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law.

3. Strengthening economic ties

We understand and value the central importance of both the Single Market and rules-based international trade to our economic prosperity. Since the publication of the first version of this plan in 2018, our bilateral trade volume has increased year by year. Germany is the largest market for Irish goods exports in the European Union. We will promote the further deepening of our economic ties, the implementation of an ambitious EU trade agenda based on openness, to foster competitiveness, diversification, resilience and sustainability, the further development of the European Green Deal, and the strengthening as well as reform of the multilateral rules-based trading system with the WTO at its core.

4. Fostering people to people links

The future of the European Union is most powerfully shaped by involving citizens throughout the continent – both near and more distant neighbours. Our citizens already travel between Germany and Ireland in both directions to holiday, study, and work, invest, live and learn from one another, including each other's languages. We want to see these people-to-people contacts further intensified. We aim to promote opportunities for exchange at all levels in our societies, with a particular focus on young people as well as on young politicians.

5. Seizing opportunities

Germany and Ireland are exceptionally strong partners in a variety of fields, covering science, research and innovation, as well as arts and humanities. Together we are committed to maintain the highest level of ambition and wish to deepen our numerous exchanges wherever possible.

II. Platforms

Germany and Ireland recognize that increased dialogue at various levels is an essential ingredient for tangibly increasing Irish-German cooperation. We are committed to continuing the intense bilateral political engagement that we have achieved to date.

We intend to maintain the following formats, which were established under the original plan:

- Consultations between State Secretaries and Secretaries General of the ministries participating in the Joint Plan of Action will continue to be held approximately every eighteen months, using flexible formats, based on the ministries' current agenda and their competences.
- The Ireland – Germany Joint Vision Forum, a partnership between the German Federal Foreign Office, the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs, the Berlin-based Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) and the Dublin-based Institute for International and European Affairs (IIEA), will be maintained as an annual meeting format alternating between Dublin and Berlin.
- Consultations between Political Directors, EU Directors General, UN Directors General and Policy Planning Units in the Federal Foreign Office and at the Department of Foreign Affairs will be maintained at regular intervals.
- Cross-departmental consultations at senior official level (Heads and Deputy Heads of Units) on current agenda issues will be continued regularly.

III. Projects

Increased bilateral cooperation translates into concrete projects in specific fields. To this end the following action points have been agreed for the period ahead. This work will be kept under active review, including at the upcoming sessions of the State Secretary / Secretary General Consultations and further projects will be added over time.

A report on the implementation of projects to date has been prepared in advance of consultations at State-Secretary / Secretary-General level. A number of continuing projects which proved successful between 2018 and 2024 are being maintained in this updated version of the Joint Plan of Action.

1. Foreign, EU and security policy cooperation

a) Increase foreign policy cooperation and highlight shared values

Support for Ukraine

- In response to the unjustified Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, Ireland and Germany will continue to cooperate, together with our EU partners, to support Ukraine as long as it takes, and will continue to exchange on our responses including humanitarian, political, security, financial, refugee, reconstruction supports as well assistance for Ukraine's EU perspective and associated reform programme.

Strengthening effective multilateralism and the United Nations

- We will use our partnership to strengthen effective multilateralism and multilateral institutions, and cooperate substantively for the preservation and further development of the rules-based multilateral order and international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We are convinced that effective multilateralism needs a resilient international system with a strong United Nations at its core, as well as concrete and effective implementation of joint decisions. We affirm our commitment to work towards a successful Summit of the Future and a concise and actionable Pact for the Future.
- The UN and the EU are natural partners, and we attach great importance to this partnership. We will continue to support the EU's cooperation with the UN, including in the field of peace and security. We support UN Peacekeeping as a means to promote peace and stability in crisis contexts.
- Recognising the importance of the protection and promotion of Human Rights as a pillar of the UN, Ireland and Germany, alongside likeminded partners, will continue to support all efforts towards ensuring that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights remains adequately resourced.

Development Cooperation including Global Gateway

- Ireland and Germany will strengthen collaboration on Team Europe, specifically on Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs) in cases where both countries are actively involved and on Team Europe approaches to fragile contexts.
- We will work together to highlight that human development and human capital is sufficiently reflected in the quality criteria of the Global Gateway, as well as supporting greater participation by the private sector in partner countries and in the EU. We will also support efforts to make Global Gateway work in Least Developed Countries and explore possibilities for fragile contexts. It is important that this is done in the knowledge that fragile contexts often require smaller and more specific initiatives, including approaches of capacity and resilience building. How Global Gateway investments can complement Official Development Assistance in these environments requires further examination and consideration.
- Ireland and Germany will continue to collaborate with other like-minded partners to shape a more effective and ambitious EU-Africa partnership, and to actively support the African Union's role in promoting peace and security.

b) Coordinate EU policy

EU Council Presidency

- Drawing on Germany's successful European Union Council Presidency in 2020, Ireland and Germany will arrange consultations at Director-level ahead of Ireland's EU Council Presidency in 2026 to exchange on Presidency matters, including policy priorities and operational issues. As noted above, Germany will second an official to Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs ahead of and for the duration of Ireland's Council Presidency.

