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AMBASSADE
DE FRANCE
EN IRLANDE

*Liberté
Égalité
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France – Ireland Joint Plan of Action *Progress Report*

October 2022



Introduction

That Ireland and France have a close partnership is not new. Our proximity and our affinity has shaped our history, inspired our artists, and facilitated countless connections between our citizens – one million of whom travel in both directions every year. For decades, no sporting rivalry has been keener nor more friendly.

What is new, however, is an ever closer partnership in tackling some of the critical challenges that now face our two countries and our citizens – whether bilaterally, as active members of the European Union or members of the United Nations Security Council.

The Joint Plan of Action was signed during President Emmanuel Macron’s official visit to Ireland in August 2021 to shape and guide this partnership in areas such as energy and sustainability, trade and the digital economy, education and research, and languages and culture. It embraces work across business and civil society, universities and cultural organisations, national, regional and local.

This progress report sets out some of the results to date. We believe those results speak for themselves.

We are responding to the current energy crisis by supporting greater energy market integration, where work on the Celtic Interconnector is advancing and, once on stream, will boost the development of renewable energy supplies and enhance security of supply in both countries.

Our direct maritime links have more than trebled in 18 months, offering new and expanded routes for tourism, trade and greater regional engagement in France and Ireland.

New strategic and research partnerships are allowing our universities to work more closely together and our students to benefit from exchange arrangements.

This report also highlights the work of our teams and wider actors in building links, making our towns and cities more sustainable and addressing shared challenges in our agricultural sectors. Cooperation is also developing between various departments of the civil service (police, customs, veterinary, etc.).

Since President Macron’s visit one year ago, there have been over 30 high level Irish government visits to France, many facilitated by the French Presidency of the European Union. French Ministers and representatives of French regions and cities have visited Ireland. This has helped strengthen existing work streams and build new ones.

We are not complacent about the work that lies ahead of us. Just as the challenges facing our citizens have grown in scale and complexity since this plan was agreed, the response of our Governments has had to keep pace.

Ambassador Niall Burgess

Ambassador Vincent Guérend



Sustainability

The first year of the Plan saw considerable progress to advance a shared key priority, greater sustainability. Ireland and France's flagship renewable energy project, the Celtic Interconnector passed through the planning process in both countries and is scheduled to be operational in 2026. The Interconnector will provide a direct undersea link connecting the electricity grids of Ireland and France, allowing the exchange of electricity and furthering EU energy market integration, security of supply and the development of a more sustainable electricity mix in Ireland and France.

Implementation of the Plan is also supporting increased collaboration between Irish and French towns to be more sustainable. The President of France Ville Durable and Mayor of Dunkirk visited Ireland in June. Sustainable development is one of the key goals of a newly announced twinning between the towns of Dunkirk and Rosslare.

Year 1 progress

- In February 2022, the Taoiseach and French President reiterated their commitment to ocean preservation and protection at the One Ocean Summit in Brest. The Summit also afforded the leaders an opportunity to highlight the Celtic Interconnector project.
- The Celtic Interconnector, a joint project between Eirgrid and Réseau de Transport d'Électricité (RTE) advanced steadily, with planning permission granted in both jurisdictions.
- The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), and French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME) signed a Memorandum of Understanding in June 2022, paving the way for enhanced cooperation.
- The President of France Ville Durable visited Ireland (Dublin, Limerick and Rosslare), under the theme of smart cities in June 2022.
- Attendance of French Director of Energy and Climate (Ministry of Ecological Transition) to the North Seas Energy Cooperation Summit in Dublin in September, to deepen cooperation in the development of a regional offshore electricity grid.

Upcoming

- Seminars and workshops on the application of the EU regulatory framework on marine planning and grid integration in October 2022, including further progress to come on the Celtic Interconnector by Eirgrid and RTE.
- Delegation of the MEDEF, France's main business association, should visit Ireland to encourage a dialogue on climate action and sustainable city management to contribute to the objectives of the Paris Agreement and the EU Green Deal.

Agriculture

France and Ireland traditionally enjoy strong cooperation in agricultural affairs. Today the two countries work to address sustainability, productivity and resilience in the sector. The last year has seen regular exchanges at technical level. For example, the G7 group of exporting countries (which includes Ireland and France) facilitates regular dialogue between the EU Trade Divisions of both departments of agriculture. There is growing interest among universities to promote exchanges between young farmers and agrifood students. In December 2021, a French mission to Ireland sought to advance these links.

