

Chapter 23

Global Irish Economic Forum

Vote 28 Foreign Affairs

Global Irish Economic Forum

23.1 A Global Irish Economic Forum¹⁹⁸ (the Forum) was held at Farmleigh¹⁹⁹, in Dublin, in September 2009. The Forum was organised and managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Department), in co-operation with a number of other government departments and State agencies.

23.2 The initiative formed part of a strategy of engagement with Irish people living abroad and those of Irish ancestry. The Forum had two broad objectives

- to explore how Irish people at home and abroad, and others with a strong interest in Ireland, could work together and contribute to overall efforts aimed at economic recovery
- to examine ways in which Ireland and its global community could develop a more strategic relationship with each other, particularly in the economic sector.

23.3 The Forum was intended to complement the recommendations from the Ireland-United States Strategic Review (published in March 2009) which focused on Ireland's relationship with the US and identified areas where there is potential for mutual benefit. It was also aligned with the strategy for economic renewal outlined in 'Building Ireland's Smart Economy', which is a programme for medium-term economic recovery based around the concept of a smart economy.

23.4 Around 200 people attended the Forum. Participants included individuals identified by Ireland's network of diplomatic missions abroad and by the main State agencies in the economic sectors. Attendees also included members of the Government, secretaries general of government departments, CEOs of State agencies, as well as leading members of the Irish business, academic and cultural sectors.

Chapter Focus

This chapter outlines

- the cost of hosting the Forum and where the charge has been borne
- the arrangements for translating the outcome of Forum activity into on-the-ground actions under specific agencies
- the general views of the Accounting Officer on the outcome of the Forum.

23.5 The total costs of holding the Forum were €330,000, of which €233,000 was met from the Emigrant Support Programme in Vote 28: Foreign Affairs (Subhead C). The balance, mainly consisting of hospitality and staff overtime costs, was met from Subhead A of the Vote.

¹⁹⁸ The Forum report, published by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, includes details of the structure and format of the Forum and is available online at www.globalirishforum.ie.

¹⁹⁹ Farmleigh is a Government-owned estate, which serves as the premier accommodation for visiting dignitaries and for high-level Government meetings.

23.6 Figure 111 outlines the key cost elements

Figure 111 Forum Costs

Cost Element	Outlay
	€
Site costs	72,539
Catering	61,441
Hotel accommodation	37,700
Conference materials	35,780
Audiovisual and related costs	32,185
Facilitation and moderation	23,894
Transport	17,930
Website costs	15,992
Miscellaneous	32,662
Total	330,123

Source: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

23.7 The Accounting Officer stated that the costs of the Forum were kept to a minimum. Participants paid for their own travel costs and the accommodation provided by the Department was chosen at hotels close to the venue and at competitive prices (an average of less than €100 a night).

23.8 Documentation in respect of the above payments was inspected on a sample basis during the examination. The funding examined was applied for the purposes intended.

Recording and Tracking Proposals

23.9 The Forum's purpose was primarily to surface ideas and make recommendations that could be taken account of in future policy making and administration. This section reviews whether

- there were arrangements in place to capture the Forum's proposals
- there was a reasonable degree of tracking the extent to which the proposals were progressed.

23.10 In doing so, it is acknowledged that the success of an initiative such as the Forum cannot be determined by a simple calculation of the number of measures implemented. Rather, value will be derived from the level of engagement with the proposals, as policy is reviewed and administrative arrangements modified.

23.11 The Irish Management Institute (IMI)²⁰⁰ was retained by the Department to facilitate eleven economic working group sessions and to record the resulting contributions and recommendations. The topics considered by the working groups are set out in Annex A. The IMI presented participants with a summary report before the seminar concluded.

²⁰⁰ The IMI is an executive management centre committed to working with practising managers, with the aim of building smarter organisations through management learning.