EU - UK

- Germany and Ireland will continue to coordinate and cooperate on matters related to EU-UK relations, including through bilateral and informal mechanisms of cooperation.

Enlargement and Reform

- As strong supporters of EU enlargement, on the basis of accession states meeting the conditions for EU membership, Germany and Ireland will arrange director-level consultations to discuss further cooperation on supporting the EU enlargement process, as well as on the parallel internal EU reform process, in accordance with the Granada Declaration. Maintain regular exchanges in various working-level formats on potential reforms to working processes of the EU.
- In particular, we will continue to cooperate on how the EU can improve the effectiveness of its CFSP, including through discussions at the Group of Friends on improving decision-making in CFSP, where Ireland is an observer.

Promotion of EU values to the wider public

- In coordination with partner organisations, European Movement Ireland and the Europäische Bewegung Deutschland, establish an exchange on innovative measures to promote European values, and increase knowledge and understanding of the EU to the public.

Migration

- Drawing on both Ireland and Germany's experiences in the field of migration, and taking account of the lead role of our Justice and Interior Ministeries, conduct regular discussions of this issue at political and senior official level, including exchange of information and discussion of best practices.

c) Deepen UN Peacekeeping Cooperation and EU CSDP Cooperation

UN Peacekeeping Training Cooperation

- Ireland and Germany will explore increasing their cooperation and / or establishing exchange programmes between their respective UN training centres through consultations or workshops.
- Consultations will be held on possible cooperation on joint training efforts (e.g. pre-deployment training) for UN peacekeeping operations.

UN Peacekeeping Operation Cooperation

- Ireland and Germany will explore the potential for greater information sharing in relation to UN Peacekeeping.
- Exchanges will be held on lessons learned from Irish-German cooperation in MINUSMA.
- Consultations will be arranged on possible joint deployments in UN Missions.

Deepen cooperation between Ministries

- Develop ideas and identify potential fields for future cooperation between the Irish and German Ministries for Defence fully respecting Ireland's policy of military neutrality.
- Establish contacts and information exchange between Irish and German interlocutors on security related issues e.g. national security strategies, critical infrastructure, dealing with disinformation.
- Continue Irish-German cooperation in the EU Battlegroup concept.
- Continue Irish-German cooperation to support Ukraine together with other EU partners in response to Russia's unprovoked war of aggression via EUMAM Ukraine and other CSDP initiatives as relevant.

Highlighting Shared Values in relation to Women, Peace and Security

- Building on existing cooperation between the Irish and German Ministries and Permanent Missions to the UN in New York, continue to seek joint opportunities to highlight the importance of women's full, equal and meaningful participation in all aspects of UN activity.

Civilian CSDP cooperation

- Deepen cooperation with the European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management (CoE) in Berlin, of which Ireland is a founder member. Share best practice on enhancing capabilities to strengthen civilian crisis management, and actively participate in the NIP-Clusters facilitated by the CoE to the civilian CSDP compact, building on the successful joint event held in Dublin in 2019.

d) Cooperation between foreign ministries

Exchange diplomats

- Based on the positive experiences of this practice, the Federal Foreign Office and the Department of Foreign Affairs agree to continue the mutual exchange of diplomats to their respective ministries.

ICT and ICT Security

- The ICT teams of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Federal Foreign Office will consult in the area of ICT and ICT Security utilising expertise on both sides to explore potential joint ventures.

Greening Foreign Ministries

- Against the backdrop of our shared commitment to Climate Action, the Federal Foreign Office and the Department of Foreign Affairs are building on the positive exchange between both sides in early 2024, a further exchange will be held on a more detailed level in 2024.

2. Climate and Energy Policy Cooperation

a) Cooperate on Climate Policy Issues

Climate and Security

- Tackling climate related fragility and security risks is an increasingly important agenda item across a number of multilateral fora, including the EU and UN. Both Ireland and Germany as recent members of the UN Security Council have made significant contributions to advancing this agenda. Ireland and Germany will continue to strongly support the UN Climate Security Mechanism, and work closely together through the Group of Friends for Climate and Security in the United Nations, the Climate for Peace initiative and through the Group of Friends for Ambitious EU Climate Diplomacy. Accordingly, Ireland and Germany will strengthen their engagement on climate and security and ensure sustained knowledge exchange.

