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Dear Irish community,
Friends of Ireland,
A chairde,

Welcome to the summer edition of our Embassy newsletter. It has been a busy but productive few months since we issued our last newsletter in early May. I would like to highlight two key areas where we have been especially active.

With the pandemic-related restrictions lifted, we set ourselves two priorities for immediate action. The first of these, and the closest to our hearts, was renewing the ties between the Embassy and the Irish community. After the bitter disappointment of having to cancel yet another Saint Patrick's Day reception, we were delighted to welcome you to a relaxed family evening at the Carlton Hotel on 25 May. It was great to see so many of you there. People to people contact, and the personal touch, can never be replaced by zoom meetings or social media. As relative newcomers to Bratislava, Estelle and I met many of you for the very first time. For the Embassy team, it was undoubtedly the highlight of the past three months. We hoped you enjoyed it as much as we did and availed of the evening either to revive old friendships or indeed to make new ones.

The Embassy is keen to build on the momentum and will hope to meet you collectively by end of the year.

A second priority was to reboot Ireland's bilateral relationship with Slovakia. After a long hiatus owing to the pandemic, we have had no less than three high-level political visits to Bratislava.

In late May, Ireland's Minister of State for European Affairs, Thomas Byrne T.D. came here for talks with his Slovak counterpart. The Minister also visited a bilingual secondary school where he spoke to students about the future of the European Union and engaged with them on their hopes and priorities for our common European home.

In June, a delegation of Irish T.D.s and Senators came at the invitation of the Slovak National Council (parliament) and had a series of very useful and constructive engagements with Slovak Ministers and politicians.

Finally, in July, Ireland's Minister for Finance and President of the group of EU countries using the Euro, Paschal Donohoe T.D., made a whistle stop tour, meeting the Prime Minister, the Central Bank Governor and the Minister of Finance. As you can imagine, Russia's immoral and unjustified war of aggression in Ukraine was at the top of the agenda. All of these meetings were an invaluable opportunity for both sides to reaffirm their unwavering support for the people of Ukraine in their struggle for a sovereign and independent country, free to make its own choices. Bilateral cooperation across the spectrum was also discussed, be it on in trade, education or R&D. It is abundantly clear that the relationship between our two countries is very warm but with much untapped potential. We at the Embassy are committed to doing our level best to explore how we can further enhance and deepen Irish-Slovak cooperation in the period ahead.

There were many other highlights. But working on the solid principle that a picture is worth a thousand words, we include photographs of some of our activities and initiatives over the past three months.

We hope you find our newsletter of interest. As always, we warmly welcome your feedback and suggestions as we work to improve our service and outreach to you, our community. Please send any comments or ideas to bratislava@dfa.ie We would be delighted to hear from you!

Likewise, if you know of anyone who has recently arrived in Slovakia and would be interested in being on our circulation list, please encourage them to register with us at [Citizens' Registration](#)

The Embassy team wish you all a wonderful summer break and hope you can get some well-earned rest - be it here in Slovakia, in Ireland or indeed wherever you choose to spend your holidays.

With best wishes,
le gach dea-ghuí.

Dermot McGauran
Ambassador of Ireland



Political Relations



There was a step up in political engagement between our two countries. Minister for Europe Thomas Byrne T.D. and Minister for Finance Paschal Donohoe T.D. visited Bratislava in May and July respectively for senior level talks with the Slovak Government. A delegation from the Dáil and Seanad came here in June, representing the Ireland-Slovak Parliamentary Friendship Group.

-  [Martin Klus: "Glad to welcome Irish Parliamentary delegation in #Bratislava"](#)
-  [Paschal Donohoe: "It was great to spend the day in Bratislava..."](#)
-  [Peter Kažimír: "Rare pleasure to host @PaschalD in #Bratislava."](#)
-  [Eduard Heger: "A fruitful talk w/ former colleague @PaschalD"](#)

During Minister Thomas Byrne's visit we had the pleasure of meeting students of one of Bratislava's bilingual secondary school and enjoyed a lively discussion with students about FutureOfEurope. #EU50

-  [Irish Embassy Bratislava on Twitter: "Pleasure to accompany @ThomasByrneTD"](#)



Historic Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 signed into law

The [Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022](#) was signed into law on 30 June 2022. This landmark legislation provides a full and clear right of access to birth certificates, birth and early life information for all persons who were adopted, boarded out, the subject of an illegal birth registration or who otherwise have questions in relation to their origins. It also allows for access to information by next of kin in certain circumstances.

