



**Follow-up to the Inquiry into Wales-Ireland relations undertaken by  
Senedd Cymru's Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,  
Sport, and International Relations Committee**

**Contribution of the Consulate General of Ireland**

Since the Senedd Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee published its report, 'Wales-Ireland relations Exploring an old relationship in a new age' in October 2023, relations between Ireland and Wales have continued to strengthen and deepen. There has been excellent progress in implementing all six areas of focus set out in the Ireland-Wales Shared Statement and Joint Action Plan 2021-2025.

Over the course of the Shared Statement, **political and official** links have grown and strengthened, with regular, constructive engagement between the Government of Ireland and the Welsh Government. The annual Ireland-Wales Forum, a key commitment under the Shared Statement, has been an important focal point, bringing together the First Minister and Ireland's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, a position held in recent years by the Tánaiste, along with other Ministers as relevant, to review work and give direction. This has been complemented by meetings and work through BIC Summits, other Ministerial visits, and contact on matters of strategic importance to both our nations.

St David's Day and St Patrick's Day celebrations have offered an excellent opportunity for political contacts, with six ministerial visits undertaken to celebrate our respective national days since 2021. Ministers undertaking these visits covered a range of portfolios, with comprehensive programmes taking in cultural, economic, and community engagements.

We also welcome the continuing close engagement between the Oireachtas and the Senedd, in which the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee has played such an important role. We were particularly pleased that the Ceann Comhairle (Speaker) of the Dáil was able to meet with the Llywydd and other Senedd Members when he visited Cardiff in 2024 and that his invitation to visit the Dáil was accepted by a cross-committee group of Senedd Members later that year. This engagement is further strengthened through the active participation of Welsh and Irish parliamentarians in the British-Irish Parliamentary Association.

This high-level engagement has been underpinned by growing official level cooperation. The Consulate General of Ireland in Cardiff works closely with the Welsh Government Office in Dublin to augment our respective engagement across all areas of the Shared Statement in Ireland and Wales.

**Energy cooperation** is a growing and important area for exploration and innovation, with relevant officials coming together to discuss potential cooperation opportunities in offshore wind, ports and infrastructure, data and knowledge sharing, and building

green skills and supply chains. In 2025, the Greenlink interconnector, running between County Wexford and Pembrokeshire, became operational, linking the existing electricity grids in Ireland and Great Britain. This cable has doubled Ireland's electricity connectivity.

Engagement between Irish officials and the Office of the **Future Generations** Commissioner for Wales continues, wherein officials exchanged learnings and experiences, including in the development of Ireland's Well-Being Framework. Recently, the Future Generation Commissioner for Wales, Derek Walker, participated in an event hosted by the Consulate General of Ireland in Cardiff with the former President of Ireland, Mrs Mary Robinson.

**Trade and economic cooperation** remains a developing part of the bilateral relationship. Engagements facilitated by the Welsh Government Office in Dublin have resulted in new links in the aerospace and cyber technology sectors. There has been significant cooperation in terms of facilitating trade, through port infrastructure collaboration, most specifically at Holyhead. As a valuable gateway for trade, Holyhead remains strategically important to both Governments. Ireland's Minister of State for Transport, Seán Canney T.D. participated in the Taskforce on sea connectivity between Wales and Ireland established by the Welsh Government following the storm-related disruption at Holyhead in December 2024, and there are ongoing close contacts at official level between Ireland's Department of Transport and their counterparts in Welsh Government.

**Academic and Research** links have been to the fore of the bilateral relationship during the course of the Shared Statement. Work has been undertaken with the British Council and Universities Wales to promote student exchange, the Taith programme and academic collaborations between universities in both Ireland and Wales. Both Governments have worked to highlight joint research projects in areas from marine environment and climate change, to tourism, diaspora connections, life sciences, languages, and Mesolithic settlers in Wales and Ireland. There has been significant research links developed between Ireland and Wales in emerging sectors such as agritech and cybersecurity.

In late 2024, a Research Alliance Award was launched by Wales Innovation Network (WIN) and Research Ireland, to support collaboration between Irish and Welsh universities, aimed at building up projects for possible supports under the Horizon programme. At the Ireland-Wales Forum in Swansea in July 2025, the Tánaiste Simon Harris T.D. announced a new funding scheme to support collaboration between early career researchers in Ireland and Wales. This scheme was launched as a dedicated stream within the Royal Irish Academy's Charlemont Grants in September 2025.

On Education, Irish and Welsh officials are in contact on areas such as school systems, AI, collaborative research networks, international testing and school standards.

The **Irish and Welsh Languages** have been a particular focus of cooperation under the Shared Statement. Collaboration in this area has been rich and diverse. Initiatives to promote the Welsh and Irish languages have ranged from cooperation with Cardiff's Ciorcal Comhrá Cymru, a Irish language group set up by members of Cardiff's Irish community, to multiyear projects between partners such as Coláiste Lurgan and Urdd

Gobaith Cymru. There continues to be active and regular collaboration between language policy officials. Language promotion and support also had multifaceted applications, touching on other pillars of the Shared Statement, such as supports for the teaching of Irish at Welsh Universities.

In the area of **Culture**, cooperation and collaboration has been extensive. There has been continued cooperation between the National Museums of Wales and Ireland. Culture Ireland support has enabled more Irish artists to perform at venues and festivals throughout Wales, including the National Eisteddfod, Green Man and Focus Wales. There has also been support from both Governments for Other Voices Cardigan, as well as numerous individual projects from musical productions, to poetry partnerships, film screenings, and support for visual artists. Such cultural exchange and engagement has bolstered mutual understanding and recognition of our shared cultural capital.

During the course of the Shared Statement, there has been strong outreach to **diaspora** communities, including work by the National Museum Wales, St. Fagans, and its preservation of the Vulcan Hotel, as a focal point for the Irish community in Cardiff. In addition, a variety of events, including the St Patrick and St David's lecture series have enabled the Consulate General of Ireland in Cardiff and the Welsh Government Office in Dublin to build links with our respective diaspora communities.

There has also been meaningful engagement on **sport**, and engagement on UEFA Euro 2028 will continue in the years ahead. In Cardiff, the Consulate General of Ireland has worked with the Gaelic Athletic Association in building interest in Irish sports, including in schools in Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and Swansea. In 2024 Wales' largest GAA club, Cardiff St. Colmcilles, fielded the first Gaelic Football Women's team from Wales to be All-Britain finalists.

The above examples demonstrate the value of a formal framework for cooperation between Ireland and Wales. At the Ireland-Wales Forum in Swansea in July 2025, the Tánaiste Simon Harris and the First Minister Eluned Morgan agreed the [Ireland-Wales Shared Statement 2030](#). The new Shared Statement builds on the experience of implementing the previous iteration, with a strengthened focus on the themes of energy, research and innovation, and language, while seeking to maintain and grow cooperation across the other focus areas. The commitment to the annual Ireland Wales Forum, led by Ireland's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade and the First Minister of Wales has been renewed. Ireland looks forward to hosting the next Ireland-Wales Forum in 2026.

*Consulate General of Ireland, Cardiff*  
*1 December 2025*