Loss and Damage

- Ireland and Germany have prioritised Loss and Damage and worked very closely together in negotiations to establish a fund. This work continues as both Ireland and Germany have a seat on the Board of the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage.

Climate finance, New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG)

- Strengthen cooperation and exchange on climate finance and the new climate goal NCQG to be negotiated at COP29. Develop a common narrative and a strong EU position on elements of the goal as well as on a joint outreach strategy that facilitates strategic alliances with progressive partners outside the EU.

Cooperation on Climate Policy Issues

- Exchange on policy strategies and best practice examples regarding the implementation of the Fit-for-55 program. Exchange on the development of an ambitious EU climate target for 2040 as well as initiatives to ensure a just transition.

b) Cooperation on Energy Policy Issues

Green Hydrogen

- Acknowledging that hydrogen and its derivatives will play an essential role in meeting global energy and decarbonisation needs, Ireland and Germany intend to deepen their cooperation in the field of hydrogen from renewable sources. This cooperation will accelerate the expansion of the hydrogen economy in Ireland and Germany, support the development of hydrogen markets, advance research and innovation, and further promote trade and investment opportunities in hydrogen and related industries.
- Deliver on the aims set out in the Joint Declaration of Intent on cooperation in the field of green hydrogen between the Irish Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications and the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research.

International and Offshore Energy

- Continue to exchange in the North Seas Energy Cooperation on facilitating the cost-effective deployment of offshore wind and promoting interconnection between the countries in the region, and strengthen cooperation in research and innovation in different fields of energy technology.
- The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications of Ireland and the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action of Germany will explore the concept of conducting a joint feasibility study for the transmission of energy options between the two countries, with a particular focus on the long-term potential of floating wind and green hydrogen, in line with the recommendations of Ireland's Offshore Renewable Energy Future Framework Policy Statement.
- The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications of Ireland and the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action of Germany are dedicated to promoting collaboration and coordination to advance marine spatial

planning for offshore renewable energy in national and European/NSEC seas including through the practice of collaborative knowledge sharing on practices and data relevant to offshore renewable energy development.

Grid Infrastructure

- Building upon the exchange focussing on the integration of high levels of renewables and on offshore wind development between Irish and German Transmission System Operators in 2023, an exchange will be held on modelling and scenario planning for highly decarbonised energy systems up to 2060.

3. Joint engagement regarding EU policy issues of common interest

a) Cooperate on Financial Policy Issues

Banking Policy development

- Germany and Ireland will exchange their considerations and cooperate on
 - o the proposal for a regulation to establish a digital euro;
 - o the proposal for a regulation on the legal tender of euro cash also with a view to measures to ensure sufficient and effective access to cash;
 - o and on the Banking Union in accordance with the agreed sequence.

Financial Literacy

- Germany and Ireland will exchange their considerations and cooperate on the establishment of national strategies to promote financial literacy.

Protecting the Single Market

- We will share our views, experiences and research on protecting fair competition for enterprises across all EU Member States, in recognition of the Single Market's importance for the success of the Union, and with a view to ensuring its integrity is protected well into the future whilst we strive to reach our climate objectives, transition to a more digital economy, and enhance the EU's global competitiveness.

Insurance Markets

- Germany and Ireland will engage on developments, and research findings in their respective insurance markets, including in the context of potential protection gaps such as climate and cyber-security.
- Germany and Ireland will also discuss lessons learned from the impact of EU level developments and domestic reforms on increasing insurance affordability, competition and availability.

EU budget

- Ireland and Germany will cooperate at senior official level on the topic of the post 2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), the negotiation of which is expected

to commence in 2025 and continue into the Irish Council Presidency in the second half of 2026.

b) Cooperate on Agricultural Policy Issues

Research cooperation

- Complete the MEDI-Cow research project started under the second iteration of the JPOA, and ensure dissemination of outcomes to relevant stakeholders.
- Explore the potential to establish a student/post-doc exchange in the area of agro-ecology.
- Continue to highlight and, where relevant, strengthen collaborative research in Europe between German and Irish institutions via relevant mechanisms, e.g. the co-funded partnerships in Horizon Europe and instruments such as Knowledge Hubs (JPI FACCE).

Plant health

- Cooperation in the field of plant health, including:
 - investigating the potential for cooperation in the area of plant health research and diagnostic method development
 - sharing learnings from simulation exercises on contingency plans for priority pests
 - cooperation on forest plant health

Horticulture

- Explore the potential for cooperation on opportunities for development of the horticulture sector, in particular opportunities for plant based ingredients for human consumption.
- Cooperation in relation to the exploration of options to reduce peat use in horticulture.