The new law establishes a Contact Preference Register and a robust tracing service and, as well as a range of new bespoke measures to address issues arising for people affected by illegal birth registration.

The legislation will come into operation on a phased basis.

From 1st July 2022

- Contact Preference Register
- A public information campaign
- A broad spectrum of counselling and support, free of charge for applicants.

From 3rd October 2022

- Information request services open
- A statutory tracing service opens for persons wishing to make contact, share or seek information.

GDPR and the legislation

The Birth Information and Tracing Act, 2022 sits within the framework of the GDPR. Similar to GDPR it provides for access to personal information, however unlike GDPR it provides for guaranteed and unredacted access to the suite of information covered by this legislation.

A bespoke website with more information on the act, the services it establishes and the persons eligible to use them, is available at www.birthinfo.ie.



Europe Day 9th May



As we mark 50 years of Ireland's membership of the EU, The Embassy team were proud to represent Ireland on Europe Day, in Bratislava's Old Market Hall, we used the occasion to showcase our beautiful country as a great place to visit, to work or to study.



Thank you for joining us for a family reception!

We were delighted to host our community at a family evening on 25 May in the Carlton hotel. A great opportunity to renew old acquaintances and make new friends.



Central – East GAA Championship by Slovak Shamrocks!

The Embassy was delighted to support the Slovak Shamrocks who hosted an exciting GAA tournament of over 250 athletes on 28 May, with teams participating from across the central European region.

Consul Janet O'Sullivan was pleased to present the trophies to the winning teams and players on the day. The commitment and dedication to Irish sport by all involved was inspiring.

Well done to every one including Teams, Organisers and volunteers!
More news from Slovak Shamrocks below.



Consul Janet O'Sullivan attended University graduation in Košice

Consul Janet O'Sullivan had the honour and pleasure of attending the graduation ceremony at the University of Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy in Košice, where ten Irish students received degrees in Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. The Embassy extends congratulations to all the graduates and their families and wishes them well in their future careers.



Consul Janet O'Sullivan meeting graduates Deborah Howard, Dearbhla McGoldrick, and Orla McCaul.

Bratislava PRIDE



The Embassy participated in this year's Bratislava Pride, the first since 2019. A lovely and fun-filled occasion but with an important message about respect, solidarity and love.

 [Amb McGauran joined other representatives of the diplomatic community to support #BratislavaPride 2022](#)



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|  | <p>LÁ FHÉILE BRÍDE Ag Ceiliúradh Cruthaitheachta na mBan ST BRIGID'S DAY Celebrating the Creativity of Women 2023</p> | <p>"Common Threads" Call for participants Looking for textile artists to contribute unique individual artworks</p> |
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**Are you an Irish Textile Artist living in Slovakia?
Would you like to be part of a Global St. Brigid's Day 2023 Project?**

The Common Threads project will see (Irish) textile artists from around the world contribute unique individual artworks, which will form part of a larger quilt or cloak to be exhibited in Dublin in February 2023 as part of the St. Brigid's Day celebrations.

St Brigid's cloak is central to the story of how she founded her church and became one of Ireland's patron saints. Her legendary cloak is often depicted as a patchwork of colours and materials, reflecting the diversity and inclusivity of Brigid's values and her work. St. Brigid's Day 2023 will be extra special as it marks the first time in history that Lá Fhéile Bhríde will be observed as a public holiday.

Techniques employed could include (but are not limited to) painting, dyeing and printing; embroidery and other types of needlework; tablet weaving; lace-making, sewing, knitting, crochet, felting, braiding or plaiting, macramé, etc.

Fabrics used could include chiffon, cotton, crepe, denim, lace, leather, linen, satin, silk and wool.

The incorporation of local textile techniques and traditions is greatly welcomed and the use of recycled and sustainable materials, where possible, is encouraged.