Follow-Up Arrangements

23.12 In October 2009, the Department submitted a report of the Forum's proceedings to Government. The report summarised the discussion that took place at each plenary session and panel discussion and identified the main themes and issues raised by participants on a recurring basis. It identified 37 specific initiatives for action in the short-term and 22 medium-term objectives.

23.13 Having considered the contents of the report, the Government established an inter-departmental committee to consider and take forward the work of the Forum. The committee reports to Government and is chaired by the Secretary General of the Department of the Taoiseach. It has met on a number of occasions and has submitted two progress reports to Government, one in February 2010 and the other in October 2010. A team of co-ordinators in relevant government departments support the work of the committee.

Short-term Initiatives

23.14 The initiatives identified with potential for action in the short-term are listed at Annex B. The Accounting Officer has placed a summary of their status, to April 2011, on the Department's website. The initiatives identified fell into six broad categories

- building and supporting networks
- educational initiatives and work placement
- progressing the environmental agenda and green technology
- fostering innovation
- support for business
- improving Ireland's international profile.

23.15 I sought the observations of the Accounting Officer on the extent to which the themes outlined above were being addressed.

Building and Supporting Networks

23.16 Forum participants identified a need to establish a formal network to enable the global Irish community to partner with Government in promoting positive messages abroad and assisting Irish business development overseas. A need to build connections with those who have previously lived in Ireland and have returned to their country of origin was also recognised.

23.17 In February 2010, a Global Irish Network (the Network) was launched in London. Regional meetings were held at Ministerial level in France, Germany, China, the US and Australia. The cost of Network meetings held in 2010 was €34,000. The Accounting Officer informed me that in the case of each of the Ministerial meetings, the Network events were arranged to tie in with other Ministerial commitments and took place as part of a wider programme. In a number of cases, (e.g. in France and Germany), they were held at no additional cost.

23.18 Irish diplomatic missions also hosted informal meetings in various countries, including Germany, Australia, the United Arab Emirates and Argentina. In addition to the Network, embassies have reported increased activity by local Irish business groups, including the establishment of a number of new networks in key markets. Embassies have focused particularly on expanding existing networks of young professionals, through engaging with Irish graduates in Britain, the US and elsewhere.

23.19 The Network is co-ordinated by a secretariat within the Department, with Irish ambassadors abroad playing a central role through liaising with international members. The Network has three broad and interlinked objectives

- to provide a platform to assist the Government and State agencies to promote Ireland's economic, cultural and tourism messages in key markets
- to provide a forum through which successful Irish business and cultural figures abroad can interact with each other, exchange views and be kept informed of key developments in Government policy
- to provide a forum through which members can put forward proposals and implement practical initiatives.

23.20 The Accounting Officer informed me that over 300 people from 37 countries agreed to participate in the Global Irish Network. He stated that the Network included some of the most influential Irish and Irish-connected individuals abroad and provided an invaluable resource of international expertise.

23.21 Interaction with members took many forms during the Network's first year in operation, ranging from formal meetings hosted by Ministers or Ambassadors through to informal discussions with Network members on specific issues.

23.22 During 2010, Network members received regular information on the main economic developments in Ireland through email communications from the Forum secretariat and through the Network's website. Missions also provided regular oral briefings to members. This information enabled Network members to speak to the media and their peers in key markets about the positive aspects of the Irish economy.

23.23 The Accounting Officer stated that at the end of 2010, the Department's Irish Abroad Unit and Ireland's diplomatic missions undertook a comprehensive review of the Network's first year of operation. The review found that the Network contributed strongly in three areas

- as a highly influential advisory group with strong facilitation capacity
- as a mechanism for distributing key information about the Irish economy and other significant developments
- as a means of delivering, or assisting with the delivery of specific initiatives.

23.24 The Accounting Officer informed me that he had written, in January 2011, to the secretaries general of all government departments outlining the work of the Global Irish Network²⁰¹ and encouraging them to view the Network and its members as an available resource that may be of assistance in advancing initiatives of interest. In order to ensure ongoing co-ordination across departments, he also asked secretaries general to nominate co-ordinators. These co-ordinators are now in place and co-operate in advancing the work of the Global Irish Network.