Year 1 progress:

- French mission to Ireland in December 2021 to promote exchanges between young farmers and agrifood students.
- Irish and French fisheries ministers met in Paris, in April 2022.
- Irish Farmers Association (IFA) visited their French equivalent Fédération nationale des syndicats d'exploitants agricoles (FNSEA) and French farms in June 2022.
- A delegation of French farmers visited Ireland in June 2022 for a fact-finding and benchmarking mission
- Border control staff exchange procedure agreed between chief veterinary officers and signed in April 2022. First visit of Irish officers to Calais, June 2022.
- Technical meetings between departments on drafting national strategic plans implementing the new EU Common Agriculture Policy.
- Embassy of Ireland programme to support equine sector links during Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe was held at Embassy in September 2022

Upcoming:

- Agricultural trade mission to France in October 2022.
- Irish Agri-food trade delegations to participate in Space, Sommet de l'Élevage and SIAL, September and October 2022.
- Irish Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine to visit Paris in November 2022 for multilateral and bilateral programme.
- Exchanges between young farmers, agrifood students and teachers to be continued.
- Border control staff exchanges to be continued: visit of French officers to Dublin Port in November 2022 (tbc).



Agriculture

French Ambassador Vincent Guérend meets with Elodie Morin-Rager (Director, Business France Ireland), Michael Murphy (CEO, Bord Bia) and Julie Poirot, (Agriculture Counsellor, Embassy of France UK) at the 2022 National Ploughing Championships in Co. Laois

Credit: Embassy of France, Dublin

Economy and Trade

Ireland and France enjoy considerable and growing trade within the Single Market. The Action Plan reinforces and strengthens these trading links. Over the last year, we have seen a further increase in the number of direct maritime links between the two countries. The opening of new Irish diplomatic missions in Brittany and Auvergne-Rhone Alpes will support the further development of business relationships. The return of in-person events has allowed for renewed trade promotion events and missions in Ireland and France.

Year 1 Progress:

- Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment undertook a trade mission to France (Marseille, Avignon and Paris) in February 2022.
- Ireland expanded its diplomatic footprint in France, appointing a new Honorary Consul in Roscoff to support partnerships in Brittany and opened its Consulate General in Lyon.
- Opening of Ireland's Honorary Consulate in Brittany in September 2022 with the inauguration attended by the Irish Naval Service and Minister of State at the Department of Justice and Equality with responsibility for Law Reform.
- Regional visits by Ambassador Burgess with a trade focus, including to Brittany and Normandy, maximised opportunities presented by new direct maritime links for business, trade and tourism.
- Embassy of Ireland networking reception in Paris for the Franco-Irish business community with Bord Bia, Tourism Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and Network Ireland to mark Six Nations match in February 2022.
- Embassy of Ireland hosted Saint Patrick's Day trade programme in March 2022, including a reception for Irish and French business representatives and ministerial engagement with key companies.
- Embassy of Ireland and ministerial participation in launch event marking the expansion of maritime links in Rosslare in April 2022.
- Embassy of Ireland trade visit to the port of Saint-Malo and the International Innovation Centre of Groupe Roullier, French agribusiness conglomerate, in July 2022.
- The Irish Minister of State Responsible for EU Affairs was in Dunkirk and Le Havre for the launch of the new freight routes between ports.
- Embassy of France hosted a delegation led by the Vice President of Brittany and including elected officials and economic players. The delegation visited Dublin, Rosslare and Limerick on transport, logistics, renewable energy and tourism.
- Embassy of France hosted a delegation from Pays de Loire on economics and tourism.
- Embassy of France hosted a delegation of Nimes to celebrate the launch of new Dublin to Nimes route.
- Embassy of France hosted a delegation of Normandy led by the President of the Region and which included officials elected, representatives of several agencies and chambers of commerce and enterprises in different fields. The aims were to promote the region, and meet all the maritime players to identify new opportunities and synergies between the region and Ireland. The delegation went to Rosslare, and met the County Council of Wexford and New Ross.
- Embassy of France and the committee of French Foreign Trade Counsellors (Conseillers du Commerce extérieur de la France) in Ireland organised two round tables on new perspectives in economic relationships between France and Ireland and cooperation on climate issues. The French and Irish Ambassadors for Climate participated.