If you or someone you know would like to be part of this wonderful Project,

let us know by **25th August** at bratislava@dfa.ie

Update from Slovak Shamrocks!



Training update

After a short summer recess, **the Slovak Shamrocks will be returning to the training ground on Wednesday, August 10th** in Molecova (Futbalový klub mládeže in Karlova Ves Bratislava).

It will be a special "Open Session", where we welcome beginners to Gaelic Football or those that are new to team sports.

Tournament thanks

On May 28th, we hosted an international tournament consisting of over 250 athletes, representing more than 8 countries within the CEE region. The feedback has been exceptional, and we are very proud to have put together such a smooth event for our guests. However, we didn't do it alone, as well as volunteers within the club, we would also like to thank the following;

- Embassy of Ireland, Slovakia
- Shane Hughes / Goblins Pub
- Ladislav Horvat / NŠK 1922 Bratislava
- Marian Murco / Prazdroj
- Ivana Pangracova
- Veronika Gallisova
- Alessia Graham, Indi Scholten, Jenny Mei Zhu and Lenka Černicka

Upcoming event

On Sunday, August 21st, the small **Austrian town of Seyring** will be hosting **a day of Irish music, dance, and of course sport!** The Slovak Shamrocks will be there with our friends from the Vienna Gaels, and we hope you can be there too. A variety of Irish sports will be showcased during the day, including Gaelic football, hurling, camogie, and handball. Contact us for further details.



Farewell Adrian!

And we leave this newsletter on a sombre note as we say goodbye to Adrian Soto Dominguez who will soon be departing for Australia in an exciting career move. Adrian's positivity and energy was infectious. First one on the training pitch, and last one off the dance floor. He added so much value to the club during his time here and we wish him well on his next adventure!

For more information

on training, tournaments, and social events please contact us via:



Last year, Ambassador McGauran was honoured to serve on the international jury of the Roma Spirit Awards in Slovakia. The awards are held annually and are organised by ACEC (Association for Culture, Education and Communication). As one of ACEC's long term partners, the Embassy would like to bring this very important initiative to your attention. We encourage you to nominate an individual, a company, an association etc. who is active within the community in promoting Roma integration.

Nominations are open until 7th September 2022 through an online application process.

[For more details, please see the message below from the Roma Spirit Team:](#)

The Roma Spirit Award is launching its 14th edition!

We are looking for exceptional personalities, organisations and activities that deserve an award!

Roma Spirit is a public recognition and promotion of inspiring stories and activities **that**

bring solutions to the challenges faced by Roma communities and our entire society.

For the 14th time, the general public has the opportunity to nominate inspiring personalities, stories and activities for the Roma Spirit Awards.

Do you know someone in your area who deserves an award for spreading the message of mutual tolerance, understanding, without prejudices and stereotypes?

Do you know of an exceptional appearance in the field of culture or an act worthy of special attention?

Help promote and appreciate an extraordinary personality, journalist and columnist, organization, responsible employer, or community worth following.

Nominate him for the Roma Spirit 2022 award!

The organisers of the Roma Spirit 2022 award are the Association for Culture, Education and Communication (ACEC), the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities (ÚSVRK)

and Radio and Television of Slovakia (RTVS). The President of the Slovak Republic, Zuzana Čaputová is patron of the Roma Spirit 2022.

The Roma Spirit Preparatory Committee will select 21 finalists in September from all valid applications.

The international Expert Jury and Act of the Year Jury will decide on the seven laureates for the 14th edition of Roma Spirit.

Winners will be announced at the Roma Spirit 2022 gala awarding ceremony, which will be broadcast by Slovak National Television RTVS on the occasion of International Human Rights Day.

The partner of the Non-Governmental Organisation category is the Carpathian Foundation, the partner of the Open Society Media Foundation category, the Culture State Science Library in Prešov category and the partner of the Act of the Year category is Rádio Expres.

www.romaspirit.sk

[@romaspirit.slovensko](https://www.facebook.com/romaspirit.slovensko)

[YouTube Roma Spirit](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRm3t3t3t3t3t3t3t3t3t3t)

Share your news with us!

If you would like to share your news about upcoming activities, please contact us at bratislava@dfa.ie



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