²⁰¹ The Global Irish Network was one of the outcomes of the Forum and is described more fully in the remainder of this chapter.

Specific Network Initiatives

The Network has worked with Irish embassies and consulates to advance some specific initiatives

- A Farmleigh Fellowship was established by Network members based in Singapore. It provides up to 25 Irish participants with an opportunity to work for four months with a number of different companies in Asia and to participate in a joint MSc degree in Asian Business Management from University College Cork and Nanyang Business School in Singapore. The programme is now underway with the first group of participants, having finished the initial phase in Cork, now in Singapore. In addition, the Irish Technology Leadership Group (ITLG)^a in Silicon Valley is in the process of establishing a graduate placement scheme^b.
- Some Irish embassies and consulates have worked with Network members and Enterprise Ireland to develop formal mentoring programmes. The programmes are aimed at Irish companies seeking to break into or expand existing operations in particular markets and they provide access to advice and guidance from Network members based in those areas. Less formally, many missions have facilitated contact between State agencies and individual Network members, as well as between members and other organisations such as local Irish chambers of commerce.
- Network members have assisted the Department in its ongoing efforts to restore Ireland's reputation. This has included projecting a positive assessment of Ireland's strengths in international media interviews and private business contacts. Such positive engagement by individual members in their own business circles can be very valuable and influential. In the US, a number of Network members have come together to advance initiatives that would complement the work of the Embassy and consulates in this area.
- A number of Network members were central to the development of Imagine Ireland, which is Culture Ireland's^c year-long season of Irish arts in America. Imagine Ireland will see over 1,000 artists and producers from Ireland create over 400 individual events across 40 American States throughout 2011.

- Notes:
- a The ITLG consists of Irish-American senior executives, based in Silicon Valley, who support the growth and development of Irish based technology companies and are committed to ensuring that Ireland remains a strategic area of investment and opportunity for US technology companies.
 - b Craig Barrett, former President and Chief Executive Officer of Intel, was appointed as the Chair of the ITLG and this is viewed as a positive development.
 - c Culture Ireland is the State agency for the promotion of Irish arts worldwide, operating under the aegis of the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Educational Initiatives and Work Placement

23.25 Forum participants identified a need to continually develop the third and fourth level education systems with the aim of fostering greater creativity, providing incentives for exceptional performance and encouraging more graduates to enter the mathematics and science areas. They advised that this should be supplemented by aligning Ireland's skill base with specific opportunities in international markets.

23.26 The Accounting Officer informed me that the primary means of progressing this set of recommendations would be through the National Strategy for Higher Education, which was launched in January 2011. Overall responsibility, therefore, for this area rests with the Department of Education and Skills. The strategy includes

- recommendations to foster creativity and innovation in teaching, such as introducing a requirement for all staff to hold qualifications in pedagogy²⁰², embedding entrepreneurship and other generic skills into all programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate level and broadening first-year undergraduate education
- research and innovation recommendations aimed at providing connectivity between higher education institutions, their students and staff, and the wider community
- a greater emphasis on staff and student mobility between business, industry, the professions and the wider community, with students to participate in accredited work or service placements and structures and procedures to be established that encourage the involvement of the wider community in activities including programme design and revision.

Environmental Agenda and Green Technology

23.27 The development and promotion of Ireland as a ‘Green Island’ across a range of sectors, including food, tourism and energy innovation was identified by Forum participants as a potential growth stimulus.

23.28 The Accounting Officer drew attention to three key initiatives being progressed principally by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources

- a new €90 million National Energy Retrofit Programme was established in 2010
- a Smart Metering Programme will enhance management of energy demand, delivering smart networks and enabling energy efficiency through the use of the latest technology²⁰³
- the Environmental Protection Agency is due to publish a ‘Green Who?’ brochure in 2011, which outlines the various forms of assistance available in terms of information, availability of grants and other practical assistance from a range of agencies in the environmental area.