Peatlands

- Cooperation in the field of peatlands/paludiculture, including sharing latest developments and research findings.

Animal Welfare

- Cooperation between German and Irish officials in the area of animal welfare.

Bioenergy

- Explore the potential for cooperation in the area of bioenergy, including investigating whether research cooperation is possible in the area.

Organic Farming

- Cooperation in relation to organic farming, including investigating whether joint research would be possible in this area.

EU Border Controls

- Cooperation in the area of EU Border Controls, including mutual learning for staff at Border Control Posts.

c) Cooperate on Economic Policy Issues

- The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment of Ireland and the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action of Germany are dedicated to promoting an industry-driven cooperation in the development of offshore renewable energy supply chains through bilateral and European Union/North Seas Energy Cooperation collaboration and commit to pursuing partnership opportunities in this area as well as continuing to exchange on best practices and other knowledge sharing in this important sector.
- The coordination of efforts to build resilient semiconductor supply chains remains crucial to the secure supply of semiconductors, which are indispensable inputs to an ever-growing range of key industry sectors. The following actions are proposed for the third iteration of the JPoA:
 - o Promote opportunities for dialogue between interested stakeholders, enterprises and organisations, with a view to identifying potential opportunities for collaboration and developing and strengthening European capacity and capability in the sector.
 - o Develop ideas and identify potential fields for cooperation within the semiconductor sector between the Irish and German Ministries and their respective agencies.

Women in Business

- Exchange on policy strategies and best practice initiatives aimed at increasing the participation of women founding, leading and growing business as well as increasing gender-balanced representation in senior levels of business.

4. People-to-people, education and research links

a) Deepen German – Irish political and parliamentary links

- We consider the exchange of views between citizens' elected representatives to be a crucial part of our intensified bilateral relations. We will build on the visit of the Bundestag European Affairs Committee in 2023 to Ireland and the visit of members of the German Friendship Group in the Oireachtas to Berlin in 2022. We welcome the increased number of visits by official representatives of the German federal states to

Ireland and efforts will be maintained to ensure a regular pattern to these visits as well as visits in both directions by other parliamentary committees and groups.

- A cross-party visit by young Irish politicians to Berlin in 2018 and 2023 was very impactful. Opportunities for increased cooperation between the youth wings of political parties will continue to be explored during the next visits.
- Visits by Bundestag political advisers to Dublin in 2019 and in 2022 were very successful. The possibility of an exchange involving parliamentary officials of the Oireachtas, the Bundestag and federal state parliaments will be further explored.

b) Deepen people-to-people and educational exchanges between Ireland and Germany

- A “travelling” guest professorship in Irish Studies was established for the 2021/2022 academic year at the University of Wuppertal and continued in 2022/2023 at the University of Tübingen and at the University of Würzburg in 2023/2024. Planning is underway for a fourth iteration at the University of Saarland in 2024/2025.
- The Embassy in Berlin has initiated a programme to engage interdisciplinary artistic collaborations in partnership with arts universities in Ireland and Germany, with the artistic collaborations projects being exhibited by the Embassy in partnership with a suitable festival. In its second year, the Goethe Institute of Dublin has joined as partner, and will further exhibit the artworks in Ireland in the following season.

c) Highlight and strengthen research links

- We will continue to promote the strong and increasing cooperation between Irish and German research institutions.
- Based on the Joint Declaration of Intent signed on 31 May 2023 between the BMBF and DECC both sides aim to establish and fund joint pilot research projects related to a potential Green Hydrogen cross-border value chain in Ireland and Germany.

d) Promote the German language in Ireland

- In order to underpin the efforts to further promote and develop the German language in Ireland, the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) supports six German as Foreign Language Lectureships (“Lektorat”) at Irish Universities (Dublin City University, University College Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, University College Cork, University College Galway, University of Limerick). To support this positive development, the DAAD established an additional lectureship at the University of Maynooth in autumn 2019.
- A new German language network within the Irish civil service has been established under the co-sponsorship of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the German Embassy in Dublin and as part of the Joint Plan. This network will be maintained and further developed.

- The Embassy in Dublin and Goethe Institut Dublin remain committed to promoting the teaching of German and PASCH, the worldwide network of excellent schools with German classes.
- The Embassy in Dublin, the Goethe Institute Ireland and the German-Irish Chamber of Commerce will continue to promote the learning of German in the context of business, enterprise and the job market.
- Both sides will work together to enhance the implementation of Languages Connect – Ireland’s Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026 with respect to the German language in particular, as outlined in the review on German-Irish relations prepared by the Department of Foreign Affairs. This remains a key area of focus for the period ahead.