- Normandy/Cotentin supported the Bastille Day reception at the French Residence, which welcomed officials and Irish and French business representatives.
- Embassy of France supported the participation of four Irish CEOs in the Choose France Summit in July 2022.

Upcoming:

- Irish Ambassador visits to Normandy and Toulouse as part of regional engagement.
- Ireland-France Business Awards in Paris in November 2022.
- Erasmus+ webinar promoting educational exchanges and travel with participation from Léargas and the Embassy of France.
- The President of Normandy will return to Dublin in November 2022 for a programme.
- Embassy of France will continue engaging with authorities of Port of Shannon (Foynes), Cork, Rosslare and Dublin on transports and energy issues.
- Brittany Ferries will organise with the French-Irish Chamber of Commerce and Chamber of Commerce of Cork a business event on the Pont Aven in Cork.
- The Port of Dunkerque visit to Ireland in December 2022.



Economy and Trade

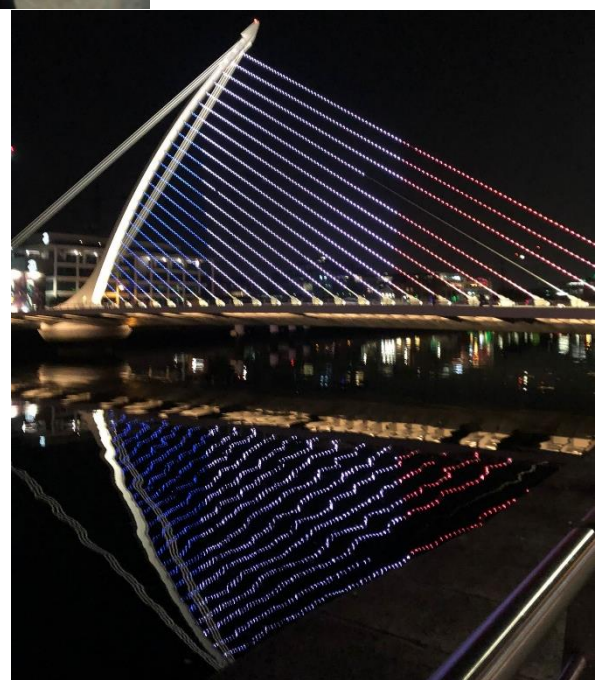
Cutting the ribbon at the opening of the new office of the Honorary Consul in Roscoff

Credit: Embassy of Ireland, Paris

Bleu, Blanc et Rouge!

Dublin's Samuel Beckett Bridge is illuminated in the colours of the French flag to mark President Macron's visit to Dublin, August 2021

Credit: Embassy of France, Dublin



Digital Economy

Ireland and France have vibrant tech ecosystems in which European companies can scale their business. Trade missions and events in Dublin and Paris have promoted and given significant platforms to these companies and highlighted innovation.

1 Year Progress:

- In February 2022, Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment visited the Paris start-up campus Station F and HQ of French Tech.
- The Embassy of Ireland and Network Irlande jointly hosted an event at Station F to examine opportunities around scaling-up in Europe in June 2022.
- In June 2022, Minister of State with responsibility for Trade Promotion, Digital and Company Regulation introduced a 'pitch and networking' event for Irish tech companies hosted by the Embassy of Ireland and Enterprise Ireland.
- The Embassy of Ireland hosted a peer-to-peer thought leadership event for an Enterprise Ireland-supported tech unicorn alongside a number of French companies in June 2022.
- French Tech round table on talent in November 2021 in Dublin (Guinness Enterprise Center - GEC)
- French seminar with France Digitale on talent in Dublin, May 2022 (Dogpatch)
- Embassy of France and French Tech round tables on AI and data security (March 2022)
- Annual team retreat of Irish incubator Dogpatch at Station F (August 2022)

Upcoming:

- Further collaboration by the Embassy of Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland with Irish companies operating in the digital economy space.
- French Tech Dublin programme supported by French Tech to enhance cooperation in the field of HealthTech/MedTech/BioTech.