23.29 In addition, the Ocean Energy Development Unit (OEDU) of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland administers a Prototype Development Fund. This fund is aimed at supporting the development and deployment of ocean energy devices that can generate renewable electricity. To date, grants totalling €4.7 million have been awarded in respect of 17 projects with a total value of €4 million.

23.30 Plans for the development of a full-scale grid connected wave test site off Annagh Head in Mayo were announced in May 2010. The OEDU is currently managing the completion of a strategic environmental assessment of Irish waters for wave, tidal and offshore wind development. The OEDU has commissioned studies on the economic benefits for Ireland of ocean energy and offshore wind development, capabilities in the engineering sector for ocean energy development and the adequacy of existing ports and shipping infrastructure.

²⁰² Pedagogy is the art or science of teaching, education and methods of instruction.

²⁰³ The electricity element of the pilot project was launched in January 2010 and the gas element went live in June 2010. The project is on schedule for completion, including a cost benefit analysis, in 2011.

Fostering Innovation

23.31 Forum participants concurred with the strategy for economic renewal outlined in 'Building Ireland's Smart Economy'²⁰⁴ as an approach to fostering innovation. They particularly advocated increasing investment in research and development (R&D) and maximising Ireland's potential as a leading location for intellectual property protection and as a test bed for clinical trials.

23.32 The Accounting Officer stated that the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources is charged with advancing smart economy initiatives.

Smart Economy Initiatives

Key follow-on initiatives related to the Forum included

- The creation of an International Content Services Centre, which will be a digital content exchange where developers can clear, trade, distribute and collect revenues from a wide range of content (e.g. images, advertising and music). A high-level task force met on a number of occasions in 2010 to examine content trading, taxation, legal and intellectual property issues. It is envisaged that the International Content Services Centre concept will be further developed through co-operation between the Digital Hub^a and the Industrial Development Authority.
- The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources has convened a series of workshops to establish the environment and conditions suitable for the development of energy efficient data and cloud computing centres in Ireland.^b
- The commissioning of the Exemplar Network, which is a fibre-optic communications test bed, using patented Irish technology and allowing for the high-speed and high quality transfer of electronic data. Additional investment of €5 million was allocated for the project in July 2010. Over 40 companies and institutions have engaged with the Exemplar test bed and several Irish, UK and Spanish university projects are in planning. Further phases of the development of the Exemplar Network Programme will commence in 2011.

- Notes:
- a The Digital Hub is a Government initiative to create an international centre of excellence for knowledge, innovation and creativity focused on digital content and technology enterprises.
 - b Ireland hosted the ISO Study Group on Data Centre Standardisation in November 2010. ISO, in this context, stands for the International Organisation for Standardisation, which is the world's largest developer and publisher of international standards.

23.33 In the area of R&D, for which the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation has responsibility, the proposals will be progressed under the Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation, 2006 - 2013. An Innovation Taskforce²⁰⁵ report was finalised in March 2010, with a focus on providing a road map for positioning Ireland as a hub for international innovation development.

²⁰⁴ The five key action areas in 'Building Ireland's Smart Economy' are securing the enterprise economy and restoring competitiveness, building the ideas economy, enhancing the environment and securing energy supplies, investing in critical infrastructure and providing efficient and effective public services.

²⁰⁵ An Innovation Taskforce was appointed by the Taoiseach, in June 2009, to advise the Government on its strategy for positioning Ireland as an international innovation development hub and to assist with the development of a smart economy.

Research and Innovation Initiatives

A group, including departmental, agency and private sector representation, was established to implement the recommendations of the Innovation Taskforce report. The Accounting Officer noted that there have been a number of developments to date.

