



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Global Ireland

Delivering in the Asia Pacific Region
to 2025

Published in January 2020

Cover photos from top to bottom:

St Patrick's Day Parade, Shanghai. © DFAT

Junk boat at sunset in Halong Bay, Vietnam. © Getty Images

Mount Everest Peak. © Getty Images

Contents

02	Introduction
03	Strategic Objectives
04	Strategic Objective 1 <i>Build long-term, strategic relationships</i>
07	Strategic Objective 2 <i>Develop stronger two way economic partnerships</i>
11	Strategic Objective 3 <i>Share Ireland's culture and engage with our diaspora</i>
13	Strategic Objective 4 <i>Dramatically increase Ireland's visibility</i>
15	Strategic Objective 5 <i>Execute a highly collaborative Team Ireland approach</i>
16	Ireland's Footprint in the Asia Pacific Region

Global Ireland: Delivering in the Asia Pacific Region to 2025



The Tokyo Saint Patrick's Day parade. Photo: © Japan Times

VISION

By 2025, Ireland will be recognised as a trusted and valued bilateral and EU political and economic partner for countries in a more prosperous and stable Asia Pacific region.

VALUES

Ireland will work bilaterally and multilaterally with countries throughout the Asia Pacific region to promote our shared values, support international peace and security, promote and protect human rights, address common challenges and attain the Sustainable Development Goals.

CONTEXT

Expanding and deepening our relationships and increasing our visibility lie at the heart of this Asia Pacific strategy.

Stretching from Pakistan to Japan to New Zealand, Asia Pacific is home to over 4 billion people, and it is the primary engine of the global economy. Commensurate with the growth in the region's economic power and influence, it has also become an increasingly important geopolitical actor on the world stage. Many of Ireland's partners in Asia Pacific are assuming ever greater roles and responsibilities in addressing challenges such as regional security, climate change and sustainable development. One implication of these developments is that the increasing influence of Asia Pacific globally will bring new considerations to bear in the formulation of Ireland's foreign and domestic policies.

This document draws the roadmap and sets out the milestones in how Ireland will structure and focus its strategic relationship with the region up to 2025. Investing in our political, economic, cultural and people-to-people relationships is central to the achievement of our goals.

By the conclusion of this strategy in 2025, we expect that Ireland will:

- » **Be** a respected, informed and engaged political partner.
- » **Have** significantly developed our trade and investment links.
- » **Be** engaged in more people-to-people exchanges by business, academia, culture and civil society.
- » **Be** more visible in the region.
- » **Yield** more value from our engagement with the region across the whole span of government.

In order to achieve this, there will need to be a stronger focus on Asia Pacific by all stakeholders in Ireland, a deepened understanding in Ireland of the region, and an increased programme of public diplomacy and cultural outreach. It will require us to intensify what we are good at, to work better together and to be enterprising in trying out new and innovative approaches.

Between 2008 and 2018, Ireland's two-way trade with Asia Pacific has more than doubled - from €23 billion to €56 billion. Building on these foundations, it is our clear ambition to grow Ireland's two-way trade with the region to €100 billion by 2025, subject to identified risks in the global trade environment.

Strategic Objectives

To deliver on the ambition of *Global Ireland*, and our vision for the region, the following five strategic objectives will be pursued:



1

Ireland will build long term, strategic relationships throughout the region

We will increase the frequency and intensity of political contact with Asia Pacific countries to develop better relationships and to search for common answers to global and regional problems.



An Taoiseach Simon Coveney in Shanghai. Photo: © DFAT

The Asia Pacific region is diverse. It includes countries with longstanding and close connections to Ireland, and others where our links remain under-developed. It comprises countries with a close affinity to each other, and others where deep political differences exist. It includes countries right at the top of the Human Development Index and others that are in its lower ranks. There are countries imbued with deep religiosity, and others that are more secular in outlook. There are linguistic, cultural and ethnic divergences which preclude any 'one-size-fits-all' approach.

In spite of these differences, in each country in the region we find common values and shared experiences that act as a platform for mutual understanding and partnership. Building on these commonalities, we will work closely with our partners, both in Ireland and overseas, to deliver a new dynamic in our relationships and a step change in our engagement with the Asia Pacific region.