Digital Economy

French and Irish companies take part in discussions on scaling-up and innovation at an event organised at Station F, Paris by the Embassy of Ireland, Paris and Network Irlande

Credit: Embassy of Ireland, Paris

Education, Research and Innovation

France and Ireland have enjoyed strong education links over many centuries. Today, these links support the development of our knowledge economies. Significant efforts have been made over the last year to foster higher levels of cooperation in the areas of education, research and innovation. The embassies are working on extending cooperation and new partners, particularly in the field of technological universities, vocational training and sports. The Irish Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science undertook two programmes in Paris, as well as participating virtually in a Paris Sorbonne conference in January 2022.

Year 1 Progress:

Higher Education

- New cooperation between Ireland's Atlantic universities and Breton universities saw a Memorandum of Understanding signed in August 2021 between UCC, UL, NUIG and four Breton universities (Université de Bretagne Occidentale, Université de Bretagne Sud, Université de Rennes 1 and Université de Rennes 2).
- Signing of two new joint ministerial declarations, one to promote the mobility of students of initial teacher education, teachers and teachers' educators and to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the field of teaching and vocational education and training.
- Participation of both French and Irish institutions in three new consortia of European Universities, pushing the number to seven.

Research and Innovation

The Ulysses scheme structures research cooperation between the two countries. The reinforcement of this programme and its alumni community guided the actions in 2022.

- The partners have agreed to extend the Ulysses programme to two years, doubling funding for each of the selected future projects.
- In June 2022, the Embassy of Ireland hosted a webinar on Marie-Curie post-doctoral scholarships with the aim of improving mobility between Ireland and France for researchers.
- In June 2022, the Embassy of France hosted an event for researchers and strategic partners of the Hubert Curien Partnership Ulysses.

Increasing University Exchanges and Double Degrees

Structured cooperation between the two countries and increasing double degrees (from 45 to 60) has also guided the actions of the embassies in 2022.

- In November 2021, the Irish Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, held a roundtable on mobility at the Embassy of Ireland, where he met with French and Irish researchers and students to get a sense of the 'state of play' of the Irish-French academic relationship and identify possible areas to further this relationship.
- Embassy of France organised a workshop for French and Irish partners participating in the European University initiative in May 2022, in partnership with Irish Universities Association.
- Funding awarded by the Embassy of France to support mobility for the development of structured partnerships between French and Irish institutions. This saw academics from TCD, Griffith College, UL, DCU and Maynooth work with partners from Bordeaux, Paris, Grenoble, Toulouse and Besancon.

- Campus France hosted an Ireland Day in July 2022. Irish Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science opened the event and a networking event was held at the Embassy of Ireland.
- Participation by the representatives of French higher education institute partners at Embassy of Ireland for Saint Patrick's Day 2022.
- Embassy of Ireland welcome events for Irish Erasmus students in France.

Vocational and Applied Education

To support greater exchange of vocational students through Erasmus+, the following actions have been undertaken:

- French and Irish Embassies supported Franco-Irish network on culinary arts, hospitality and tourism (FICAHT), including event that took place in April 2022 in Galway.
- Deepening of the links between five French academies (Paris, Normandy, Toulouse, Aix-Marseille and Rennes) and the Education and Training Board Ireland (ETBI) and its county boards.

Upcoming:

- Next year's FICAHT competition take place in France.
- Bilateral meeting between French and Irish Higher Education Ministers in the works for late 2022.
- Continued expansion of structured cooperation, in particular double degrees, to increase from 45 to 51 in 2022.
- Embassy of France will organise an open house day at the Campus France office for students and staff of the international relation offices.
- Organisation of a joint visit to Ireland in autumn 2022 by the rectors of the academies in order to finalise bilateral projects in vocational training with Education & Training Boards (ETBs).
- Discussions for Irish institutions to join the Association Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF).
- Appointment of a technical expert in charge of innovation and applied research to foster French-Irish cooperation in this domain, and reinforce the number of Horizon project applications.
- Organisation of a meeting between Normandy Institutions led by President of Region and Technological Universities led by the Minister for Further and Higher Education.
- Launch in October 2022 of the 'Olympic Weeks' to promote the values and stakes of Paris 2024 through a pilot project around Taekwondo.
- As part of France rugby team's trip to Ireland for the 6 Nations tournament, organisation of an educational meeting with Irish students.
- Launch of the first Interceltic Games in Dinard in June 2023, a sporting and educational project.
- The Embassy of France will partner with Team Ireland Paris 2024 in order to promote the Olympics in Irish schools.