- The Innovation Fund Ireland was launched in July 2010, with the aim of attracting leading international venture capital companies to locate in Ireland. Under the scheme, Enterprise Ireland and the National Pension Reserve Fund (NPRF) will match up to €250 million of investment from international venture capital firms, so that a total of €500 million is available to support innovative enterprise. The NPRF has made two investments to date. Enterprise Ireland's first call for expressions of interest closed in November 2010 and the NPRF is currently assisting it to evaluate the 32 expressions of interest received. It is envisaged that Enterprise Ireland will make a number of commitments to venture capital fund managers in the near term.
- The Enterprise Ireland Seed and Venture Capital Scheme (2007-2012) aims to further develop the Irish venture capital sector. It provides risk capital to small and medium sized enterprises in the seed, start-up and development stages, leverages private and institutional investment and develops commercially viable funds. Enterprise Ireland is investing €175 million in a new round of venture capital funding under the scheme.
- Funding has been provided by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to the Irish Technology Leadership Group towards the establishment of a secretariat and the expansion of the organisation's activities.
- The Irish Innovation Centre was officially opened in San Jose in early 2010. It provides an environment in which Irish Technology companies can gain access to venture capital firms, bankers, customers, suppliers and employees.

Support for Business

23.34 Forum participants drew attention to the need to support Irish businesses, both at home and abroad, through the establishment of a single liaison point in Government and the development of venture capital funding mechanisms.

23.35 The Accounting Officer informed me that in the period since the Global Irish Economic Forum, progress has been made in a number of areas to improve the supports to business.

- In September 2010, the Government launched a '*Trading and Investing in a Smart Economy*' strategy and action plan. The strategy seeks to ensure that overseas trade, tourism and investment in key markets is promoted in a co-ordinated manner.
- The enterprise development agencies are formulating new client support strategies with a focus on taking advantage of opportunities in the global marketplace, while sustaining jobs.

- Red tape, or the regulatory burden on business, continues to be reduced. The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation estimate that in the period since the Forum, this work has resulted in €74 million²⁰⁶ in savings for small firms. International benchmarking statistics reveal that Ireland imposes a relatively low burden of regulation on business, with the National Competitiveness Council's Annual Competitiveness Report 2010²⁰⁷ stating that Ireland's regulatory environment is one of the least restrictive in the OECD.
- There are plans to streamline business inspection and licensing as well as food safety monitoring.
- The attainment of a predictable, consistent and speedy intellectual property regime in Ireland will be addressed through the National Intellectual Property Protocol providing clarity around expectations and terms and ensuring efficient processes for the commercialisation of intellectual property from publicly funded research.
- The intellectual property regime is being reviewed with the objective of affording appropriate access to intellectual property arising from Government funded research, so that it can be used by enterprises to create jobs and drive economic recovery.

Improving Ireland's International Profile

23.36 Forum participants were of the opinion that there was a need to refine the image that Ireland projects to the world market, with a particular emphasis on undoing the reputational damage caused by regulatory weaknesses in the financial system. In addition, they highlighted a need to actively promote Ireland abroad, particularly in the Asian markets, focussing on the unique nature of Ireland's cultural identity.

23.37 The Accounting Officer noted that events since the 2009 Forum have had a significant impact on Ireland's international profile. However, initiatives undertaken by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in advance of the Forum and as part of the follow-up process have enabled it to address the damage done to Ireland's international reputation.

23.38 The Department positions itself to do this through monitoring the tone and content of the coverage of Irish affairs in the international media, particularly in respect of articles relating to the economy. The Department's Media Monitoring Unit works with other government departments and State agencies to ensure that embassies and consulates have access to the most up-to-date information on economic developments. Missions share much of this information including key speeches, reports and contents with locally based members of the Global Irish Network.

23.39 The Accounting Officer stated that diplomats in Irish missions have engaged on economic issues with the international community at various levels including Heads of State, senior ministers, central bank governors and all levels of the media.

23.40 Missions also engage on these issues with the Global Irish Network, thus enabling members to speak to the media and their peers in key markets about the positives in the Irish economy.