As a small country, with the experience of conflict on our island, and having seen the benefits of collective action in addressing common challenges, we are firmly committed to the rules-based international order. We will continue to work closely with our partners in the region to pursue our common goals in the UN and in other multilateral fora, and we will enhance our engagement with leading international organisations, including in particular the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).



Performers at the St Patrick's Day Féile celebration in Shanghai. Photo: © DFAT

Our membership of the EU provides much of the context for our engagement with the region at a political and strategic level, and we will continue to be an enthusiastic and engaged partner in shaping Europe's approach to the region. We will work with other EU member states and the countries of Asia Pacific in pursuit of a fairer, more just, secure and sustainable world.

We will:

- » **Increase** the frequency and intensity of political contact with Asia Pacific countries to develop better relationships and to search for common answers to global and regional problems.
- » **Work** collectively with EU member states and EU institutions in Brussels, on the ground in the region, and at key fora such as ASEM and the EU-ASEAN dialogue in pursuit of our shared objectives, including efforts to enhance connectivity between Asia Pacific and Europe.
- » **Support** the multilateral system, with the UN at its core, and the central role played by the UN Security Council in maintaining peace and security globally.
- » **Support** adherence to international law, to human rights treaties and the strengthening of regional and multilateral human rights frameworks. Our efforts will reflect the priority we place on gender equality, the protection of civil society space, the protection of Human Rights Defenders and their work, the defence and promotion of the rights of LGBTI people, and our opposition to the death penalty.
- » **Actively** and energetically campaign for the support of the countries of the region for our candidacy for membership of the UN Security Council for the 2021/22 term. As an elected member we will seek to faithfully reflect the interests of countries in Asia Pacific displaying empathy, partnership and independence.



Team Ireland at the Pyeongchang 2018 Winter Olympics Opening Ceremony. Photo: © DFAT

- » **Collaborate** with Asia Pacific troop- and police-contributing countries to improve the effectiveness of Peace-Keeping Operations.
- » **Draw** on *A Better World*, Ireland's policy for international development, to shape our work with Asia Pacific partners in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the Paris Agreement.
- » **Deliver** on our international development goals in the region, with particular focus on Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar.
- » **Increase** our support for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Pacific, including through the provision of €12m to the 'Ireland Trust Fund', a specially designed fund at the Asian Development Bank to help SIDS develop their resilience to climate change and natural disasters.
- » **Partner** with the UN, international NGOs and civil society organisations to support principled humanitarian action to save lives, reduce suffering and strengthen resilience in the region.
- » **Collaborate** with the leading international financial institutions in the region, such as the Asian Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and explore new partnerships to support their policy development and programme implementation, and to realise commercial opportunities.



An aerial view of Nauru in Micronesia. Photo: © DFAT

2

Ireland will develop strong two-way economic partnerships with Asia Pacific

We will promote Ireland as a source of world class products and services across a range of sectors such as Fintech, Education Services, Digital Technologies, Agritech, Healthcare, Construction & Engineering.

Ireland's comparative advantages, including our food quality and safety standards, our enterprise culture, our young workforce and our technological innovation, align well with the growing needs of economies across the region. We will position ourselves as an economically advanced and agile, cultured, adaptive, innovative and creative country at the heart of Europe, in support of our efforts to be recognised as a great place to visit, trade with, invest in or to study.

Between 2008 and 2018, Ireland's two-way trade with Asia Pacific has more than doubled - from €23 billion to €56 billion. Building on these foundations, it is our clear ambition that Ireland's two-way trade with the region will exceed €100 billion by 2025. Growing our trade and investment ties will further connect Ireland to the world's most dynamic region, contribute to efforts to diversify our markets and help build resilience in our economy. Our efforts are underpinned by a Team Ireland effort between our Embassies and Consulates, the State Agencies and others in Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

The region's dynamism contains significant opportunities for Ireland. Asia Pacific is home to 6 of the 20 largest global economies, including China, Japan, India, Republic of Korea, Australia and Indonesia. When measured as a bloc, ASEAN, an association of ten countries representing 640 million people, is the sixth largest economy in the world, with a combined market of USD 2.7 trillion.

The region is already the primary driver of the global economy, contributing more than 60% of global growth, and it has seen a continuous expansion of its middle class, which is expected to number 3.5 billion people by 2030.