Culture and Language

Drawing on rich cultural and linguistic links between France and Ireland, the first year of implementation of the Action Plan saw a contemporary artistic programme addressing the issues of today's world and engaging diverse new audiences with geographic and demographic inclusivity. We have promoted these cultural links through high-level presence, synergy, and visibility in major cultural and linguistic events in both countries, including the 100-year centenary of the publication of *Ulysses* in Paris. Paris is home to Ireland's foremost cultural centre overseas, the Centre Culturel Irlandais (CCI), which celebrated its 20th birthday: a landmark for an institution that has been a centrepiece for cultural exchange between France and Ireland.

Year 1 Progress:

- On-going consultations between the Culture Sections of the two embassies, as well as with the Ministries of Culture, Culture Ireland and the Cultural Directors of the Foreign Ministries.
- A new Strategic Partnership agreement between Royal Irish Academy of Music and the Conservatoire de Paris: the first performance with Irish and French musicians under this partnership took place in Dublin at the National Concert Hall in April 2022 as part of New Music Dublin.
- The Académie française and the Royal Irish Academy confirmed the joint funding of the Michel Déon Prize until 2025. This joint literature prize is awarded in alternate years by the Royal Irish Academy and the Académie française. The award's 2022 Irish winner was Sally Hayden for her chronicle of the migration route to Europe, *My Fourth Time We Drowned*, awarded at a ceremony hosted by the Royal Irish Academy.
- In September 2021, the Embassy of France organised a cross-country headline digital arts event for Culture Night with the National Gallery of Ireland in association with the CCI.
- Embassy of France strengthened collaboration with the CCI with four major projects in 2022.
- June 2022 saw both Embassies work together with the CCI to present a high profile hip-hop project with artists from Ireland, France and Senegal coming together for a creative residency, followed by performances at Fête de la Musique in Paris, Cork Midsummer Festival and, at the end of 2022, at the inauguration of the Embassy of Ireland in Dakar.
- July 2022 saw the first Ireland-France Sustainable Fashion Show organised as part of Limerick Wild Geese Bastille Day Festival, along with the concert Siansach32/Symphonie 32 celebrating the independence of Ireland as part of the Decades of Centenary programme.
- Embassy of France worked with Waterford Walls to develop a new Youth Exchange Programme between Ireland, France and Cyprus to engage young people in street art and encourage mobility. In July 2022, the first leg of the Programme took place in Waterford.
- Enhanced bilateral exchange for professionals in 2022: the Embassy of France has invited two young film students to participate in Culture Lab, a 12-day programme at FEMA, La Rochelle International Film Festival; four Irish professionals to take part in the Institut français Focus Programmes (Street Theatre, Dance, Immersive

Realities)/French Ministry of Culture Seminar; one French Visiting Translator Fellowship at Trinity College.

- Overall, in 2022 there was dynamic programming with French participation in the biggest festivals and throughout Ireland: Fête de la musique, Dublin Dance Festival (including dancers from West Africa), Waterford Walls, Animation Dingle, CUIRT Festival, Limerick Literary Festival, International Literature Festival Dublin (Adult and Youth programme), Franco-Irish Literary Festival.
- In September 2021, the French-language Civil Service Network was launched in Ireland by the Irish Minister of State for European Affairs and both Ambassadors at Résidence de France Dublin.
- Uptake of the Franco-Irish scheme for language assistants has increased to a cohort of 70 French students in Ireland and 53 Irish students in France.
- The reintroduction of foreign languages at primary level has been a success: the launch of the Sampler module saw more than 500 schools participate, with French the number one choice (213 schools).
- French language certification (DELF-DALF) for secondary schools has hit a new record this year, with a total of 35 schools.
- In-service mobility for Irish teachers of French language has returned to a cohort of five in the Cotentin region in April and 14 to CAVILAM Alliance Française in Vichy in July.
- Success in the pilot project between the Embassy of France and University of Limerick for the initial training of future teachers of French language. A one-month immersion programme that saw three students going to CAVILAM Alliance Française in Vichy.
- Launch of the Francophonie Festival by Minister of State for European Affairs at the Canadian Embassy promoting French language, cultural & linguistic diversity, democracy, and peace, presented by the Embassies part of the International Organisation of la Francophonie represented in Ireland, in March 2022.
- In March 2022, the Embassy of France in Ireland hosted 'Inspiring Plurilingualism' at Eurofound conference centre in Dublin. This high-level conference was organised in joint partnership with the EUNIC-Ireland group, the Irish Department of Education and the Representation of the European Commission in Ireland and was opened by the Irish Minister of State for European Affairs.
- September 2022: Embassy of France and National Gallery of Ireland strengthened collaboration with new headline digital arts event for Culture Night.