²⁰⁶ This figure was calculated by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation using the Standard Cost Model, which is an international methodology for measuring administrative costs.

²⁰⁷ Annual Competitiveness Report 2010 'Benchmarking Ireland's Performance – Volume 1', published by National Competitiveness Council in July 2010.

23.41 Key interventions included

- promoting the publication in the foreign press of articles written by Irish political leaders
- taking advantage of St. Patrick's Day celebrations to promote Irish interests
- establishing a Foreign Trade Council whose objectives included building Ireland's reputation in high-growth global markets and enhancing them in existing markets
- participating in a communications group chaired by the Department of the Taoiseach, which is developing an international communications strategy and campaign to enhance Ireland's image and reputation.

General Observations of the Accounting Officer

23.42 The Accounting Officer stated that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade considers the Forum to have been a success and that it represented real value for money. The primary focus of the Forum was to develop a new level of strategic engagement between Ireland and key Irish connected business leaders abroad. The success in achieving this objective has been one of the most important long-term outcomes from the event.

23.43 Since September 2009, a far greater recognition of the value of the relationship between Ireland and its diaspora has developed among key contacts abroad and within the domestic business and Government sectors. The Forum was responsible for a qualitative change in diaspora engagement by the Irish State and added considerably to the range and level of engagement with the global Irish already carried out by the Irish Abroad Unit of the Department and by Ireland's embassies and consulates abroad. The Accounting Officer noted that, since the Forum, a number of other countries have approached the Department for guidance on how they could develop a similar level of diaspora engagement.

23.44 The establishment of the Global Irish Network in February 2010 – a key outcome from the Forum – has been the mechanism through which this considerable resource has been harnessed for the first time and on such a scale. The Network provides the Government and Irish companies with access to key private sector decision makers across the globe. It can act as a considerable source of 'soft power' for Ireland in the years to come and is already serving as an important resource for the Government in promoting Ireland's economic, cultural and tourism messages in key markets at a critical juncture for this State.

23.45 The second key objective of the Forum was to examine ways in which the Irish, at home and abroad, could work together and contribute to overall efforts at economic recovery. The report of the Forum and the six and twelve month progress reports demonstrated the range and detail of the discussion across key economic sectors. A succinct account of the progress achieved, to April 2011, under each of these specific proposals is set out on the Department's website. The Accounting Officer stated that a close reading of that assessment shows that the follow up process to the Forum's recommendations has been robust and that the vast majority of initiatives have either been implemented or seen significant progress towards implementation.

Conclusion

The cost of holding the Forum was €330,000. Following the Forum, a network was established which is managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The ongoing costs are met from within the Vote and €34,000 was spent during 2010 to hold Ministerial meetings with members of the network at various international venues.

The Forum has produced a wide range of ideas that, while not formally endorsed by Government, are available to inform policy and administrative adjustments.

This chapter has reviewed progress in addressing the main themes in the advice emanating from the Forum. How each specific measure is being addressed is outlined on the Department's website.

The Forum's usefulness lies in its capacity to surface ideas and follow them in a joined up whole-of-Government way while repositioning State interventions to better align Ireland's distinctive competencies and productive capacity with the marketing opportunities that exist in the current economic environment.

There has been a reasonable level of tracking and reporting on the proposals of participants and it would be useful to evaluate the overall contribution of the concept and opportunities to further exploit the networks, for the benefit of the country, going forward.

Annex A Economic Forum Working Groups

The topics considered by the working groups were

- How can Ireland attract higher value inward investment and secure existing investments?
- How can Ireland help indigenous exporting Irish companies achieve scale?
- How can a 'European Silicon Valley' be created in Ireland through attracting talent, entrepreneurs and intellectual property expertise?
- How can Ireland's education system address any skills deficit to prepare young people to be the thought leaders of the smart economy through fostering creativity, innovation and lateral thinking?
- How can the Irish financial services sector take advantage of the finance and banking sectors of the future?
- How can Ireland become a leader in technology convergence?
- How can Ireland develop its low carbon economy?
- How can Ireland prioritise capital spending to fast track the infrastructure necessary for the smart economy?
- How can Ireland position itself as a leading global location for the next generation of tourist?
- What are the necessary changes to transform the Irish food and agriculture sector to secure its future as a long-term sustainable industry?
- What role can Ireland's cultural and artistic capital play in developing our economy?