Women in STEAM panel, marking St Brigid's Day in Jakarta. Photo: © DFAT



PantiBliss as a marshall in the Pride Parade, Hanoi, Vietnam.
Photo: © DFAT

At the same time, we must acknowledge that Irish companies face specific challenges in doing business with this region. Building business relationships is resource-intensive, requiring significant and sustained commitments of time, people, skills and money. The scale and diversity of markets, the distance from Europe and variations in business culture, language and administrative practices are all unavoidable barriers for Irish companies seeking to succeed in the region. Tackling these, along with the generally low level of awareness of Ireland and of our strengths, are challenges which we will address.

Our membership of the European Union provides a robust framework for further strengthening of our trade and economic relationships, including through Free Trade Agreements with Korea, Vietnam and Singapore, as well as those being negotiated with Australia, New Zealand and Indonesia, and the recently-established Economic Partnership Agreement with Japan, which accounts for 30% of global GDP. Ireland will continue to support a rules-based multilateral trading system centred on the World Trade Organisation.

TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Ireland's economic diplomacy, led by the departments of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Business Enterprise and Innovation, and Finance, coupled with the efforts of Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland, is at the forefront of our economic success in Asia Pacific.

In order to support jobs and increase our prosperity, we will:

- » **Promote** Ireland as a source of world class products and services across a range of sectors such as Fintech, Education Services, Digital Technologies, Agritech, Healthcare, Construction & Engineering.
- » **Double** growth in project investments from non-US markets in the period 2018-2024, with the IDA accelerating its diversification of source markets.
- » **Continue** to differentiate Ireland's FDI offering to partners from the Asia Pacific region by highlighting our talented pool of highly-skilled workers, our world-class research capabilities, and the attractiveness of Ireland as a place to live, work and invest.
- » **Build** on the €151 million of Irish fintech exports to the region and, in line with the *Ireland for Finance* strategy for the development of the international financial services sector to 2025, harness the opportunity presented by China, India and other Asian financial markets.
- » **Deepen** and expand Enterprise Ireland's presence in China, India, Australia, New Zealand and ASEAN markets.
- » Effectively **promote** to Irish businesses the opportunities offered by the network of existing and emerging free trade agreements in Asia Pacific.
- » **Expand** upon the 12 comprehensive Double Taxation Agreements (DTAs) currently in place, covering the taxation of companies and individuals based on the OECD Model Tax Convention. We will also update and modernise older agreements, starting with Japan.

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

We will maximise the opportunities to market our world-class produce, reinforced by our food safety, traceability and sustainability standards. Specifically, we will:

- » More than **double** the value of Bord Bia client food and drink exports to Asia Pacific to €3.0bn by 2025.
- » **Build** market understanding and lead generation opportunities for Irish exporters through delivery of regular ministerial-led trade missions to the region each year.
- » **Expand** the Bord Bia Fellowship and Global Graduate programmes in China, Singapore, Japan, Vietnam and Australia.
- » **Work** closely with governments in the region to expand and build on the access secured to the Chinese beef market in 2018, as well as the beef access obtained in the Philippines, pig meat access obtained in Vietnam and seafood access obtained in Republic of Korea.
- » **Gain** further market access for Irish food in the region, including for beef in the Republic of Korea and Vietnam, and for sheep meat in China.
- » **Realise** the opportunities presented by the EU-Japan EPA, which will bring about a phased reduction of Japan's high tariffs on agricultural products including cheese, beef and pork.



Irish Cheese on display in Shanghai. Photo: © DFAT

- » Further **expand** our global footprint with a new Agriculture Attaché in Seoul in 2020. This appointment is in addition to the Attaché appointed to Tokyo in Autumn 2019.
- » **Continue** our engagement with the European Commission to lead promotion of EU agrifood across the Asia Pacific region for key sectors.

EDUCATION

The Irish Education system has a world-wide reputation for excellence. As part of this strategy we will harness this reputation to enhance our governmental, institutional and people-to-people relations in the Asia Pacific region. Specifically, we will:

- » **Continue** to assist countries from the Asia Pacific region to build their capacity to address their education challenges by sharing policy information and expertise through the Joint Working Group on Education process and by facilitating delegations of inward study visits from the region.
- » **Continue** to position Ireland as a leading destination for third level and English-language study, and increase the number of students from Asia Pacific countries studying in Ireland in line with the targets in *Irish Educated: Globally Connected*.