Upcoming:

- A new cinematographic co-production agreement between Ireland (Screen Ireland) and France (Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée, CNC) is nearing signature. The co-production agreement will be a landmark moment for bilateral cooperation in the film sector.
- A new collaboration between the French National Immigration History Museum and the Irish Emigration Museum EPIC during the first semester 2023 with the exhibition "Borders", a high-level conference on migrations and the development of a school programme on the subject.
- Embassy of France strengthened collaboration with the CCI with four major projects in 2022, of which three are upcoming:
 - Franco-Irish actor Kelly Rivière 'An Irish Story' Tour in Ireland;

- CCI French Associate artist Leïla Martial for a performance at the National Concert Hall celebrating the 20th anniversary of the CCI;
- The new Tomi Ungerer Residency.
- The second performance under the aegis of the Strategic Partnership agreement between the Royal Irish Academy of Music and the Conservatoire de Paris, with participation from Salzburg's Mozarteum and London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama, will take place in Paris in the Irish Embassy on 9 November.
- Enhanced bilateral exchange for professionals: Embassy of France has worked with Irish and French partners to develop the first Digital Arts Research Residency between Ireland and France that will open in September 2022 to take place in both Lyon and Galway from November 2022 to March 2023.
- Continuation of the new Youth Exchange Programme 2022-2023 between Ireland, France and Cyprus to take place in Paris in October 2022, then Cyprus, to engage young people in street art in association with Waterford Walls.
- To celebrate the 225th anniversary of the proclamation of the first Irish Republic (1798), both embassies will organise various events during 2023 under the banner, the Year of the French, the name by which that year was known in Ireland.
- In 2023, the Embassy of France, Trinity College Dublin and the DFA in partnership with the group of Francophone embassies in Ireland, will organise the "Premières rencontres universitaires de la francophonie en Irlande" bringing together Irish, African and French universities.)
- In 2023, the Embassy of France will work together with the Olympic Federation of Ireland to promote break dancing, a new Olympic discipline at Paris 2024.
- "Say Yes to Languages", renewal of the Sampler Module at primary level with more schools to be involved
- Language assistants' scheme renewed with an increase of participants (75 French students in Ireland and 55 Irish students in France).
- Intensifying activity within the French-language Civil Service Network with socialisation events and cultural/linguistic activities.



Culture and Language

Irish, French and Senegalese musicians practice at the Embassy of Ireland prior to performing at the Fête de la Musique

Credit: Embassy of Ireland, Paris

People-to-people links

People-to-people links are at the very core of France and Ireland's relationship. The last year has seen both Embassies continue to support a wide variety of exchanges, including in the areas of culture, tourism, and sports.

Year 1 Progress:

- To celebrate Saint Brigid's Day, the Embassy of Ireland welcomed Ireland's Minister of State for Special Education and Inclusion who was the guest speaker, alongside the French Minister for Gender Equality, Diversity and Equal Opportunities, at an event co-hosted by the Embassy of Ireland and the Franco-Irish Business Network entitled "Role Models for Change: a Ireland-France dialogue on gender equality and diversity".
- On the occasion of the French Presidency of the EU Council and for International Women's Day, March 8, the Embassy of France organised a debate on "The new challenges of feminism in Europe" at Trinity College Dublin in partnership with the German Embassy and the Goethe Institute. Three eminent Irish, French and German panellists – former President of Ireland Mary Robinson, Laure Adler and Emilia Roig - shared their vision on the future of feminism in Europe and exchanged views with the younger generation and student representatives from five Irish universities.
- Numerous exchanges have been held between Atout France and their Irish equivalent Tourism Ireland.
- An official of the Department of Foreign Affairs undertook studies at l'Institut national du service public (INSP) to further reinforce mutual understanding and links between our civil services.
- To mark Pride, the Embassy of Ireland hosted Irish and French LGBT+ leaders to discuss workplace inclusion. Irish diplomats marched with Les Ambassades pour l'Égalité in la Marche des fiertés. French diplomats marched in the 2022 Dublin Pride Parade under the banner of 'Diplomats for Equality'.

Sports

In the run-up to the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Paris, sports diplomacy will be a cornerstone of our actions:

- First meeting between INSEP and representatives of Sport Ireland, the leader of the Irish sports movement, in July
- First meeting between the French and Irish Taekwondo federations In margins of the Paris 2022 World Taekwondo Grand prix in September

Upcoming:

- Event at the Embassy of Ireland for French and Irish think tanks, to encourage opportunities for policy debate and exchange.
- Identify opportunities to promote community links through sport, including through the Rugby World Cup 2023 and the Olympic and Paralympics Games 2024 to be staged in France.

Policy Dialogue and Cooperation

There was significant high-level engagement, including in the lead-up and during the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union, at both political and official level. Since the Joint Plan of Action was agreed on 30 August 2021, Ireland and France have deepened dialogue and cooperation across a number of policy areas.

Year 1 Progress:

Reinforced high-level exchange has included:

At political level

- Bilateral discussions and engagements in the margins of 28 ministerial visits to France for the French Presidency of the Council of the EU.
- Ministers for European Affairs met in Paris in October 2021.
- Meeting between Foreign Ministers en marge of the June 2022 FAC and phone call July 2022.
- Meeting between Ministers for European Affairs in August 2022.

At official level

- Foreign Ministries: Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) Directors consultations took place in Paris in November 2021.
- Foreign Ministries: EU Directors General met in December 2021
- Foreign Ministries: UN consultations took place in Paris in December 2021.
- Finances Ministries (Directorate general of the treasury for France) : Consultations in December 2021
- Consultations at official level took place in Paris in May 2022 to discuss FitFor55.
- Climate Ambassadors met in Dublin in June 2022.
- In June 2022 in Dublin, the Department of Defence held Strategic Dialogue consultations with the Ministère des Armées.
- From September 2021 until July 2022, a member of the Defence Forces was deployed to the École spéciale militaire de Saint-Cyr as a Cadet Instructor). Twelve additional members of the Defence Forces participated in immersion training blocks with the French armed forces during this period, while they hosted seven French Army cadets for the same purpose (September 2021-February 2022). There was also engagement in foreign language training.
- Projects involving two civil society organisations from Ireland were among the 100 solutions shortlisted at the 2021 Paris Peace Forum: ActionAid Ireland and Front Line Defenders.
- Launch of French language network for Irish civil servants in October 2021, with now over 1200 members around Ireland.
- Border control posts staff exchange procedure agreed between chief veterinary officers signed in April 2022. First visit of Irish officers in Calais in June 2022.
- Diplomats from the Embassy of Ireland attended various exchanges at the European Union Directorate of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs. Diplomats from the Embassy of France attended exchanges at the Department of Foreign Affairs.
- Six constables attended a training session provided by An Garda Síochána.
- An exercise took place between the customs services of both countries.

Upcoming:

- Foreign Ministries upcoming consultations in 2022: : UN Director consultations, Political Directors consultations, Secretary General and, in 2023, MENA Directors consultations.
- Finances Ministries (Directorate general of the treasury for France) : Consultations (date TBC)
- Upcoming support by Embassy of France to Senegal for the opening of the Embassy of Ireland in Dakar.



*Above and Left: **Policy Dialogue and Cooperation***

Irish Ministers Simon Coveney and Thomas Byrne meet with their then French counterparts Jean Yves Le Drian and Clément Beaune

Credit: Department of Foreign Affairs and @ThomasByrneTD Twitter Account



*Right: **People-to-People Links***

Team Ireland in Paris take part in the Paris Pride March 2022.

Credit: Embassy of Ireland, Paris