Annex B Initiatives with Potential for Action in the Short Term

Improving Ireland's International Profile

- 1 Create a 'Gateway Ireland' website to promote Irish business, culture and sport.
- 2 Implement a revised Asia Strategy and develop strategies for other emerging markets.
- 3 Increase Ireland's representation abroad and ensure embassies have a strong business focus.
- 4 Make more targeted use of global marketing opportunities linked to St. Patrick's Day.
- 5 Tourism Ireland to encourage members of the global Irish community to holiday in Ireland.
- 6 Select most appropriate participants to maximise return from international trade missions.
- 7 Focus on the traceability of Irish food products as the key to accessing future export markets.
- 8 Increase efforts to bring an end to the import ban for Irish beef in the Philippines.

Building and Supporting Networks

- 9 Establish a Global Irish Network to continue the work commenced at the Forum.
- 10 Create a database of influential Irish individuals and businesses across the world.
- 11 Organise a youth forum to engage with younger members of the global Irish community.
- 12 Support and promote specific sectoral Irish business networks abroad.
- 13 Establish a food and beverage network around the world.
- 14 Implement a strategy to engage foreign nationals who have previously lived in Ireland.

Educational Initiatives and Work Placement

- 15 Establish a world-class centre for Irish culture and performing arts in a landmark Irish building, to become a centre for artistic and creative education, innovation and technology.
- 16 Establish a programme to assist Irish graduates in securing employment and educational opportunities in target countries including China, Japan, Korea, Russia and India.
- 17 Set up student placements in Ireland for younger members of the global Irish community.
- 18 Develop a strategy to promote the teaching of Asian languages in Ireland.
- 19 Up skill key talent (e.g. unemployed architects, electrical and mechanical engineers) in new technologies and processes through the advancement of major green public building projects.
- 20 Use Global Irish Network to create placements for agricultural and food sector graduates.

Fostering Innovation

- 21 Establish an Irish Innovation Centre in California.
- 22 Implement the Innovation Fund proposed in 'Building Ireland's Smart Economy'.
- 23 Develop tourism opportunities through improving access to genealogical records and enabling potential tourists to trace their ancestry.
- 24 Develop a content management destination, streamlining the management of digital content and associated royalty issues and providing a complete service for global clients.
- 25 Develop an intelligent transport system, including the provision of e-Centres adjacent to major cities, to increase productivity, reduce congestion and lower carbon emissions.

Support for Business

- 26 Establish a formal mentoring programme through which leading members of the global Irish community take non-executive positions on the boards of Irish companies.
- 27 Create a new bond scheme aimed at the global Irish community, with revenue generated being invested in landmark infrastructure projects.
- 28 Appoint an 'IFSC Tsar' to work with the Central Bank Governor and Minister for Finance to restore confidence in Ireland within the main financial markets.
- 29 Re-establish confidence in Ireland as an international financial centre.
- 30 Develop a white paper on financial services, which would identify key strategies to pursue.
- 31 Actively promote Ireland as a centre for global asset management activity.

Environmental Agenda and Green Technology

- 32 Implement the recommendations of the high-level action group on green enterprise.
 - 33 Establish a solidarity fund to support the development of green technology firms in Ireland.
 - 34 Implement an energy demand reduction programme.
 - 35 Establish an annual prize to encourage positive developments in green technology.
 - 36 Develop a smart electricity network, incorporating renewable energy, to enable customers to control energy costs and to support the development of an electric vehicle network.
 - 37 Establish a single water authority for the entire country.
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