Indonesia, Education Fair. Photo: © DFAT



CurrencyFair Asia Gaelic Games in Kuala Lumpur. Photo: © DFAT

- » **Increase** the number of research collaborations with the region and build on existing partnerships to improve academic mobility between Ireland and target countries.
- » By 2025, **double** the number of Government of Ireland Scholarships available worldwide to 120.
- » **Introduce** Mandarin Chinese at Leaving Certificate Level from 2020, with examinations from 2022.
- » **Introduce** and continue the support for a Korean Language module for Transition Year students.
- » **Develop** enhanced data on international alumni, mapping their location to support the development of networks of interest overseas.
- » **Implement** a new visa processing programme to ensure turnaround times are in line with best practice from other EU countries.

TOURISM

Over the period to 2025, it is planned that tourism revenue from the region will triple. To deliver this, we will:

- » **Expand** Tourism Ireland’s presence and promotional activity in Asia Pacific, particularly China and Japan, build on progress in Australia and New Zealand, and explore opportunities in Singapore, Republic of Korea and elsewhere.
- » **Work** closely with the Dublin Airport Authority and other stakeholders to advance new air services from Asia, including with China, Japan and India.
- » **Further** improve our online offering with key tourist and information websites translated into Asian languages.
- » **Implement** a comprehensive programme with Fáilte Ireland that will enable the Irish hospitality sector to develop its product appeal specifically for Asian travellers.

3

Ireland will make a positive contribution to the region by engaging our diaspora and sharing our culture

We will continue our support of voluntary, community, academic, cultural, sporting, business and other Irish organisations throughout Asia Pacific.



Embassy staff at the St Patrick's Day reception in New Delhi.
Photo: © DFAT

Irish citizens and people of Irish descent have often played an outsize role in the region, and as many as 100,000 Irish-born citizens live there today, of which 75,000 are in Australia.

In recent years there has been an increase in new Irish communities in locations such as China (particularly Hong Kong), Thailand and Singapore. Recognising the important contributions they make, the Government is committed to supporting and connecting with Irish communities, including those in 'new diaspora' locations. The Government further commits to building on our engagement with affinity diaspora groups across the region, including alumni and other groups.

OUR CITIZENS AND DIASPORA

Under *Global Ireland 2025*, we have committed to introduce a new diaspora policy in 2020. This new policy will underpin and inform our engagement with the diaspora in the region. We will:

- » **Continue** our support of voluntary, community, academic, cultural, sporting, business and other Irish organisations throughout Asia Pacific.
- » **Bring together** government and universities to support existing alumni organisations and establish them in locations where they do not exist, in line with the recommendations of *Irish Educated: Globally Connected*.
- » **Review** the current working holiday programme agreements with Australia, China (specifically with Hong Kong and Taiwan), Japan, New Zealand and Republic of Korea with a view to expanding them where appropriate.
- » **Promote** and support Irish culture, sport, heritage and values through our work with Irish communities and the affinity diaspora, and through the Emigrant Support Programme and partnerships with the GAA, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and the Ireland Funds.
- » **Continue** the roll out of digital services in Passports, Foreign Birth Registrations and Visas to improve service delivery and turnaround times for citizens in the region, and deliver world-class consular services to citizens in need.



Jiggy play the St Patrick's Day Reception in New Delhi. Photo: © DFAT

SHARING OUR CULTURE

Our culture is a powerful tool that enables us to realise many other opportunities. It is also a valuable resource in and of itself, and worth promoting in its own right. Recognition and appreciation of our ancient culture and its modern expression by those in the region can help to develop our mutual understanding in a contemporary context.

Cultural agencies will work more closely with our network in Asia Pacific to promote our music, literature and the performing arts amongst new audiences, including young people, in a region with its own rich and diverse cultural offering.



Dancers from the Simpson Academy of Irish Dancing in Canberra. Photo: © DFAT

We will:

- » **Support** the creative arts both at home and abroad so as to effectively promote Ireland overseas.
- » **Increase** our cultural outreach by appointing cultural officers to Beijing and Tokyo, with other appointments to be considered during the lifetime of this strategy.
- » **Consider** adoption of an Asian Country of Focus by Culture Ireland for 2021.
- » **Promote** our culture through region-wide celebrations of St. Patrick's Day, St. Brigid's Day, Bloomsday and Halloween/Samhain.
- » **Establish** a short-term graduate recruitment programme in Sydney to raise awareness and increase the impact of Culture Ireland's work.
- » **Expand** Ireland's network of international film co-production treaties, including with China, and increase opportunities for Irish producers to co-produce more effectively with international producers, media organisations and major studios.

4

Ireland will dramatically increase its visibility in the Asia Pacific region

We will implement a new, dedicated Asia-Pacific communications programme that will promote a joined up message of Ireland as a great place to visit, trade with, invest in and to study in.

We recognise that the low visibility of Ireland in Asia Pacific remains a particular challenge and impacts on the effectiveness of our work across all sectors. In a region where strong personal relationships are a critical starting point for long-term successful partnerships, we must continue to invest in them at all levels, including at the highest political levels. We will facilitate greater people-to-people exchanges, including through education, tourism and sport, in order to double our impact internationally and be seen as an important partner in the region by 2025.

At home in Ireland, enhancing our understanding of the region and developing greater coherence in our approach, both within Government and throughout the private sector and broader civil society, is critical. We need to expand our capacity to analyse, contextualise and anticipate developments in this diverse region. Central to this will be the effective leveraging of existing knowledge already here in Ireland, while also encouraging and supporting people to study and work in the region.



Irish Artist, Mr Gerard Byrne, gaining some admirers in Singapore Botanic Gardens. Photo: © DFAT



Greening of the Great Wall of China in 2019. Photo: © DFAT

Specifically, we will:

- » **Conduct** a baseline analysis of knowledge and favourability of Ireland in key partner countries, starting with Japan and New Zealand, which will inform our communications approach to the region.
- » **Implement** a new, dedicated Asia-Pacific communications programme that will promote a joined up message of Ireland as a great place to visit, trade with, invest in and to study in.
- » **Implement** a “digital first” strategy centred on *Ireland.ie*, developing it as an ‘Ireland House in the Cloud’ with content in languages tailored to the region.
- » **Scale up** significantly the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade’s ‘Asia Pacific Regional Fund’, used by embassies and consulates in Asia Pacific for public diplomacy initiatives.
- » **Develop** a portfolio of major international events at which to showcase Ireland and build our media profile.



Japanese Women’s Rugby team marching in the Tokyo St Patrick’s Day Parade. Photo: © The Japan Times, 18 March 2019

5

Ireland will execute a highly collaborative Team Ireland approach throughout the region

We will implement this strategy through effective interdepartmental and interagency collaboration, both in Ireland and overseas, and collaborate closely with other stakeholders including civil society, academia and the private sector.



Ireland's Ambassador to New Zealand, Peter Ryan, presents credentials in Wellington, August 2018. Photo: © DFAT

A strong Team Ireland approach will enable us to achieve our goals. We will implement it through effective interdepartmental and interagency collaboration, both in Ireland and overseas, with all departments and agencies working together for the good of the country. We will also collaborate closely with other stakeholders who can contribute to the success of this strategy, including civil society, academia and the private sector. Increasing our impact requires an investment in our presence, both at HQ and in the region, including in existing locations.

Specifically, we will:

- » **Open** an embassy in Manila in 2020 to build on traditional links and realise strong bilateral trade opportunities.
- » **Use** the newly-opened Consulate General to make a strong impact in Mumbai, the economic capital of India, from 2019.
- » **Open** a new consulate in China.
- » **Augment** our presence in Australia.
- » **Deepen** and expand Enterprise Ireland's presence in China, India, Australia, New Zealand and ASEAN.
- » **Design** and build a flagship Ireland House in Tokyo.
- » **Roll out** the 'Ireland House' integrated model where co-location is appropriate.
- » **Establish** a permanent network of Envoys to support and further develop our relationship with Small Island Developing States.
- » **Maintain** and develop the Local Market Team approach which facilitates the pooling of resources and a strategic approach by Government to overseas markets.
- » **Develop** opportunities for junior and senior civil service management to learn about the region.
- » **Establish** a broad-based working group of Asia Pacific stakeholders in Ireland to support implementation of the strategy and to enhance our understanding of Asia Pacific in relation to culture, society and commerce.
- » **Report** annually to Government on progress towards implementation of the strategy



Ireland's Footprint in the Asia Pacific Region

- Embassies
- Embassies by 2020
- Consulates
- IDA Ireland Locations
- Current/Future Enterprise Ireland Locations
- Bord Bia Locations
- Tourism Ireland Locations





Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland