

The 
Diaspora
Institute

Global Irish Surveys

Securing the Future of Ireland's
National Diaspora Strategy

ANALYSIS

Supported by



Government of Ireland
Emigrant Support Programme



An Roinn Gnóthai Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Authors Dr Martin Russell and Kingsley Aikins

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Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the quantitative and qualitative findings from Global Irish Surveys designed to help inform the Government’s new Diaspora Strategy. The surveys were a package of three online consultation tools to supplement the extensive in-person consultations conducted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

The breakdown of the responses per consultation tool is as follows:

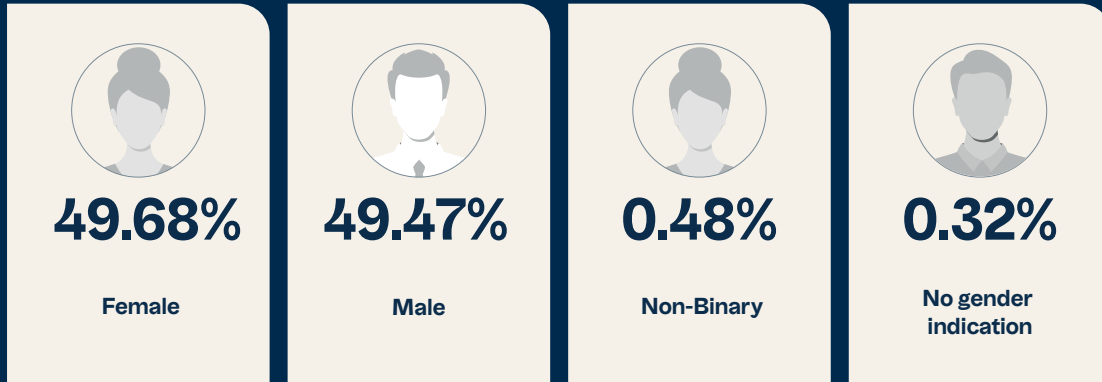
The Global Irish Survey for
Individuals: | **6,503**
Eligible Submissions.

The Global Irish Survey for
Organisations: | **120**
Eligible Submissions.

The Global Irish Survey for
Position Papers: | **36**
Eligible Submissions.

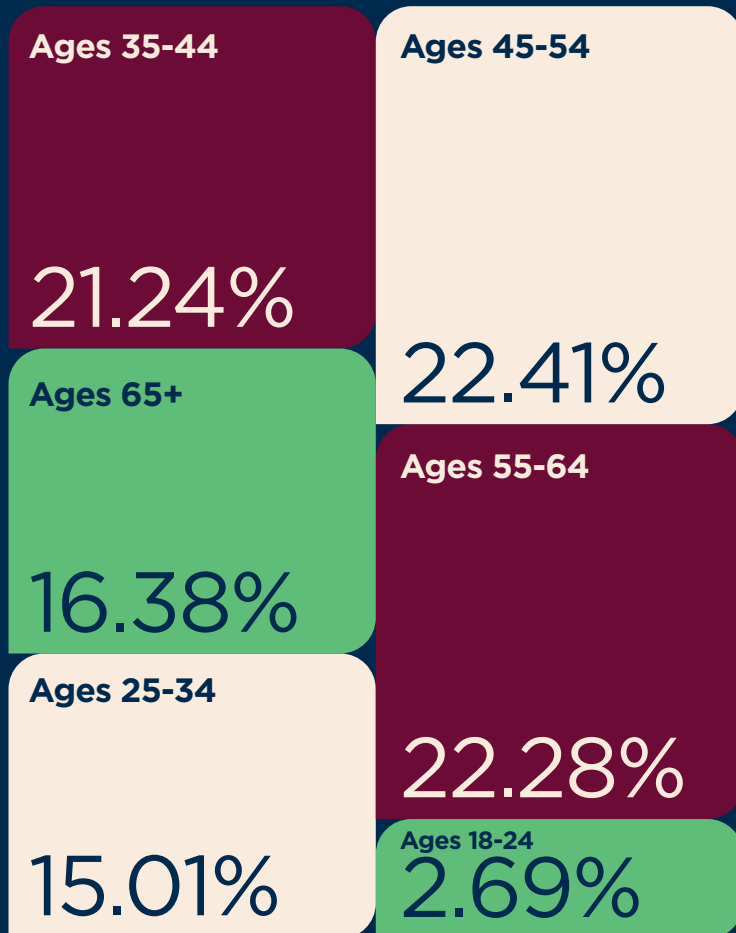
A | Global Irish Survey for Individuals

QUANTITATIVE DATA RESULTS Demographic & Geographic Profile



Gender Balance

The Global Irish Survey for Individuals delivered a strong gender balance with 49.68% female respondents and 49.47% male respondents. Approximately 0.48% of respondents identified as non-binary with 0.32% of respondents preferring not to indicate their gender. The rest of the respondents indicated 'other'.



Age Profile

The age profile of respondents is shown to the left.

In terms of how respondents identified within the diaspora, first-generation (67.00%) and ancestral diaspora (30.46%) were by far the most prevalent with the rest comprising affinity or reverse diaspora. 81.81% of respondents were passport holders.



2.96

Access to reliable information



2.58

Access to community networks and support



2.41

Developing inter-generational relationships

Challenges Faced by the Diaspora

Respondents ranked key challenges as follows (out of 4.00): access to reliable information (2.96), advancing access to community networks and support (2.58), developing inter-generational relationships (2.41) and immigration status (2.05). The qualitative data analysis provides additional insight into specific challenges noted as explored in the wider report.

Supporting the Next Generation

The survey recommended critical innovations in supporting the next generation of the Irish diaspora including more extensive pre-departure support. Respondents ranked supports as follows (out of 5.00): better access to existing Irish diaspora organisations/networks abroad (3.94), access to information pre-departure from Ireland (3.41), digital engagement/support tools (2.85), participation in community events in countries of destination (2.74) and support to create their own diaspora networks/organisations and peer networks (2.07).

Qualitative Data Insights of Global Irish Surveys for Individuals

The qualitative data shared by respondents indicated strong thematic findings and helped to identify specific considerations for the new strategy. Specific issues raised most consistently blended across topics above such as barriers to return, challenges in the community and support for the next generation of the diaspora are listed below. They are not listed in order of importance but as a snapshot of the key issues raised by respondents.

They are as follows:

Mental health, loneliness, advice on financial implications of returning to Ireland, expansion of pathways to citizenship for ancestral diaspora, immigration support to non-Irish spouses, special consideration for the diaspora in access to tertiary education, wider issues pertaining to access to education, specialised consideration of incentives to return, recognition of skills, qualifications and career progress abroad, quality of employment in Ireland, infrastructural development in Ireland to enhance return to non-urban centres, cost of housing and living, geographical density of diaspora organisations and voting rights.

In terms of the priorities for the new strategy, several of the issues raised above were key recommendations along with the following additions:

Ensuring cultural heritage and advancing generational engagement, promotion of Irish language, strategic economic engagement, strategic academic collaborations, strategic research, development and innovation collaborations, engagement of creative industries, promoting Irish values, continued investment in diaspora supports/networks and enhanced diaspora diplomacy.

Given the depth of data, this list is by no means exhaustive. It is also important to note that certain elements of the findings are outside the mandate of the DFAT. The research report accompanying the publication of this survey provides more in-depth analysis of these findings.

B | Global Irish Survey for Organisations

QUANTITATIVE DATA RESULTS

Structure and Size of the Organisations

Respondents had to have the primary mission of being “directly and primarily focused on engaging, servicing or supporting the Irish diaspora” to be eligible. Of the respondents, 25.83% were founders and 74.17% were a director/executive leader. 86.67% identified as a not-for-profit, 3.33% identified as an informal group, 2.50% were a for-profit organisation and 7.50% identified as other.

Organisations varied in size with staffing and volunteering levels broken down as follows: 1 – 5 people (27.50%), 6 – 10 people (20.00%), 10 – 20 people (22.50%), 20 – 50 people (10.83%), 50 – 100 people (5.00%) and >100 people (14.17%). In terms of the size of the community engaged annually, the diaspora organisations indicate good value for money given the size of community engaged being: 1 – 99 people (17.50%), 100 – 299 people (22.50%), 300 – 499 people (12.50%), 500 – 999 people (9.17%), > 1000 people (38.33%).

Audience & Engagement Priorities

The primary audiences engaged by the diaspora organisations also provide important guidance on successes and areas for creative action. The prominence of older age groups (post-45 age groups) in the most populous engagement categories (i.e., ranked 1 or 2 by organisations of audience engaged) shows that the diaspora organisational architecture at that level is built.

A relatively light priority of early age group engagement may be correlated to the fact that the early journey of emigration may not rush an affiliation to a diaspora organisation. It is, however, problematic in other areas. It may indicate a shortcoming in terms of strategically nurturing generational diaspora engagement when viewed through the lens of ancestral or affinity diaspora. Furthermore, the deeper activation of engagement among individuals aged 25-34, and more particularly those aged 35-44 ranking 2 and 3, suggests that there is scope to develop pathways for earlier involvement within these age groups.

Important progress has been made in engaging the diversity of the diaspora with multiple heritage Irish ranked as the second most engaged diasporic identity. However, more work needs to be done to support marginalised communities such as LGBTQI communities, traveller communities and survivors of institutional abuse based on the data.

Some of the priority engagement areas provide spaces to develop this with the main areas noted being culture, heritage & sport, alumni engagement, youth engagement, philanthropy and business. Additional guidance in the position papers amplified the importance of ensuring marginalised communities are engaged centrally in the design and delivery of engagement of their communities.

Funding & Challenges

Organisations indicated a blended resourcing model. In terms of funding supports, organisations ranked the following resources in importance (out of 5.00): funding from Government of Ireland [for example, the Emigrant Support Programme, (ESP)] (3.38), charitable donations/philanthropic support (3.38), membership fees (2.88), revenue from goods or services sold through the organisation (2.73), funding from Government where the organisation is based (2.63).

In terms of challenges, the primary ones listed by percentage of respondents included: lack of long-term funding (24.60%), access to staff/volunteers (17.70%), awareness/trust from the diaspora (13.76%), digital capacity (12.64%) and training of leadership/staff/volunteers (10.67%).

Supports & Priorities

In relation to supports that diaspora organisations would like to see, the supports ranked in priority were as follows (out of 6.00): provide grant funding to support operations [for example, Emigrant Support Programme] (4.28), support strategic networking across Irish diaspora organisations [digital and in-person] (3.24), provide capacity building training to support organisational development [e.g., governance and fundraising] (2.77), support access/information/networking to diversified, non-government funding opportunities (2.42) and support more engagement with diplomatic missions (2.28).

Diaspora organisations indicated that the following should be the main priorities for the new strategy: culture, heritage & sport (4.78), advocacy for the Irish diaspora (4.37), digital engagement/support to the diaspora (3.63), support for the most vulnerable in the diaspora (3.31), economic engagement (2.83), support to return to live, work and study in Ireland (2.10).

C | Global Irish Position Papers

The Global Irish Position Papers served as an important tool for representative bodies at home and abroad to submit policy inputs on behalf of their constituencies and their interests. They also provided space for returned Irish emigrants to input their perspectives. This also ensured they served as an idea bank for the development of the new strategy and some of those ideas are shared in the full report to follow.

For the purposes of the Executive Summary, a thematic analysis is best served to capture the range of inputs. The key themes that emerged were:



• **Appreciating Diaspora Diplomacy:**

Within the position papers, there was a strong recognition of the support and leadership provided by the DFAT. There was also a dawning realisation that the nature of diaspora diplomacy is shifting and that the government cannot be expected to do it on their own. There were concrete ways recommended to build new forms of diplomacy and partnerships to engage the diaspora.

- **Evolving to Evidence-Based Wellbeing:**

Another consistent theme was a strong advocacy towards the sustaining of the ESP, (Emigrant Support Programme). Strong appreciation was shared on the intrinsic value that the ESP provides. However, support was indicated to ensure that more evidence-based interventions are shaped to track real-time data on the shifts of priorities from the community and the challenges they face.

- **Infrastructure of Return:**

A strong demand emerged for clearer guidance and inter-agency coordination on supporting return for first-generation and ancestral diaspora. Additional insight was drawn on the importance of supporting practical elements of return as shared earlier in the executive summary in areas like financial advice, visa support, skills recognition, among others.

- **Organisational & Leadership Development:**

Strategic thought was shared in respect to how to build organisational and leadership capacity within the diaspora. This was reflected in their appreciation of key civic partners and networks as front-line partners for diaspora engagement.

- **Generational Belonging through Community & Language:**

The position papers also highlighted the power of intergenerational engagement as a key part of the reframing of Ireland's diaspora engagement work. The importance of incentivising student return, the promotion of the Irish language and wider inter-generational engagement was strong across several of the submissions.

- **New Technologies – Blending AI with Immersive Experience:**

Another important theme to emerge was the recommendation to embrace AI and new technologies. Critical insights were shared on how this could optimise pre-departure support as well as in-field diaspora engagement. This was not to overtake in-person convenings through diplomatic engagement or platforms like the Global Irish Civic Forum but to supplement them.

- **Inspiration through Values:**

A strong consistent theme across the papers was to ensure Ireland's work on diaspora continues to be led by a values-led and inclusive model. Inclusivity cut across many of the above themes. This included a noticeable concern amongst the diaspora on the perception of Ireland and the nation's reputation in the world in relation to anti-immigrant and far right agitation. This has also translated to some of the perceptions and opinions shared by a cohort of the diaspora. This divisiveness needs to be diluted.

D | Analytical Recommendations

The recommendations are based on the opportunities created from the progress built in previous strategies, as well as the data-led insights generated through the consultation. The recommendations provided here are done so by TDI and do not reflect the views of the DFAT. They collectively assert that:

The opportunity now for Ireland is for ambitious and bold leadership on ideas that reimagine diaspora engagement that meets our history, our present and our future.

This can scale partnerships across the public, private and non-profit sectors in Irish diaspora engagement, as a national asset, and diaspora engagement, as a diplomatic asset.

This will help drive Ireland's diplomatic and economic security as well as the secure and sustain the vitality and wellbeing of the Irish diaspora.

The Global Irish Survey for Individuals unpacked the critical intentionality required to engage the Irish diaspora across different geographic locations. The data proves that the Irish diaspora is not homogenous with different needs and ambitions for engagement across different geographies. An important strategic opportunity is now emerging for the new strategy to further build tailored engagement across geographies.

This can bring critical support to the diaspora across the key thematic priorities identified across the individual survey, organisational survey and position papers. These findings include a stronger demand for more robust engagement with diplomatic missions and domestic actors in Ireland. This was most prominent in relation to the importance of advocacy on issues important to the diaspora (in Ireland and abroad) and support for the wellbeing of the diaspora.

A primary finding of the surveys was a deepening fusion of domestic and foreign policy in shaping the next iteration of diaspora engagement within the new strategy. This is reflected in the growing recognition within public policy by the Government of Ireland of the positive impacts of diaspora engagement for Ireland, as well as the importance of fostering active domestic advocacy for issues faced by the Irish diaspora. The latter was most prominent, for example, in relation to returning to Ireland.

Additional findings focused on the evolving nature of vulnerabilities within the community. The quantitative and qualitative data emphasised the ongoing importance of supporting front-line services through community organisations to ensure the wellbeing of the diaspora. This is an invaluable networked approach to supporting the diaspora. This included innovations on how to better shape communication and engagement mechanisms to support life cycle and life-long engagement for the diaspora. By extension, this correlated with the organisational priorities to ensure more effective capacity, governance and sustainability for diaspora organisations to better serve and engage the diaspora.

Another important finding focused on the continued prioritisation of culture, heritage and sport in diaspora engagement. A renewed commitment to ensuring generational engagements across identity and heritage shone through the data. The practical implementation of this was a strong theme focusing on partnerships across sectors including academia, creative industries, gender, sports and youth sectors, to name a few. It was clear across the data that different levels of identification, belonging, connectivity and engagement were active across the diaspora. This strategy can help ensure all levels are increasingly engaged through digital tools and real-life experiences.

Within this, the data also signalled new opportunities to elevate diaspora diplomacy and economic engagement to new levels in response to shifting geopolitical realities facing Ireland and the globe. This can help shape a new frontier embedded into the new strategy to ensure effective coherence of this strategy across the Programme for Government in relation to priorities such as competitiveness, innovation, investment and talent attraction. The findings spoke to the importance of building networked relationships that celebrate connections to Ireland. They also highlighted the significance of relationships that work to activate new forms of contributions from the island of Ireland to the diaspora, as well as between the island of Ireland and the diaspora.

Finally, the inter-disciplinary research situating the surveys and position papers also identified an emergent diplomatic opportunity for Ireland to reaffirm its commitments to multilateralism and the principles of global cooperation through diaspora engagement. This is rooted in the rising prominence of diaspora engagement as a policy priority across the globe including within international development. This positions diaspora engagement as a unique diplomatic asset for Ireland to further elevate its global reputation and influence by sharing its proud history and models of work in this increasingly important policy area for counterparts across the globe.

E | Policy Recommendations

Based on the analytical recommendations, five primary policy interventions can be enacted to action the recommendations as follows:

- **Invest in the Partnerships of Implementation (Domestic and Diaspora Based):**

There is a critical opportunity to invest in a streamlined implementation model on diaspora engagement that integrates a whole-of-government approach with strategic partnerships with selective partners in the private and third sectors. This can ensure effective diaspora engagement across critical policy priorities for the government and the diaspora alike, in areas such as community care, heritage, investment, research, sport, trade, welfare provision among others. This can happen domestically and in the diaspora. For example, the latter can focus on deeper connectivity across diaspora organisations.

- **Invest in Generational Policy:**

The vitality of the global Irish diaspora cannot be taken for granted. Policy interventions should be enacted to ensure that critical sectors in Ireland and in the diaspora are empowered to invest in this vitality across generations. This will mean understanding there are different forms of Irish belonging active today and they will likely change over time. There must be a balance between driving robust return of impact through the strategy with a policy consciousness that some investments will be loss-leaders to secure the vitality of the Irish diaspora across generations. This will require firm communication across policy and public domains – at home and abroad.

- **Invest in the Policy of Diaspora Return:**

There is an increasing urgency to enhance advocacy and policy reform to enact a more comprehensive policy of diaspora return. This cuts across informational flows to practical policy incentivisation of return for the diaspora. This can be both physical and virtual return in terms of the scope of engagements built. Given the mandate of the DFAT, it will likely operate across different roles in this policy architecture from advocate, facilitator to implementer.

- **Invest in the Capacity of Diaspora Diplomacy:**

Strategic investment in the infrastructure of the DFAT has laid the groundwork for diplomatic innovation for Ireland. Strategic support can be positioned to enhance the existing human resource capacity of the DFAT to prioritise diaspora diplomacy within this new infrastructure. This can secure important gains in supporting and engaging the Irish diaspora as well as positioning diaspora engagement as a vehicle for Irish leadership globally in a specialist area for bilateral and multilateral frameworks. The data is clear on the size of this opportunity – diaspora engagement is now a global norm in public policy.

- **Invest in the Economic Policy of Diaspora Engagement:**

There is a preeminent opportunity to re-imagine the economic relationship between Ireland and the global diaspora. This cuts across competitiveness, entrepreneurship (domestic and diaspora-based), investment, trade promotion and philanthropy. Strategic policy innovation can build a more robust and compelling economic toolset to unlock the diaspora capital built within the Irish diaspora. The new strategy should not underestimate this potential as it arrives at a time where there are increasing expectations of public policy to represent strong value to the public purse. There is a strong opportunity now to bring policy, industry, research and philanthropy closer together to reshape the future financing of diaspora engagement in Ireland.



Introduction

As part of an integrated strategy development process for the Government’s new National Diaspora Strategy, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in partnership with The Diaspora Institute (TDI) enacted a digital consultation process with the global Irish diaspora. This came in the form of three main consultative tools:

- **The Global Irish Survey for Individuals** → [Section 02](#)
- **The Global Irish Survey for Organisations** → [Section 03](#)
- **The Global Irish Survey Position Papers** → [Section 04](#)

These tools supplemented the extensive in-person consultations hosted respectively by Neale Richmond T.D., the Minister of State for International Development and Diaspora with support from colleagues across the DFAT.

Methodological Note

These consultative tools were developed to ensure an inclusive and participatory approach. Critical eligibility criteria were set within the surveys to ensure they engaged the intended audience to secure the suitability of data collected.

The spirit of this research was to be an active listening exercise to capture insights from as many as possible across the community profile of the diaspora. However, it is important to note that methodological limitations were naturally expected in this work. For example, a primary and important component of Ireland’s diaspora engagement is supporting the diaspora, particularly those most marginalised and vulnerable. It is natural that many such diaspora voices may not have been able to respond to the GIS Individual Survey. Therefore, the data findings must be read in respect of that limitation.

This is why the GIS Individual Survey formed part of a more extensive consultation methodology including in-person consultations from the DFAT. The other consultative tools, namely the GIS Organisational Survey and GIS Position Papers, were also provided as tools for representative bodies of such diaspora voices to submit inputs on their behalf. The analysis that follows reflects the totality of data available to TDI across these tools.

In terms of implementation, the surveys were built through robust software with various functionalities to ensure safety of the data collection and analysis process. This was monitored daily by TDI.

The design of the surveys ensured a blend of quantitative and qualitative questions were embedded in the surveys. This was to provide opportunities for respondents to input freely on their aims, concerns and hopes for the future of diaspora engagement.

The researchers were encouraged by the DFAT to ensure that no issue was off-limits. This is important to acknowledge. The authors of this report would like to acknowledge the kind support of colleagues across the DFAT for their active promotion of the survey.

Naturally, with such an approach, this unearthed areas of importance for the diaspora that may be outside the remit of the DFAT. These include issues such as cost of housing and living as well as the outcomes associated with issues such as quality of life, work-life balance and so forth.

That noted, such findings also amplify an emerging rationale for a maturation of a more coherent public policy framework to support the work of DFAT within diaspora engagement. This extends towards the potential work ahead to ensure a more integrated technical and operational framework for implementation of the new strategy. This will need to link engagement across the public, private and third sectors. The findings indicate that this system needs to be built within Ireland for applications within Ireland and across the diaspora.

Upon closure of the survey, an extensive data cleaning process was enacted upon the approval of the DFAT. This process built evaluative criteria that provided robust measures to ensure quality and effectiveness of the dataset. Again, additional functionalities to support this were built into the software used to implement the survey.

This was done in respect of the spirit of this exercise to be an extensive listening exchange with the global Irish family. Therefore, the methodology was shaped to ensure that a reliable dataset from as many voices as possible was achieved.

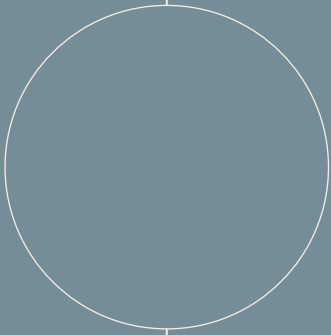
Another important tool in this regard was the Global Irish Position Papers. This tool helped ensure that representative bodies – across the public, private and third sectors at home and abroad – could submit inputs on behalf of their constituencies. As noted above, this was particularly important for organisations that represent constituencies that may not have been able to access the individual or organisational surveys. Furthermore, the in-person consultations helped tackle any methodological shortcomings in areas such as digital access or digital literacy.

Based on this extensive methodological process, for each of these tools, the following final submissions were achieved:

Consultative Tool	Number of Cleaned Submissions
The Global Irish Survey for Individuals	6,503
The Global Irish Survey for Organisations	120
The Global Irish Survey Position Papers	36

Table 1 Breakdown of Submissions across Research Tools

This report provides the findings extracted from the data across these submissions. Before delving into those, the report opens with a short situational analysis on the evolving domestic and foreign policy realities the new strategy will find itself operating within.



01.

**Diaspora Engagement:
Bridging Ireland's
Domestic and
Foreign Policy**

“

What Ireland needs most is a foreign policy narrative that connects strategic necessity with civic imagination”.¹

The new diaspora strategy comes at a period where domestic and foreign policies active today are entering a new age of volatility and uncertainty. It is a turbulent world increasingly defined by tanks and tariffs. As Peter Drucker famously noted:

“

The greatest danger in times of turbulence is not the turbulence; it is to act with yesterday’s logic”.²

This new age demands policy and operational innovation. It is shaped by some forces within Ireland’s control, while others are sadly not. The lines between domestic and foreign policy have blurred. The sharp reality is that the Government’s new Diaspora Strategy faces a sizeable task in meeting new demands from Ireland’s domestic and diaspora audiences. As Tonra notes above, it needs to spark and sustain civic imagination coupled with the pragmatism of strategic necessity.

The unique value proposition of diaspora engagement as public policy is rooted in its adaptability and its low-cost effectiveness when done well. This positions the new strategy as a domain of innovation within public policy in Ireland if it can effectively bridge the success of the past with the strategic necessities of the present and actively re-imagine the future of diaspora engagement for Ireland’s security.

Meeting the Domestic Moment: “Diasporising” Ireland’s Programme for Government
The current Programme for Government (PfG) provides important signalling of how the new strategy can serve the future intentions of public policy. Within the PfG, there are diverse and timely opportunities for diaspora engagement to be a critical accelerator and enabler of the ambitions built within it.

The Government’s new Diaspora Strategy can primarily bring important results and progress in interventions focused on security, values, competitiveness & change, thriving communities, balanced development, all-island peace and reconciliation as well as international influence. This is achieved through understanding and applying the agility of diaspora capital.

Diaspora capital, as defined by The Diaspora Institute, relates to the:



Resources available to places and organisations and consists of networks, finance, ideas, attitudes and concerns from those with a connection or affinity to those places and organisations”.³

The PfG also has direct interventions in diaspora engagement which signal a growing appreciation of this agility. These are visualised below in Table 2:

Direct Diaspora Reference with PfG ⁴
Launch the Year of the Invitation, extending a global invitation for visitors to reconnect with Ireland, following on from the success of The Gathering in 2013. This event will inspire local communities to organise welcoming events, celebrating Irish culture and reconnecting with the global diaspora.
Develop a new diaspora strategy to ensure that the new generation and profile of emigrants are aware of and can access support overseas and develop our international diaspora networks using online and data-based initiatives
Develop a programme for young adults from the diaspora to develop a new generation of ties within the global Irish network.
Develop a specific strategy to grow the Irish diaspora in the US.

Table 2 Direct References to Diaspora in PfG

The direct and indirect applications of diaspora engagement for the PfG are an influential guide on where the new strategy should prioritise. This will likely require a maturing of the groundwork built in previous strategies. This is only accelerated in the context of the international realities that this strategy will operate in.

Meeting the International Moment: Re-imagining Irish Diaspora Engagement



Going forward, there is no shortage of reasons for international actors to engage with diaspora”.⁵

Change, it seems, is the only guaranteed constant of 21st century geopolitics and geoeconomics. It is leaving its mark on the world. The world is becoming more protectionist, isolationist and transactional. This is fundamentally shifting the diplomatic and economic realities facing Ireland.

Geopolitical upheaval, digital transformation, economic disruption and other outcomes of change are bringing new dawns of challenge. There are also opportunities in such change for Ireland that the new strategy can advance.

These new international realities are also important contextually for this research and the new diaspora strategy. They are evolving the mission of diaspora engagement for Ireland.

Echoing the PfG, the mission of diaspora engagement for Ireland must now legitimately explore missions of reputational security, economic resilience, competitiveness

and other areas. These are fundamentally different skillsets than some of the primary engagements in previous strategies.

They are, quite simply, different types of diaspora engagement. At the core of this is one simple realisation:

Nations, places and organisations now need their global friends around the world more than ever before. They need the capitals of consistency such networks of belonging and friendship represent. Diasporas are the primary example of these networks operating at the global scale, especially for smaller nations. They are gateways to influence, reputation, power, prosperity and security.

Embracing the Changing World of the Irish Diaspora

This changing world is being redefined for the Irish diaspora too. The analysis from the surveys that follows in this report confirms this. The challenges and vulnerabilities facing the diaspora are changing. Political insecurity is breeding societal instability in certain geographies. Domestic politics – in Ireland and in the countries where the diaspora reside – are determining outcomes in other areas such as the ability and willingness to return to Ireland.

Technological change is reshaping the community infrastructure and information flows. Most importantly, in terms of priorities for the new strategy, change in how Ireland engages the diaspora is being recommended from the data collected in this research. This is evolutionary rather than revolutionary change.

It is wiring community engagement, diaspora diplomacy and economics at the heart of what the Irish diaspora is asking for. This can play out in established areas such as advocacy, culture, heritage, and sport whilst bringing new energies in areas such as competitiveness, innovation and talent attraction, to name a few.

Unleashing Diaspora Diplomacy for Ireland's Security

Building this momentum through the Government's new Diaspora Strategy is grounded in firm academic consideration also. This speaks to ensuring the strategy also delivers on the commitment by the government to more coherently integrate research, policy and industry in shaping public policy design and implementation.

For example, diaspora diplomacy has been earmarked as a new standard of diplomatic excellence in the networked age. It has been designated as **“an emerging and increasingly important dimension of international and transnational relations”**.⁶ Diasporas have been positioned as playing **“multifaceted, complex, and critical”** roles in international diplomacy and politics.⁷

This is driven by the emerging opportunities shaped by **“new geographies of connectivity, which are remaking the relationship between states and citizens”**.⁸ In these new geographies, diasporas are:

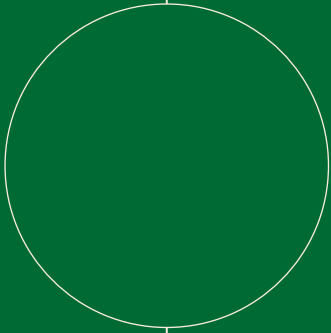


Actively engaging arenas of transnational commerce, communications and politics in ways that disrupt normative ideas and practices of global governance, reflecting the polylateral relationships of power in an increasingly networked world”.⁹

The PfG and other public policy terrains are amplifying the necessity for the next strategy to evolve the mission of diaspora engagement. The increased visibility of diaspora engagement in strategic priorities such as the *Government Action Plan for Market Diversification*, Ireland’s *Business Event 2030 strategy*, Ireland’s International Sports Diplomacy Framework, A New Era for Irish Tourism National Tourism Policy Statement, all published in 2025, signal this.¹⁰ Other established strategic priorities such as *Global Citizens 2023 Talent and Innovation Strategy and A Better World: Ireland’s Policy for International Development* articulate this diaspora opportunity.¹¹

This is just a snapshot of the policy and strategic agility offered by diaspora engagement as a public policy toolset. This is the depth of the asset it represents for Ireland. This does not mean that the new strategy loses sight of its strong grounding in serving and supporting the Irish diaspora. It can find a potent blend.

This is a mindset shift in terms of how the strategic approach to diaspora engagement in Ireland – through policy and implementation – is treated. Diaspora engagement must be seen as a unique asset for Ireland and invested in accordingly to effectively unlock that asset.



02.

**Global Irish Survey
for Individuals**

This section of the report outlines the core findings from the data collected in the Global Irish Survey for Individuals. It is broken into three main subsections.

The first assesses the profile of the community based on the data shared by survey respondents.

This looks at topics such as demographic profile, community network infrastructure of the diaspora and intention to return to Ireland.

The second focuses on assessing the key challenges facing the community as well as the preferred supports and priorities for the next strategy indicated by the respondents. The final section builds a comparative analysis (across geographies and age) to amplify key insights for segmented diaspora engagement across different markets.

2.1 Community Profile of Respondents

This subsection outlines the demographic and community network infrastructure of the diaspora as indicated by survey respondents. Another important data point is included in terms of the intention of the respondents to return to Ireland (to live, work or study). This is included as these data points collectively shape insight on how to support the diaspora where they are and if they wish to return to Ireland.

As will become increasingly evident through the analysis at an individual and organisational level, the needs and opportunities to be built with Ireland's diaspora engagement model are maturing and evolving. Diasporas are never static; the data is telling that reality. This represents a new policy demand in Ireland to build an agile architecture of policy and strategy-based coherence to engage the diaspora.

An early lesson to keep in mind is that this is proof that there is no such thing as the Irish diaspora. There are many different diasporas across age, geography, interests and so forth. These all required tailored engagement.

This is an opportunity. On one hand, it can help ensure the strong record of impact of the DFAT in engaging and supporting the Irish diaspora is secured. It can also unearth new opportunities to advance the socio-economic wellbeing of the diaspora and Ireland.

It must be noted that this cannot be deemed the work of the DFAT alone. The department is the leading institutional actor but activating the future of Ireland's diaspora engagement model will need to embrace the "Team Ireland" mindset – across the public, private and third sectors.

There are many different diasporas across age, geography, interests, and so forth.

2.1.1 Demographic Breakdown of Respondents

Gender and Age of Respondents

The Global Irish Survey for Individuals delivered a strong gender balance with 49.68% female respondents and 49.47% male respondents. Approximately 0.48% of respondents identified as non-binary with 0.32% of respondents preferring not to indicate their gender. The survey also achieved a strong representation across ages as visualised on the next page.

In terms of the age profile, 18 – 24 year olds represented 2.69% of respondents, 25 – 34 years represented 15.01%, 35 – 44 represented 21.24%, 45 – 54 represented 22.41%, 55 – 64 represented 22.28% and over 65s represented 16.38%.

Whilst indicating a strong need to find ways of engaging younger diaspora in the future, there may be mitigating factors for the lower responses in the 18 – 24 range.

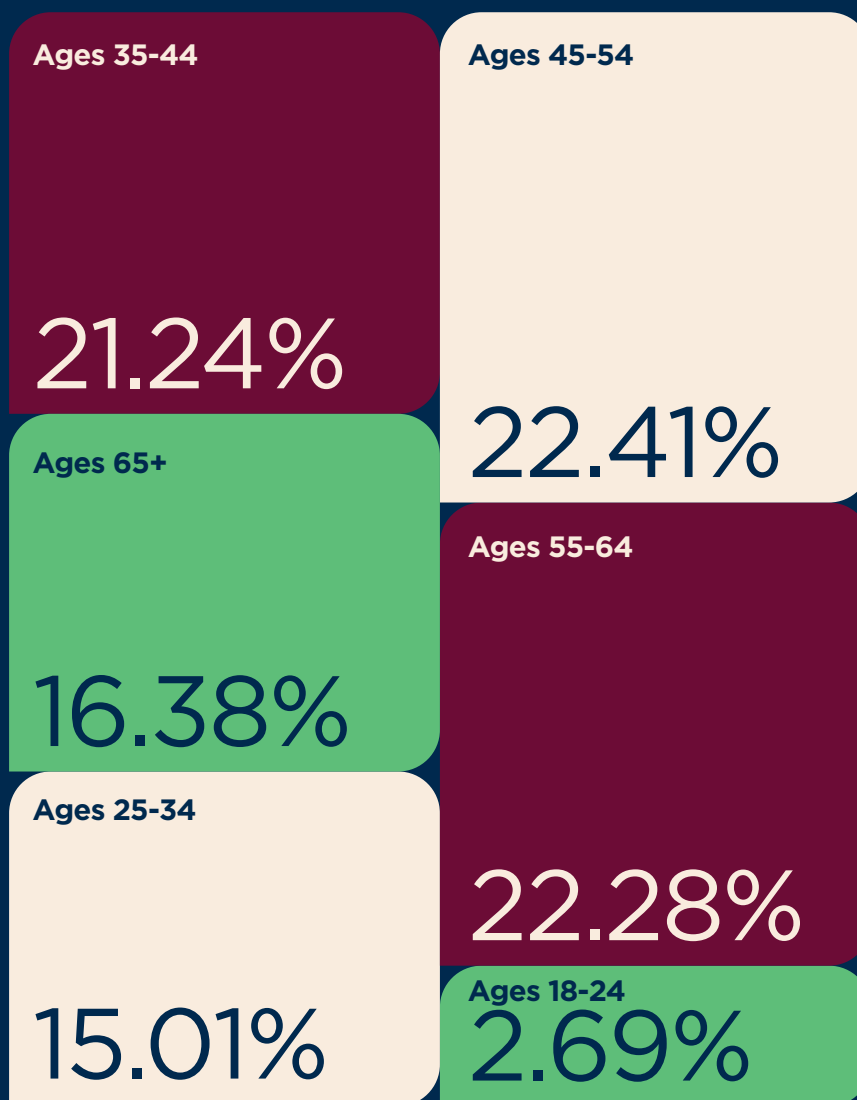


Figure 1 Age Profile of Respondents of Global Irish Survey for Individuals

These include that many in this age range may not categorise themselves as diaspora given the infancy of their migratory journey. Similarly, it may speak to a need to ensure stronger generational diaspora engagement to ensure engagement of ancestral diaspora youth. For example, of those who identified as ancestral diaspora only 4.34% of respondents were aged 18 – 24 and 11.21% were aged 25 – 34.

Identities of Respondents

In terms of how respondents identified within the diaspora, first-generation diaspora (67.00%) and ancestral diaspora (30.46%) were by far the most prevalent with 81.81% of respondents being passport holders. The high level of passport holders may also signal a dormant potential for Ireland in that the sense of belonging is strong within the diaspora. This is pronounced when weighed against the number of respondents active within organisations explored later.

Passport holders
82%

Ireland’s previous diaspora strategies were forward looking in how they integrated definitional innovation into their framing of Irish diaspora engagement (affinity and reverse diaspora). This was important to ensure that Ireland’s model of diaspora engagement delivered on its commitment to a values-led engagement. The respondent base in this survey indicates that more intentional planning may be required to fully activate and unlock the impacts possible through such definitional innovation.

Definitional categories such as affinity diaspora and reverse diaspora have specialist capacities to help Ireland’s domestic and foreign policy. This is more pronounced in areas such as alumni engagement, diplomacy, education, trade and investment, philanthropy and more. Closing the gap between definitional innovation and active engagement is an important one in this regard.

Beyond the diaspora framing, respondents were asked what identity they most strongly identify with. The question allowed for more than one answer to ensure inclusion of hybrid identities (for example, a respondent could identify as both Irish of multiple heritage and part of the LGBTQI community). The percentages below in Table 3 relate to the percentage of respondents that indicated the relevant identities. The data indicates that important work remains in ensuring the new strategy engages the full diversity of the Irish diaspora.

Answer Choices	Responses
Irish (White)	94.34%
Irish (Non-White)	0.62%
Irish (Mixed-Race)	1.98%
Irish Traveller Community	0.29%
LGBTQI	5.52%
Other (please specify)	4.78%

Table 3 Percentage of Respondents per Identity (Global Irish Survey for Individuals)

2.1.2 Community Network Infrastructure

Community Involvement and Connection Area

In terms of community network infrastructure, the survey indicates a strong range of diaspora community organisations. This scope ensures there are accessible entry points for the diaspora. Later analysis on challenges and supports indicate that more targeted engagement to translate access to active participation in organisations will be important.

For example, 41.03% of respondents were a member or volunteered with an Irish diaspora organisation. This provides a strong foundation of community engagement to build upon, while also highlighting opportunities to explore ways to encourage greater participation from the diaspora. A dormant majority remains that could be more actively engaged.

It is also important to note that many respondents in the qualitative dataset indicated not feeling part of a group or lamented the geographical distribution towards certain areas as a barrier to engagement. This speaks to the hypothesis that there is a dormant diaspora out there for Ireland. Activating it will require sparking more agency in the diaspora to shape the engagement journey.

The reach of organisations is also telling. In terms of the organisations that respondents felt most connected (i.e., they did not have to be a member or volunteer for these organisations), there was a strong cross-sectoral focus. This is shown in *Figure 2*.

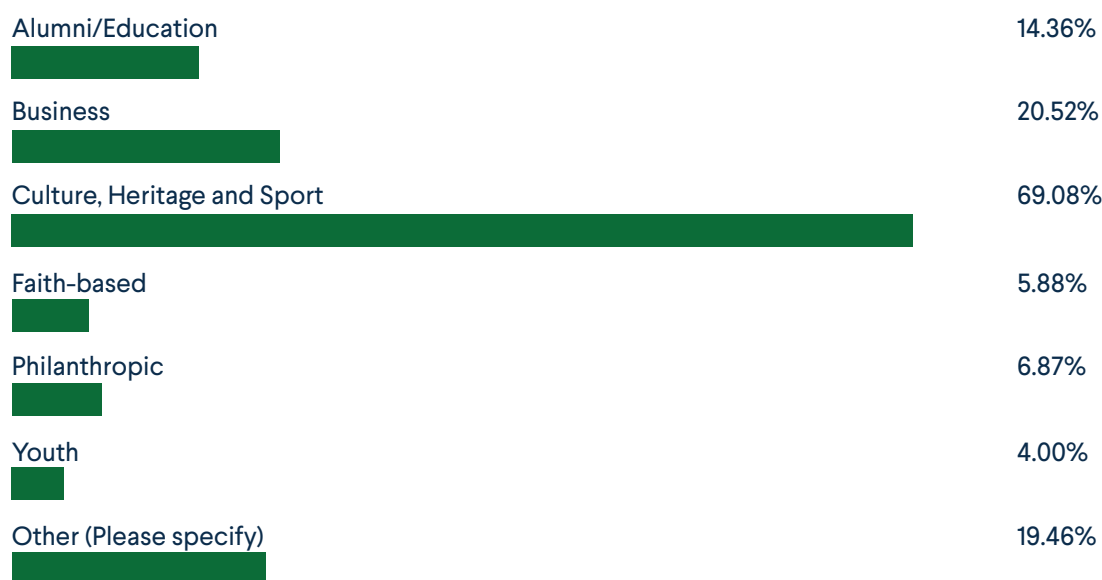


Figure 2 Breakdown of Type of Organisations that Respondents were most connected to (Global Irish Survey for Individuals)

Information Flows

Whilst the areas above provide important insights on the arenas where the diaspora access their connection with Ireland, effective engagement will evolve from understanding the informational flows within the diaspora. The key lesson is that the information flows to and through the Irish diaspora are high-touch and high-tech networks. It is formal and informal. This is a critical balance for the new strategy to get right. This is shown in Table 4.

Answer Choices	Responses
Friends/Family Networks	69.35%
Newspapers	32.76%
Professional Networks (LinkedIn, Industry Associations).	10.81%
Radio	9.79%
Social media	55.30%
Embassies Newsletters/Ireland.ie	8.61%
Television	5.90%

Table 4 Breakdown of Information Tools most used by Respondents of Global Irish Survey for Individuals (By % of Respondents that use those tools).

This would seem to indicate that the communication strategies built within the new strategy must reflect that the informational arenas of engagement are increasingly personable and digital. This can help evolve discussions on how digital diplomacy tools may be enacted to help increase informational exchanges in areas such as pre-departure support, consular services, cultural diplomacy, economic diplomacy and other areas. Artificial Intelligence (AI), for example, can lead to a personalised communication engagement for members of the diaspora based on their interests or needs.

A compelling insight is the collective strength of personal and professional networks in the data. This relates back to considering how the new strategy embeds reimagined diaspora diplomacy. It pushes towards the networked dimensions shared earlier. The DFAT must give strategic thought on how it can empower its diplomatic staff and wider diaspora engagement model to be a trusted network of the diaspora.

A determining characteristic of how to transform community engagement and informational flow is also understanding how these may evolve across the different segments of the diaspora that want to return, are unsure about return and those who do not want to return.

2.1.3 Intention to Return: The Depth of Ireland's Diaspora Opportunity

The answer to this question is critically important in articulating the need for segmentation in diaspora engagement. Moreover, it is critical in showcasing how this segmentation will elevate different levels of emphasis across the geographies of engagement.

For example, for those that want to return, the engagement will be blended between the domestic and the diaspora landscapes. For those unsure, it will be more in the diaspora landscape to help them make the final decision with ongoing access to the domestic landscape. For those that do not want to return, it will be about service provision where they are and engagement mechanisms so they can truly connect to and engage with Ireland across their lifelong journey.

This is the nuanced science of lifelong diaspora engagement.

The data from the question on return shows the depth of the diaspora opportunity for Ireland. Only 24.67% of respondents indicated that they did not want to return. 34.66% indicated that they wanted to return and 40.67% were unsure as visualised below in *Figure 3*.

In essence, there were 4,899 out of the 6,503 respondents open to returning. This is a phenomenal asset.

Of those open to return, the majority were aged between 25 – 54, with the following breakdown (17.27% aged 25 – 34, 22.47% aged 35 – 44 and 23.39% aged 45 – 54). This is an opportunity for Ireland in terms of the new strategy being an active contributor to other public policy domains in Ireland such as talent attraction, market diversification and other areas of importance.

Respondents
open to returning
4899

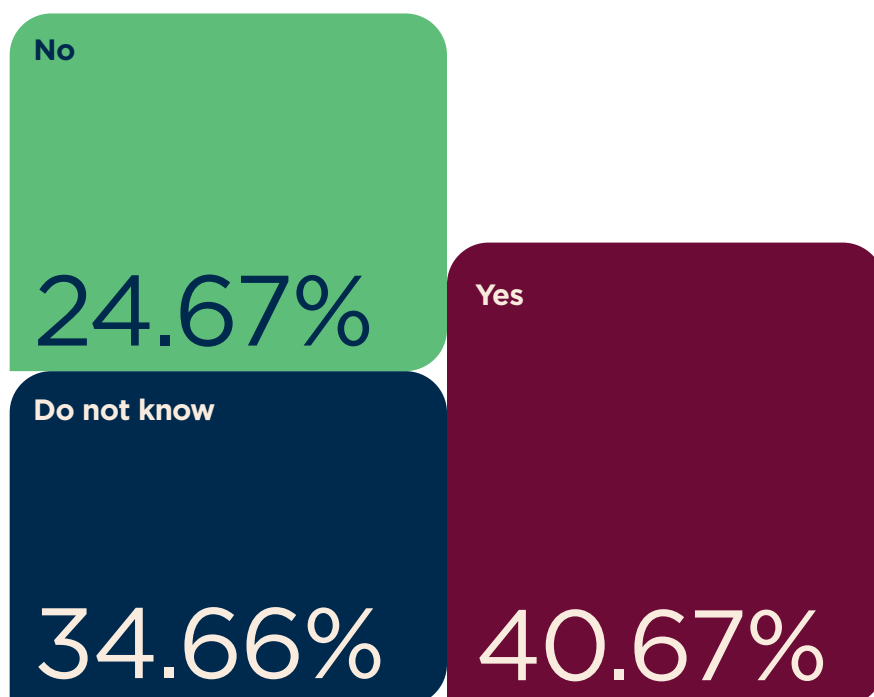


Figure 3 Intention to Return to Ireland across Respondents of Global Irish Survey for Individuals

Most respondents indicated that they wish to see this happen primarily within the next cycle of the national strategy. 29.40% envisage returning in the next two years, 34.26% envisage returning in the next 3 to 5 years and 25.45% envisage returning in the next 6 to 10 years. This data organically points to the next critical dataset for consideration – the specific supports that respondents wish to see to make return happen.

Envisage returning
in next 3-5 years
34%

Barriers to Return and Preferred Supports

In terms of the barriers to return, the data indicated issues that can be directly or indirectly impacted by DFAT through policy advocacy or service provision. It is important to note that certain barriers such as the cost of housing and living were prominent barriers for return (for those both willing and unsure on return). Such issues were also a prominent reason for those who do not want to return.

The report would like to acknowledge such issues but also remain respectful to the scope of work mandated to the DFAT in ensuring that the new strategy is conscious of these contextual forces but is rooted in the realities of what the DFAT can achieve or advocate for. The spirit of these consultation tools was to listen to the diaspora so it is only correct that these issues are noted.

In terms of direct or indirect barriers that the DFAT can help address, respondents that wanted to return ranked the following issues as shown below in *Figure 4*.

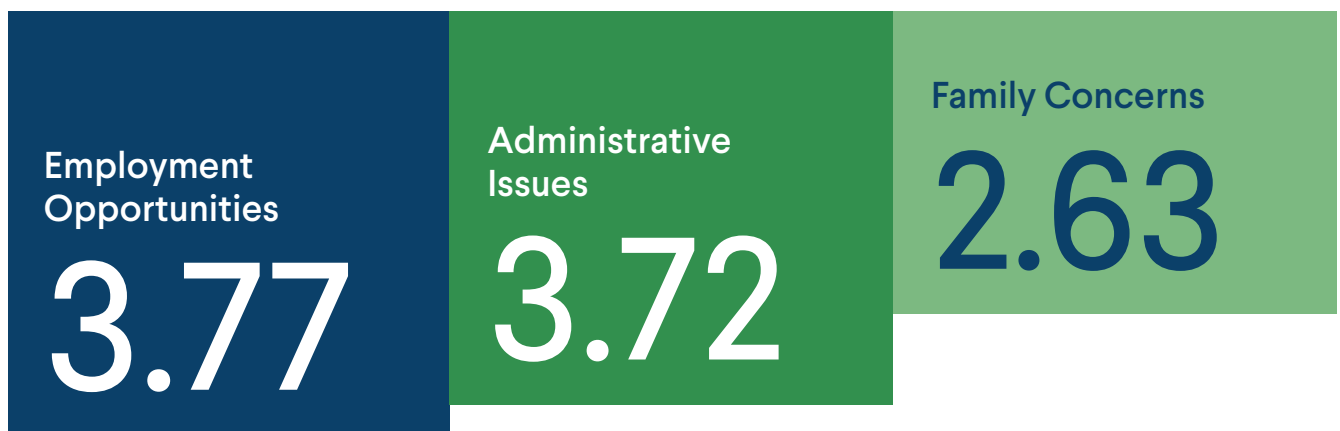


Figure 4 Breakdown of Key Barriers to Return for Respondents in Global Irish Survey for Individuals

This speaks to the necessity to build more robust inter-institutional frameworks for strategy implementation as well as more integrated technical delivery of support services to the diaspora. In addition to barriers, respondents were also asked what supports they would like prioritised to facilitate return to Ireland. This data is outlined in the next paragraph.

Respondents ranked (out of 4.00) the options as follows: information about employment opportunities and workplace activation programmes (2.83), access to information regarding public service (e.g., Education & Healthcare) (2.80), access to relevant authorities in Ireland (2.74), and social integration back in Ireland (1.63). Previous diaspora strategies have invested well in the correct partnerships to service across these areas.

2.2 Analysis of Key Challenges and Priorities

Addressing support through the prism of intention to return is a limited lens in helping to understand how to more effectively support the diaspora at large. This mission is better served by assessing the main challenges indicated by the respondents overall through the survey. This data can then be cross referenced with insights on how to better support the next generation of the diaspora and the preferred priorities for the new strategy recommended by the respondents to build a holistic portfolio of engagement.

2.2.1 Challenges Facing Community

Extracting an understanding of the challenges facing the community was a complex methodological hurdle. Therefore, to set guidance parameters, a dual quantitative and qualitative approach was taken to understanding challenges. A ranking question was set based on the current engagement frameworks that the DFAT understands to be the key challenges. Additionally, beyond these categorisations of challenges, respondents were provided with an open-ended question to add in other challenges.

The latter was provided so that the diaspora were afforded a space to speak openly to inform the new strategy. The following is an analysis of both those inputs from respondents.



Figure 5 Overview of Main Challenges Faced by Respondents of Global Irish Survey for Individuals

Considering core service provision from DFAT and partners, there was a relatively consistent thread across three core issues facing the community. These were ensuring access to reliable information (2.96), advancing access to community networks and support (2.58) and developing inter-generational relationships (2.41). The recommendations to address these challenges can be extracted from other datasets.

For example, earlier considerations on information flows through the community network infrastructure pinpoint that access to reliable information can be communicated through certain preferred tools (network-based and digital-based tools). This also links to the importance of deeper institutional and implementation cooperation to ensure that the range of reliable information is flowing correctly and regularly validated.

Early interventions from DFAT and partners through platforms such as the Returning to Ireland portal on the Citizens Information Bureau is a prime example of the current informational challenge. It shows that the collection of data is flowing but given the prominence of access to reliable information being recorded as a key challenge, this would indicate that diaspora audiences are not fully aware of such informational tools. A subtext to this raised within the survey was also the ethical use of AI to ensure that disinformation and misinformation is not spread to the diaspora.

Beyond the core service areas, the qualitative inputs from the survey extract some valuable insights when thematically assessed. Across these responses, critical insights emerged across two core themes – environmental challenges and societal challenges faced by the diaspora.

Environmental challenges for the purpose of this report are defined as challenges that relate to the environment of how engagement happens. It can speak to additional issues that may impact the decision of the diaspora to return. It may also relate to issues that impact how they engage economically or politically with Ireland.

Societal challenges relate to more social engagement challenges that the diaspora feel where they are now. It may speak to different senses of vulnerabilities or engagement interests whilst living abroad.

These challenges have been extracted both from the quantitative and qualitative options for the respondents to share their insights on challenges. They are by no means exhaustive in terms of the totality of issues raised (aligned with the consistency of issues such as cost of living and housing) but represent the most consistent challenges raised across the dataset.

A key challenge, this would indicate that diaspora audiences are not fully aware of such informational tools.

Thematic Areas	Insights
Environmental Challenges	Pathways Citizenship (e.g., ancestral); Access to Schools/Costs of Education; Voting Rights; Incentivised Return; Healthcare; Quality of Employment.
Societal Challenges	Mental Health/Loneliness; Cultural Preservation (e.g., Language Supports/Genealogy); Diaspora Diplomacy; Anti-Immigration Sentiment; Political Instability; Quality of Life.

Table 5 Synopsis of Other Challenges noted by Respondents of Global Irish Survey for Individuals

In terms of environmental challenges, there were consistent submissions on issues such as expansion of pathways to citizenship for ancestral diaspora, immigration support to non-Irish spouses, special consideration for the diaspora in access to tertiary education, wider issues on access to education, specialised consideration of incentives to return, recognition of skills, qualifications and career progress abroad, advice on taxation/relocation, access to quality employment in Ireland and voting rights.

A strong thread also emerged on the increasing sense of instability felt by the diaspora due to geopolitical shifts in key countries of destination for the diaspora. This is unpacked in more detail later as it links to critical findings on the key priorities and supports that the diaspora would like to see in the new strategy.

The societal challenges are also informative and partially linked to such geopolitical change. Respondents advocated for a more proactive form of diaspora diplomacy through more interaction with diplomatic missions. The value add of diplomatic outreach was noted repeatedly and several testimonies were provided on the impact of outreach in different parts of the world. Several respondents noted their thanks to DFAT staff for their active engagement and would like to see more.

This report is an example of this in action in the context of diaspora engagement. Embedding a series of regular listening exercises with the diaspora can help deliver on this demand.

The next section of the report will address issues of vulnerability in more detail but the responses on challenges does set the initial consideration that vulnerabilities may be changing. For example, isolation (both individual and for communities not close to central hubs of the diaspora) was raised by respondents. Issues of mental health were also prominent.

Other key societal challenges shared include the desire to ensure the preservation of cultural heritage. Within this area, topics such as language promotion, generational engagement and genealogical engagement were strongly advocated for.

A more sensitive challenge emerged also in that there was a portion of respondents who expressed concern about increasing immigration to Ireland and the impact it may have on their ability to return to Ireland. This also speaks to the importance of ensuring Ireland's reputational security abroad and strategically investing in effective storytelling of current affairs in Ireland.

These concerns are real for many and need acknowledgement. Careful consideration must also be given as to how these perceptions are being formed. In many ways, this speaks to the importance of how Ireland communicates both the values of the nation as a diverse and inclusive society as well as the material value that such immigration brings to Ireland.

This relates to the earlier contention that the new strategy must build civic imagination to meet the different social and political pressures that are emerging in Ireland as well as within the consciousness of some within the diaspora.

2.2.2 Optimising Support for the Community

Other insights generated on support pinpointed a critical suite of practical and technical supports requested by the diaspora. Some were newer in comparison to previous strategies such as the provision of better financial services and financial literacy on returning to Ireland for the diaspora. Others mirrored elements of the challenges outlined earlier.

Technical support of interest raised included areas of better access for non-Irish spouses, reform on education access/costs, healthcare concerns and recognition of skills/qualifications. These reflections that bridge challenges to support also speak to later insights that will be developed around the primary priorities identified by survey respondents for the new strategy.

The environmental and societal challenges along with the technical support clearly show that diaspora engagement is built and delivered both at home and abroad. Such a mindset is even more critical when tackling the issue of supporting more marginalised communities and the next generation of the Irish diaspora.

For marginalised communities, ideas on how to better support them included greater integration of such communities in mainstream engagement platforms. Other ideas included active cultural promotion of their diasporic stories, including more engagement at official events. Essentially, respondents advocated for a rights-based approach of community inclusion and leadership empowerment for such communities from design to delivery of engagement.

In terms of supporting the next generation, the feedback focused on what could be considered pipeline support. This represents a mature appreciation that emigration from Ireland and increased mobility of the diaspora is likely to be a norm in Ireland. The preferred supports are visualised in Figure 6.



Figure 6 Overview of Inputs on How to Best Support the Next Generation of the Irish Diaspora

The primary supports identified were better access to existing organisations (3.94) and pre-departure support (3.41) to help support earlier in the mobility journey. This was followed in priority by digital engagement (2.85) and active inclusion for the next generation in events in the countries they move to (2.74).

Whilst not all next generation emigrants will be young, the likelihood is that a lot of the diaspora in this cohort will fall into such categories. For example, of survey respondents that had lived in Ireland within the last 2 years, 15.80% were aged 18 – 24 and 37.47% were aged 25 – 34. Within a 10-year lens, 5.73% were aged 18 – 24 and 43.50% were aged 25 – 34.

This pipeline support could be a powerful way to address the issues raised earlier about engaging the youth in the diaspora. It can build engagement from the very beginning of the process. This also means the new strategy must focus on what will offer intrinsic value to these cohorts of the diaspora.

Lived in Ireland
within the last 2
years aged 25-34

37%

2.2.3 Priorities for Next Strategy

The final analysis point of this subsection of the report ramps up the focus on the future of Ireland's diaspora engagement by unpacking the data shared by respondents on what they think the priorities of the new strategy should be. This data illustrates that the challenges and supports outlined earlier represent an evolution of engagement with the Irish diaspora that the new strategy can meet.



Figure 7 Ranking of Priorities for New Strategy by Respondents of Global Irish Survey for Individuals

The top ranked priority was advocacy for the Irish diaspora (4.26). This advocacy is clearly a domestic and foreign policy endeavour. This opens important questions on how to better equip DFAT staff with the skills to enhance diaspora diplomacy. The continued prominence of culture, heritage and sport (3.99) is testament to the ongoing work of the DFAT and partners. This is a proud legacy of the previous strategies.

The proximity of support to return to live, work and study in Ireland (3.80) in ranking with the two top priorities is an elevation of this topic in comparison to priorities

developed within previous strategies. This is where the advancement of the architecture of diaspora engagement will be required to meet this demand from the diaspora.

The similar level of priority for digital (3.17) and economic engagement (3.03) pinpoints them as emerging constants within the landscape of Ireland's diaspora engagement model. Akin to the argument around advocacy, effective digital diplomacy and economic diplomacy represent specialised skillsets within diaspora engagement.

The prominence of advocacy for the diaspora strongly correlated with the provision of support and front-line community engagement when considered with the qualitative data shared in the individual survey. It is also reinforced in the inputs shared through other consultation tools.

It is imperative to blend the quantitative and qualitative data here given the methodological limitations noted in the introduction. This combined data clearly signalled the importance of ongoing community facing, community-led service provision to future engagement.

This insight can also be contextualised within the fact that the composition of individuals emigrating from Ireland in recent decades represent different forms of communities from previous decades. The progress in Ireland over the recent decades in terms of education, professional development, cultural intelligence and other areas, would lend to a reality that many of those recently added to the diaspora may not identify within traditional understandings of vulnerability.

The prominence of advocacy for the diaspora in the ranking would seem to indicate that the indices of vulnerability may be shifting within the diaspora. Issues identified earlier in this report such as isolation, loneliness, political instability and other areas may be reshaping vulnerability within the diaspora.

In fact, vulnerability may not be the correct term to understand these shifts. It may be that vulnerability is now best considered as a specialist category within a wider framework of wellbeing.

This can speak to the wellbeing and security of the diaspora and how the strategy can support this. It can also speak to how the strategy can energise diaspora engagement to contribute to Ireland's wellbeing and security; particularly diplomatic, economic, reputational and territorial security.

This can be achieved by activating belonging in the diaspora. It can also be sustained by increasing connectivity across the diaspora as well as between the diaspora and Ireland.

By investing in established engagements, such as the ESP and support to return, and new engagements, such as economic and generational engagement, the strategy can ensure it nurtures meaningful engagement that respects the layered histories of Ireland's diaspora story. This can embrace the current needs and opportunities in the diaspora whilst setting the framework for an innovative future for Ireland's diaspora engagement that positions the Irish diaspora as a key driver in the delivery of Ireland's domestic and international ambitions.

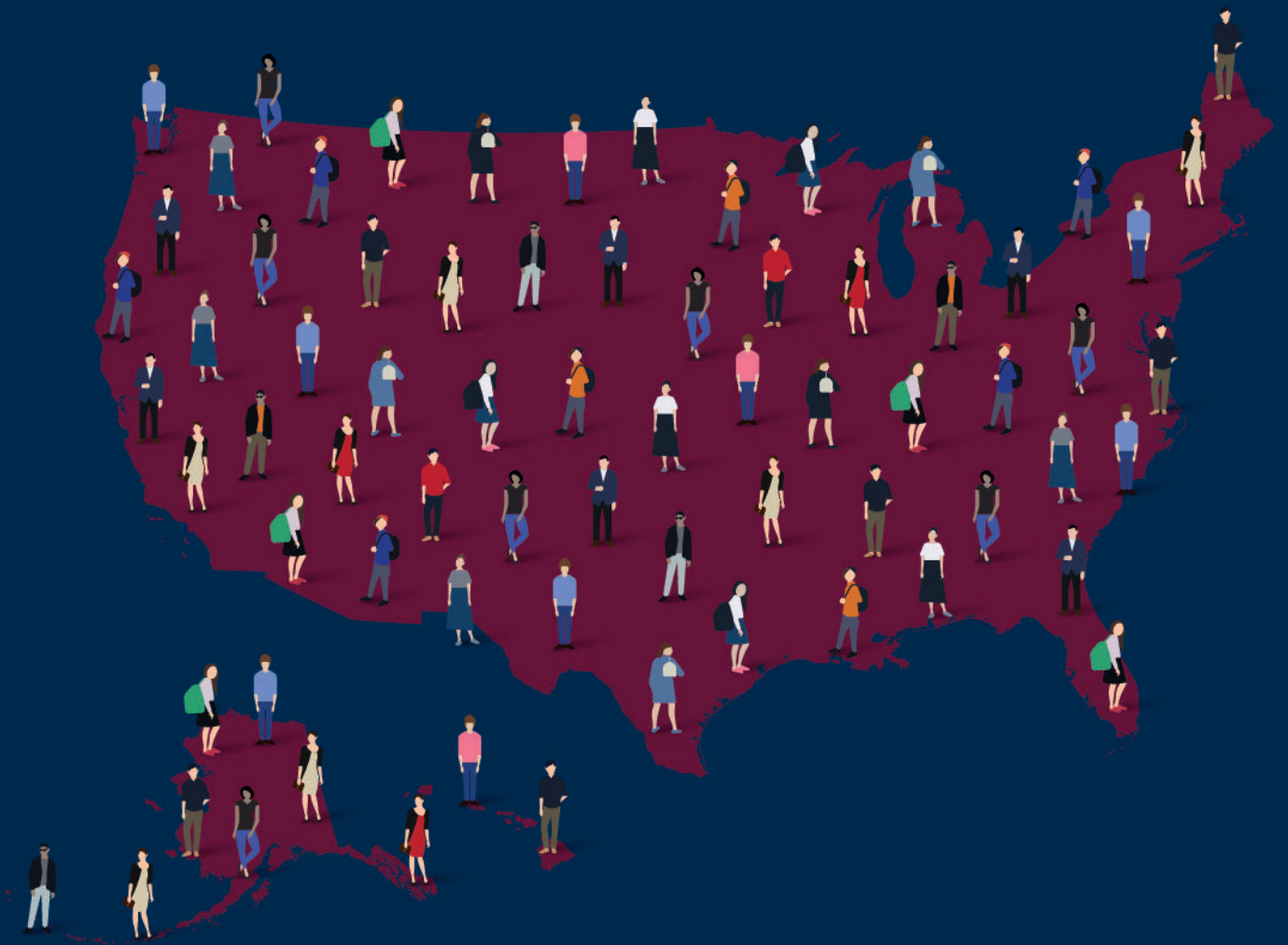
2.3

Analysis of Responses by Country/Region

The data assessed thus far relates to the overall findings in the survey. At certain points, this data is clearly signalling the relevance of more active segmentation of diaspora engagement through the next strategy. Therefore, a helpful exercise to begin this process is to develop snapshot analysis of key inputs from respondents across different geographies and ages.

1726

Respondents



U.S.A

2.3.1 United States

There were 1,726 respondents from the US. The main categories of diasporic identity were ancestral diaspora (53.82%) and first-generational diaspora (42.53%). 58.40% were passport holders. The age profile of respondents from the US was as follows:

Answer Choices	Responses
18 – 24	2.49%
25 – 34	10.83%
35 – 44	15.12%
45 – 54	19.87%
55 – 64	27.52%
Over 65	24.16%

Table 6 Age Profile of US-Based Respondents of Global Irish Survey for Individuals

Most respondents either last lived in Ireland over 20 years ago (26.25%) or never lived in Ireland (47.33%). The strength of the latter cohort illustrates the depth of belonging to Ireland within this community.

The challenges faced by this community illustrate slight variations from the overall data. Access to reliable information remains top (2.89) but immigration status (2.41), inter-generational relationships (2.37) and access to existing community organisations (2.34) are closely aligned as the other priorities. The slighter higher focus on intergenerational relationships in this dataset reflects the maturity of the diaspora. The focus on immigration status validates earlier points on the evolving parameters of vulnerability given the immigration environment unfolding in the United States.

In terms of information flow, whilst networks and social media are prominent, traditional media tools like newspapers are more prominent in this market (34.90%). This shows how different communication and diaspora media modalities may need to be enacted in different geographies. In terms of community engagement, the data mirrors the overall data as 56.04% were not members or volunteers of a diaspora organisation.

Closing this participation gap provides practical proof of the need to foster a sense of belonging, strengthen connections, and encourage active engagement. In terms of the organisations the respondents felt most connected to in the US, this is visualised in *Figure 8*.



Figure 8 Type of Organisation that US-based Respondents feel most connected to.

In the 'other' category, prominent examples included academic networks, Irish language promotion, genealogy and networks for social support. US based respondents also showed slight variations in their priorities for the next strategy. Advocacy for the Irish diaspora remained the highest priority (4.30) but support to return to work, live and study in Ireland (4.05) elevated in importance. This is visualised in *Figure 9*.



Figure 9 Preferred Priorities for New Strategy for US-Based Respondents

This would likely indicate that the vulnerability shift explored earlier could emerge as a critical opportunity for Ireland to benefit through its values-based approach to policy making. For example, the data from the US respondents seem to indicate that societal and political volatility has increased the priority of support to return to live, work or study in Ireland.

When reflected through other policy domains focused on Ireland's economic resilience, talent attraction, wider wellbeing and security, this can translate towards unlocking significant diaspora capital to support these policy areas.

The continued importance of culture, heritage and sport (3.94) showcases that traditional diaspora engagement is working well in the US. The data is indicating that the diaspora wants the next strategy to secure that work but also to break new ground that can benefit the diaspora and Ireland in areas such as diplomacy and economics.

1,310

Respondents



Britain

2.3.2 Britain

There were 1,310 respondents from Britain. The main categories of diasporic identity were first generation diaspora (67.94%) and ancestral diaspora (31.37%). 90.38% were passport holders. The age profile of respondents from Britain was as follows:

Answer Choices	Responses
18 – 24	3.05%
25 – 34	13.97%
35 – 44	20.84%
45 – 54	20.99%
55 – 64	25.27%
Over 65	15.88%

Table 7 Age Profile of British-Based Respondents of Global Irish Survey for Individuals

The more balanced age profile indicates that the diaspora in Britain is going through a form of regeneration. From the basic demographic profile of respondents, this would indicate that the diasporas in Britain and US are fundamentally different and require tailored engagement plans. This is confirmed by the data on when the British-based respondents last lived in Ireland.

Whilst there is a historical diaspora component, for example 37.71% of British-based respondents last lived in Ireland over 20 years ago, there is also a more recent diaspora emerging. For example, 18.40% lived in Ireland within the last 5 – 10 years, 9.01% last lived in Ireland within the last 3 – 4 years, and 6.64% last lived in Ireland within the last 2 years. Most British-based respondents left Ireland for an employment opportunity (57.19%), education opportunity (15.65%) or family reasons (11.12%).

This data indicates that there are even different Irish diasporas within Britain. Therefore, more strategic work to bridge these diasporas will be important to ensure generational flow. For example, 69.92% of British-based respondents were not a member or volunteering with an organisation on diaspora engagement. This again speaks to the opportunity to activate dormant belonging.

The organisational areas that the diaspora feel most connected would tend to support the established and emerging diaspora hypothesis in Britain. For example, culture, heritage and sport is very strong (65.95% indicated this area) but the alumni category was more prominent in Britain (16.87%) closely followed by business (16.34%). Above these in ranking was the 'other' category which included strong representation of welfare and support organisations.

The blend between established and emerging diaspora is also reflected in the data on challenges for the community. Again, access to reliable information is most prominent (ranked 3.05 out of 4) followed by access to community networks/support (2.80) and intergenerational relationships (2.59). Immigration weakens significantly for the British market which is understandable given the nature of the contemporary British-Irish relationship.

Similarly, the priorities for the new strategy for respondents in Britain follow this thread of a diverse diaspora composition.



Figure 10 Preferred Priorities for New Strategy of British-Based Respondents

The priorities show a higher importance for support for the most vulnerable in comparison to any other major geographic region of destination for the diaspora (ranked 4th in importance with a score of 3.26). This combined with the prominence of culture, heritage and sport (3.85) indicates the ongoing importance of the established diaspora.

The importance of advocacy for the Irish diaspora (4.32) and support to return to live, work and study in Ireland (3.61) conveys the relevance of those services to both the established diaspora but perhaps more so for the emerging diaspora.

457

Respondents



Canada

2.3.3 Canada

There were 457 respondents from Canada. The main categories of diasporic identity were first generation diaspora (67.83%) and ancestral diaspora (29.98%). 74.18% were passport holders. The age profile of respondents from Canada was as follows:

Answer Choices	Responses
18 – 24	1.75%
25 – 34	18.82%
35 – 44	25.38%
45 – 54	15.32%
55 – 64	20.35%
Over 65	18.38%

Table 8 Age Profile of Canada-Based Respondents of Global Irish Survey for Individuals

This profile indicates the importance of inter-generational engagement in the Canadian context. Various forms of Irishness will be operating across the community. It also amplifies the need for lifecycle engagement with the largest age group of respondents aged 35 – 44.

For example, in terms of attracting people to return to Ireland, this cohort is also strong in the overall data set from those who wish to return. This would indicate that engagement around these life-stage moments will be critical for such areas. This is logical in the context that this is also the age category where other social considerations are embedded in the diaspora journey – such as children accessing schooling, family commitments back in Ireland and so forth.

The diversity of the diaspora as well as the lifecycle hypothesis is affirmed in the composition of the data on the time respondents last lived in Ireland. This indicates that there is a recent diaspora, established diaspora and ancestral diaspora in Canada. These all need tailored engagement strategies.

For example, 8.32% of respondents last lived in Ireland in the last 3 – 5 years, 14.00% lived in Ireland in the last 5 – 10 years, 19.26% last lived in Ireland in the last 10 – 20 years, 25.60% of the diaspora last lived in Ireland over 20 years ago and 25.38% never lived in Ireland. This indicates that, for many, settlement in Canada is strengthening as an option. This is a potential long-term loss for Ireland unless active engagement is built.

This is amplified by the fact that respondents from Canada positioned employment opportunities and administrative issues as the primary barriers to return. This is echoed in

the prominence of employment as a reason for leaving (48.39%). However, respondents indicated 'other' reasons as second which is mirrored in the Australian dataset. Such 'other' reasons included an eagerness to explore the world, personal relationships and emigration from political issues in Ireland (e.g., conflict in Northern Ireland).

In relation to community networks, 41.79% of respondents were members or volunteers of a diaspora organisation. In terms of community network infrastructure, culture, heritage and support was again the most prominent engagement point. This is visualised in *Figure 11*.

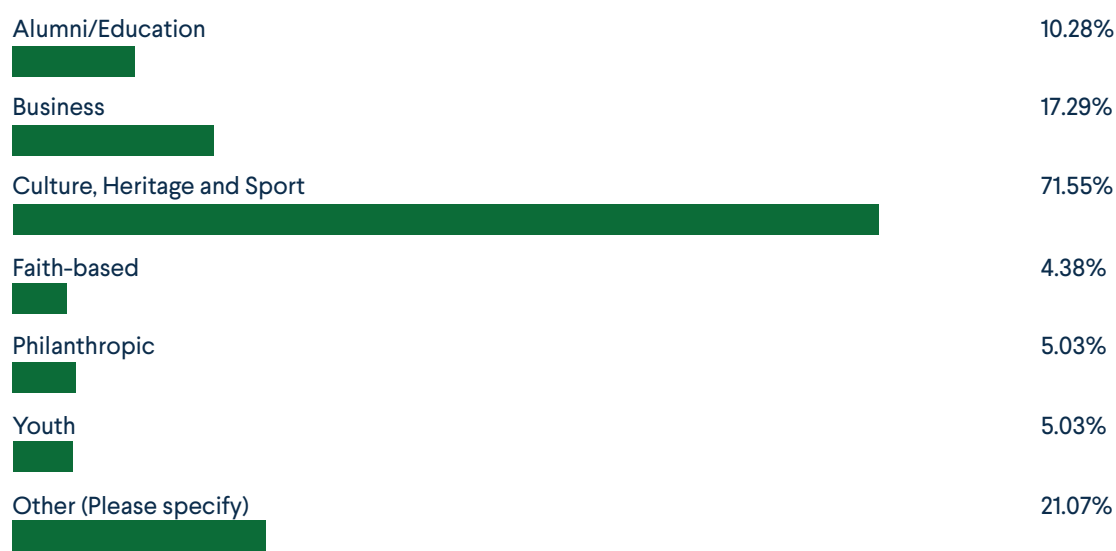


Figure 11 Type of Organisation that Canada-Based Respondents Feel Most Connected To

In terms of the 'other' category, respondents identified groups such as ancestry, language, LGBTQ groups, public affairs, social networks and women's groups. This is again signalling a diversifying nuance of interest points for the diaspora in how they want to engage where they are and with Ireland.

In terms of priorities for the next strategy, respondents in Canada have three top-tier priorities which are advocacy for the Irish diaspora (4.21), culture, heritage and sport (4.07) as well as support to return to live, work and study in Ireland (3.80) as shown below.



Figure 12 Preferred Priorities of Canada-Based Respondents

These priorities directly map onto the different diaspora constituencies in Canada. Advocacy speaks primarily to first-generation engagement, reflecting the evolving understanding of diaspora support. Culture, heritage, and sport bridge first-generation, recent, and ancestral diaspora alike. Support to return to live, work, and study in Ireland is similarly cross-cutting, engaging both first-generation and ancestral diaspora; however, age profile and diaspora identity data suggest it holds greater relevance for first-generation, recent diaspora.

418

Respondents



Australia

2.3.4 Australia

There were 418 respondents from Australia. The main categories of diasporic identity were first generation diaspora (81.82%) and ancestral diaspora (16.75%). 87.08% were passport holders. The age profile of respondents from Australia was as follows:

Answer Choices	Responses
18 – 24	2.15%
25 – 34	22.01%
35 – 44	27.51%
45 – 54	17.22%
55 – 64	17.70%
Over 65	13.40%

Table 9 Age Profile of Australia-Based Respondents of Global Irish Survey for Individuals

This fact that approximately half of respondents were aged 44 or under also pinpoints to the different nature of diaspora engagement that will be required in Australia. It is important to ensure that strategic efforts are put in place to cultivate belonging and connection to Ireland. It may also indicate that more strategic focus on return could be viable within the Australian market given the infancy of diaspora integration for many in the community.

This is mirrored in the data from respondents on when they last lived in Ireland. 13.40% of respondents lived in Ireland within the past 2 years, 6.70% within the last 3 – 5 years, 11.72% in the last 5 to 10 years and 30.38% within the last 10 to 20 years. This temporal proximity of living in Ireland would suggest that there is value in exploring strategic engagements around return with the Australian-based diaspora.

There is, however, work to be done to make the case for return. 32.78% of respondents indicated they wanted to return with 36.60% unsure. Echoing the overall data survey, it shows that a key priority for the new strategy may be developing a compelling and competitive value proposition for return.

This is not the sole responsibility of the DFAT and given the strong performance of advocacy for the Irish diaspora in priorities for the new strategy, it would indicate that this advocacy must engage the domestic market to make return more attractive and viable.

Unsure on
returning
37%



Figure 13 Type of Organisations that Australia-Based Respondents Feel Most Connected to.

The prominence of culture, heritage and sport (72.01%) points to the value of these engagement areas as support mechanisms to both established and emerging diasporas. Similarly aligned with the Canadian data, it seems to indicate that emerging diasporas are also beginning to build more engagement around alumni and business. This is logical in the context that the critical priority for the younger diaspora may likely be career development and employment as much as community development. The ‘other’ category ranked second, and the major engagement areas listed in that category focused on the Irish language, genealogy, music and support networks.

In relation to key priorities that the community would like to see in the next strategy, this blended focus is also woven in. Echoing the return hypothesis earlier, the core priorities identified were a blend of advocacy for the Irish diaspora (4.24), culture, heritage and sport (4.06) and support to return to work, live and study in Ireland (3.94) as shown below.



Figure 14 Preferred Priorities for New Strategy of Australia-Based Respondents

These findings would lean towards an understanding of the diaspora in Australia as a diaspora in development – exploring both the potentials and opportunities of a hybrid identity. It would indicate, in some ways, an undecided diaspora in relation to wanting support to help them settle or advance in Australia whilst holding a lens towards home with consideration of return within a certain period.

238

Respondents



New Zealand

2.3.5 New Zealand

There were 238 respondents from New Zealand. The main categories of diasporic identity were first generation diaspora (70.17%) and ancestral diaspora (28.57%). 78.57% were passport holders. The age profile of respondents from New Zealand was as follows:

Answer Choices	Responses
18 – 24	1.68%
25 – 34	9.24%
35 – 44	23.95%
45 – 54	30.25%
55 – 64	14.29%
Over 65	20.59%

Table 10 Age Profile of New Zealand-Based Respondents of Global Irish Survey for Individuals

A distinguishing feature of the respondent data from New Zealand was around gender. 71.01% of respondents were female. The age demographic and time last lived in Ireland indicates a blend between an established and ancestral diaspora.

The rationale for moving or settling in New Zealand also indicates this. Within the dataset, the answer option for ‘other’ is much more prominent within responses (35.36%). Within the insights shared, key themes around marriage, family and other such motivations are more visible. This is layered within the organisational engagements of the community also with areas such as genealogy more prominent in the respondent data.

The settled nature of the diaspora is also reflected in a higher percentage of those indicating that they do not want to return from New Zealand (comparative to other geographies). Only 24.37% respondents indicated that they wanted to return with 39.92% indicating no and 35.71% unsure.

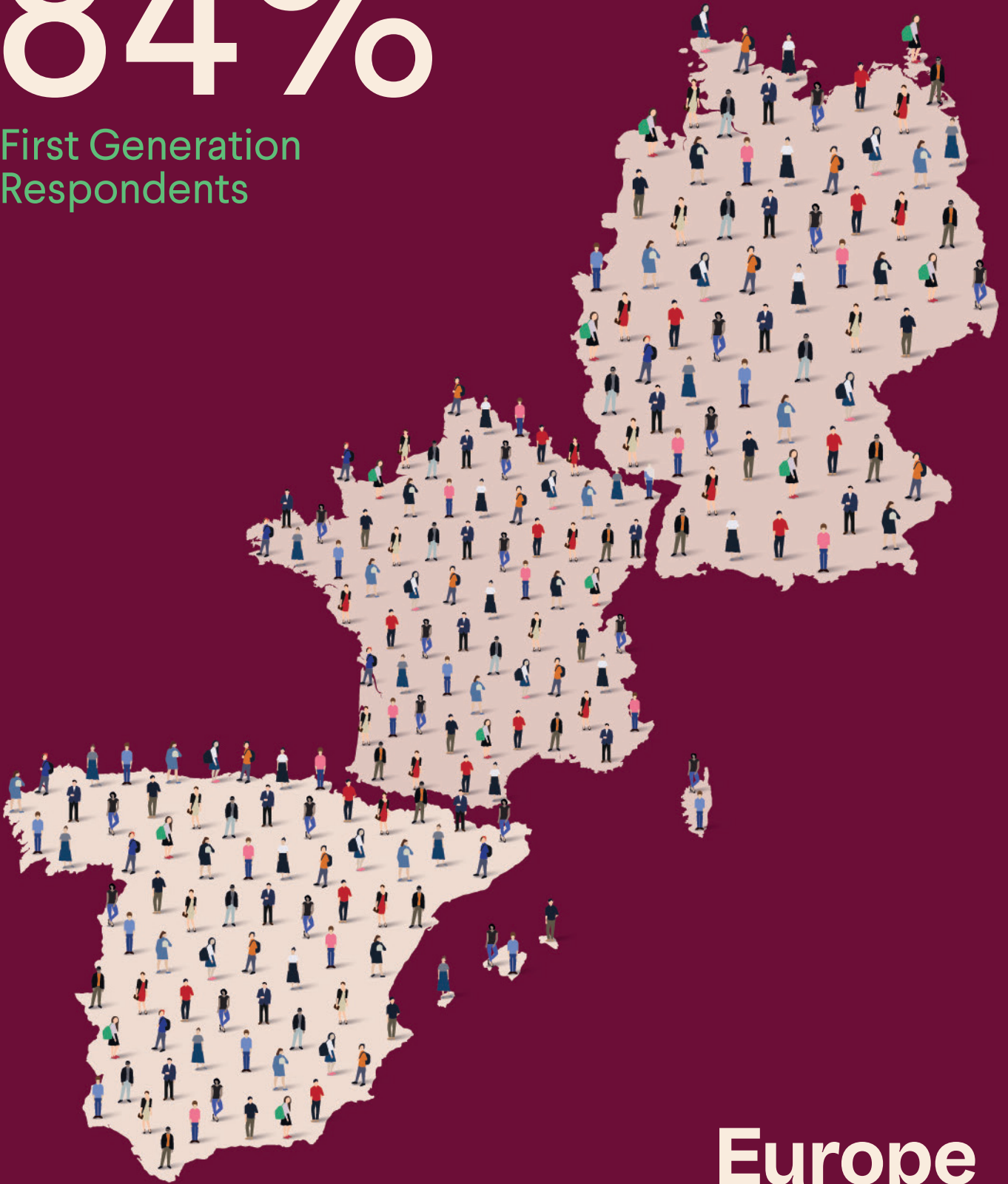
The main challenges echo the priority of community building in New Zealand with priorities being access to reliable information (2.83) intergenerational relationships (2.54) and access to community networks (2.52) respectively. Interestingly, 48.52% indicated that they were members or volunteers of a diaspora organisation which may indicate that locations with smaller Irish diaspora communities can be strategically nurtured to enhance community engagement.

In terms of priorities for the next strategy, the prominence of advocacy for the Irish diaspora (4.39) and culture, heritage and sport (4.24) are aligned with the analysis above. This indicates a diaspora that is settled and interested in more active engagement to build belonging.

Female
Respondents
71%

84%

First Generation
Respondents



Europe

2.3.6 Europe

This subsection provides a comparative synopsis of key data from respondents across European countries represented with a minimum of 100 respondents. It is designed to be a snapshot analysis of key challenges and priorities given that there are similar demographic trends across the countries with over 100 respondents (France – 275 respondents, Germany – 236 respondents and Spain – 170 respondents). For example, in all countries, first generation respondents comprised over 84% of respondents. In all markets, a minimum of 95% were Irish passport holders.

France-Based Respondents

The respondents from France represented a gendered diaspora with 64.00% of respondents identifying as female. It was also an older diaspora with 25.09% aged between 45 – 54 and 31.27% aged 55 – 64 with 46.91% of respondents last living in Ireland over 20 years ago.

This settled diaspora component is reflected in that only 20.36% of respondents indicated that they would like to return although 48% are unsure. The two major challenges of the community are access to reliable information (3.06) and access to community networks (2.81). The older composition of the diaspora also impacts informational flow with family and friend networks (69.82%) being most important. However, for French-based respondents, newspapers (42.18%) were equally as important as social media (42.55%).

The data indicates a stronger community engagement with 53.09% of respondents being a member or volunteer with a diaspora organisation. Culture, heritage and sport (61.82%) was the preeminent area of engagement but also 'other' (30.18%) and business (18.18%). In the 'other' category, the two most prominent were social networking and women's networks. The informality of this was captured by one respondent who indicated they are part of an online social communication group of over 500 women in France with an interest in Ireland. In terms of priorities for the next strategy, continued support of culture, heritage and sport (4.37) slightly outranked advocacy for the Irish diaspora (4.33) which is an interesting reversal from many other locations.

Germany-Based Respondents

The respondents from Germany represented a more gender balanced diaspora with close to a 50-50 split across genders. It was also balanced across age profiles with the 18.64% of respondents aged 25 – 34, 23.31% aged 35 – 44, 23.73% aged between 45 – 54 and 20.34% aged 55 – 64. It is also a regenerating diaspora with wide scope in terms of when respondents last lived in Ireland albeit more than 20 years ago represented 40.25% of respondents.

This is reflected in the data on potential return with 30.93% of respondents indicating that they would like to return with an additional 46.61% unsure. The two major challenges of the community are access to reliable information (3.15) and access to community

networks (2.91). Family and friend networks (73.62%) were most important for gaining information on Ireland along with social media (49.79%).

The data indicates a stronger community engagement with 53.09% of respondents being a member or volunteer with a diaspora organisation. In terms of community networks, whilst culture, heritage and sport remain the leading engagement area, business was more prominent in Germany (27.66%). In the 'other' category, the main organisations noted include Irish language focused, public affairs and social networking.



Figure 15 Preferred Priorities of New Strategy for Germany-Based Respondents

For the priorities of the next strategy, there was a more balanced array of priorities which reflect the demographics, challenges and engagement areas. For example, digital engagement and economic engagement was positioned closer to other priorities in comparison to other countries.

Spanish-Based Respondents

The respondents from Spain revert to a more gendered diaspora lens with 60.59% of respondents identifying as male. It was also an older diaspora with 21.76% aged between 35 – 44, 32.94% aged 45 – 54 and 20.59% aged 55 – 64. A data outlier in the Spanish-based respondents' data is that 'other' (35.03%) was the largest reason for leaving followed by employment (33.76%) and then family reasons (19.11%). In the 'other' category, reasons listed include adventure, personal friendships/relationships and quality of life. This impacts other datasets.

For example, the older diaspora component is reflected in that only 16.47% of respondents indicated that they would like to return. The two major challenges of the community are access to reliable information (3.14) and access to community networks (2.79). The maturing composition of the diaspora also impacts informational flow with family and friend networks being most important. However, for Spanish-based respondents, newspapers (41.18%) were more important than social media (34.12%).

The data indicates strong informality in community engagement with 72.94% not a member or volunteer with a diaspora organisation. Culture, heritage and sport (58.82%) is the primary category of engagement, but business is prominent in this market also (29.41%). In terms of priorities for the next strategy, advocacy for the Irish diaspora (4.03) and continued support of culture, heritage and sport (4.28) were most significant by far. The lighter focus on other areas mirrors the demographics and other datasets explored above in relation to return and other areas of engagement.

189

Respondents



U.A.E

2.3.7 UAE

There were 189 respondents from the UAE. 93.12% were first generation diaspora with 56.08% female and 43.92% male. 7.14% has last lived in Ireland within the past 2 years, 21.16% of respondents had last lived in Ireland in the last 3 – 4 years and 21.16% has also lived in Ireland in the last 5 – 10 years respectively. 31.75% last lived in Ireland within the last 11 – 20 years. It is also a younger diaspora which is merging towards an established diaspora as visualised below.

Answer Choices	Responses
18 – 24	0.53%
25 – 34	29.10%
35 – 44	32.28%
45 – 54	28.57%
55 – 64	7.41%
Over 65	2.12%

Table 11 Age Profile of UAE-Based Respondents

The data indicates that it is a talented diaspora given that 76.06% left for an employment opportunity. Similarly in terms of engagement areas, this is emphasised by the fact that business (38.10%) is much closer to culture, heritage and support (65.08%) than in other markets. Remarkably, it is also potentially a transitory diaspora given that 61.90% of respondents want to return with 26.98% unsure. Of those that wish to return, just under 90% see themselves returning within 10 years.

A holistic set of supports is recommended by respondents (slight variance across options provided) with employment opportunities seen as the primary barrier to return (4.23). This transitory nature is reflected in the challenges facing the community also with access to reliable information by far the most prominent response (3.32).



Figure 16 Preferred Priorities of New Strategy for UAE-Based Respondents

This is also reflected in the priorities for the next strategy with support to return to live, work or study in Ireland the top priority (4.60). These indicators lean towards the need for a specialised approach to engaging the diaspora in UAE.

119

Respondents



Returned Irish

2.3.8 Returned Irish

The Global Irish Survey for Individuals was embedded with a functionality for people currently living in Ireland to input into the survey. Given eligibility requested the respondent to indicate their diasporic identity, it was expected that respondents who indicated they now live in Ireland would primarily comprise returned Irish. There were 119 respondents in this category with 72.27% first generation, 22.69% ancestral and 5.04% affinity diaspora.

Over half were aged between 35 and 55 which may serve as further indicative importance for the life cycle model noted earlier. It would position this age range as when a lot of folks have made decisions to return. This is amplified by the fact that the next age range of highest percentage was 55 – 64 (additional 21.01%). For example, engagement around return to Ireland may be more impactful for people in the 25 – 44 age range.

Listening to this constituency can extract critical insights on how to support the next generation, streamline return experiences and guide on how to embed these into the priorities of the new strategy. The key insights from returned Irish indicate that the strategy can respond to the realities of the diasporic journey – from leaving Ireland, living abroad and returning. Notably, 62.18% of respondents were female, which may warrant further analysis on gender dynamics within the return decision. Key barriers identified were administrative issues and employment opportunities, with strong advocacy for holistic support across sectors. For the next generation, better access to diaspora organisations (3.74) and pre-departure information (3.67) were the top recommendations.

Whilst culture, heritage and sport remained most visible, business (21.19%) and alumni/education (18.64%) were also significant, logical arenas where return opportunities such as networking and further education are likely to emerge. The fact that support to return to live, work and study was ranked highest among returned respondents suggests a disconnect between perceived effectiveness of support and the practicalities of return, further amplified in Global Irish Position Paper submissions calling for more effective return support.



Figure 17 Preferred Priorities of New Strategy for Respondents that Returned to Ireland

2.4 Analysis of Responses by Age

This subsection of the report provides a brief overview of some key findings across different age groups of respondents to explore if there are any implications to inform the new diaspora strategy. As noted in different analyses in previous sections, the generational dynamism of the diaspora indicates that different forms of engagement will be required across ages and diasporic identities.

Respondents Aged 18 – 24

There were 175 respondents in this age category. They were evenly split between first-generation diaspora and ancestral diaspora (approximately 49% each). 78.86% were Irish passport holders. Over half were female respondents (51.43%) with 44.00% male and 3.43% non-binary. The predominant identities were Irish white (87.43%) and LGBTQI (16.57%).

Irish Passport holders
79%

40.00% of respondents had left Ireland within the last 2 years and 36.57% had never lived in Ireland. The majority of those that left Ireland within the last 5 years have left for education (31.46%) or economic (40.45%) opportunities.

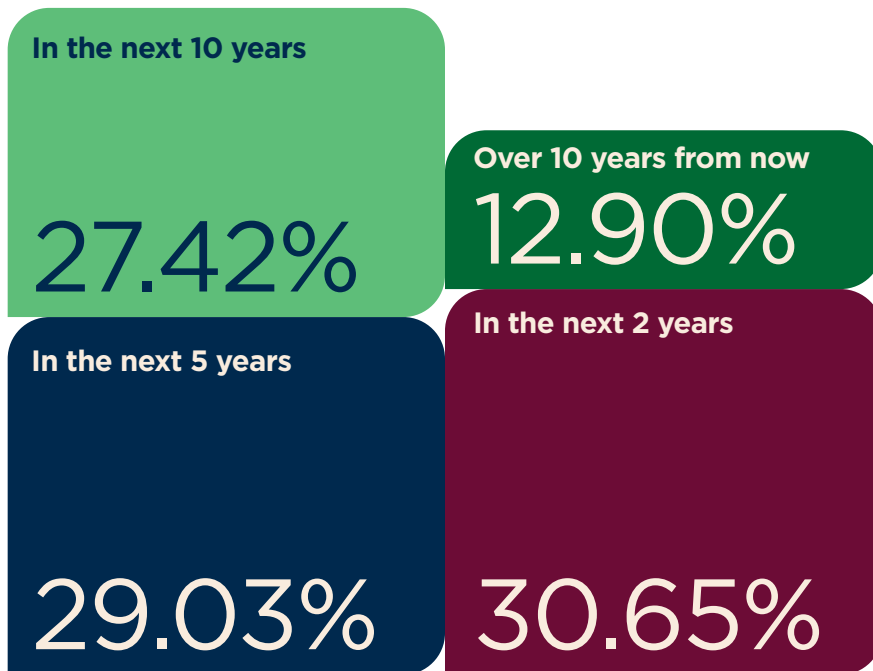


Figure 18
Timeframe for Return for those indicated they will return (18 - 24 years old)

Intention to Return and Preferred Supports

The younger diaspora is strongly open to return. 56.00% indicated that they want to return with 34.29% unsure. Only 9.71% said no. For those that wish to return, they see this happening relatively quickly as shown in *Figure 18*.

The primary barrier to return remains employment opportunities (4.21). This correlates with the data in terms of support requested with information about employment the primary support indicated (3.37).

Community Engagement: Challenges and The Future

For this age cohort, there were three issues of consistency. Access to community networks was first (2.80), followed by inter-generational relationships (2.66) and access to reliable information (2.61).

This may open considerations for strategic support in areas such as diaspora mentorship or career development.

This is layered through their insights on supporting the next generation of the Irish diaspora (which this age group may primarily represent). Key supports recommended were better access to existing organisations (4.11), pre-departure support (3.06) and participation in events in countries of destination (3.05).

The majority are not part of an organisation (64.94%) which is natural given many young people may only be beginning their diaspora journey. Social media is also the most used tool for informational flow (78.74%). Whilst culture, heritage and sport (66.67%) are the natural entry points, this cohort also connects across alumni/education (19.54%), business (14.37%) and youth (18.97%) organisations. The priorities for the next strategy for this cohort are visualised in *Figure 19* below and echo the prominence of return noted earlier.

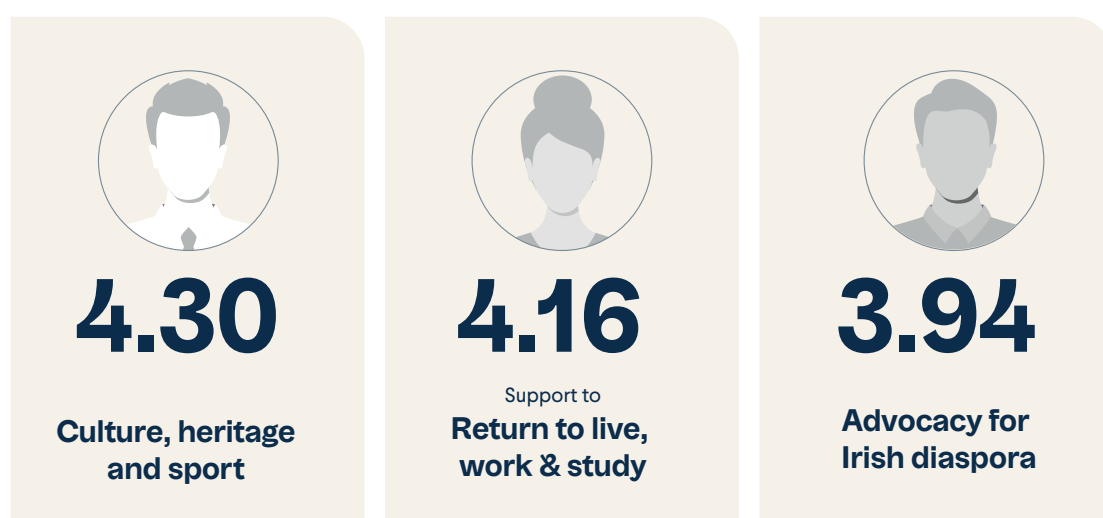


Figure 19 Preferred Priorities of New Strategy for Respondents Aged 18 - 24

Respondents Aged 25 – 44

There were 2,357 respondents in this age category. The majority were first-generation diaspora (76.71%) with 20.70% ancestral diaspora. 88.54% were Irish passport holders. 51.34% were female respondents and 47.52% were male. The predominant identities were Irish white (94.78%) and LGBTQI (8.40%). Approximately half of respondents in this age group had lived in Ireland within the last 10 years.

Intention to Return and Preferred Supports

This age group is actively open to returning. For example, only 17.39% indicated that they do not want to return. The other categories (yes or unsure) were 40.69% and 41.92% respectively. For those that wish to return, the majority see it happening within 10 years (just over 81%).

Intend to return over 10 years

81%

In terms of barriers to return, employment opportunities were again the primary barrier (4.22) followed by administrative issues to return (3.32). This echoed the data on the younger cohort in that information about employment was the preferred priority support (3.22).

Community Engagement: Challenges and The Future

The information thread transfers to key challenges with access to reliable information the main challenge (2.84) followed by access to community networks (2.68). This shift from the younger cohort is logical in that many in the diaspora may have built some networks at this age.

A similar trend emerged on how to support the next generation diaspora with an integrated package of access to networks (3.93), reliable information (3.23) and participation in events in countries of destination (2.90) preferred. This is backed up by the fact that the majority (59.87%) are not part of a diaspora organisation. Education engagement (15.03%) weakens in this age group with culture, heritage and sport (67.26%) remaining steadfast as does business engagement (22.46%).

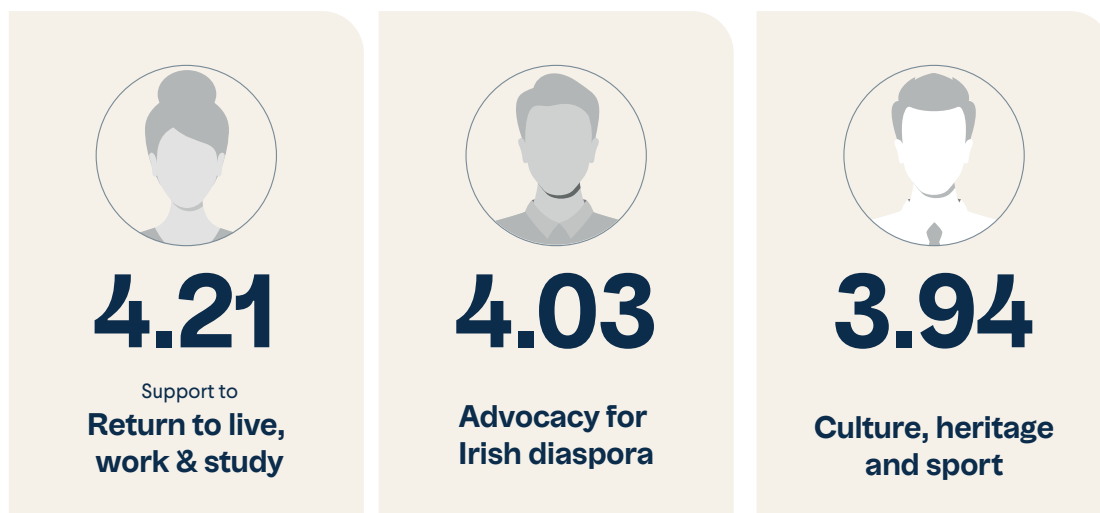


Figure 20 Preferred Priorities of New Strategy for Respondents Aged 25 – 44

Finally, the preferred priorities for the next strategy reflect these diaspora stages of their journey. The preference is for support to return to work, live or study in Ireland (4.21) closely followed by advocacy for the Irish diaspora (4.03) and continued investment in culture, heritage and sport (3.94).

Respondents Aged 45 – 65

There were 2,906 respondents in this age category. The majority were first-generation diaspora (67.65%) with 30.18% ancestral diaspora. 82.83% were Irish passport holders. Respondents were evenly split across female and male. Given the age profile, the data seems to indicate a settled diaspora also with a large percentage of respondents in this age cohort last living in Ireland over 20 years ago (47.38%) or they have never lived in Ireland (23.16%).

Intention to Return and Preferred Supports

The longevity of belonging to Ireland is represented in the dataset on potential return. Only 23.16% indicated that they do not want to return. 34.31% noted that they wanted to and the rest were unsure. For those that want to return, they again see that happening primarily in the next 10-year window.

It can be expected that many in this more mature cohort will have deeper capacity to return to Ireland. This is reflected in the fact that administrative issues (3.91) overtake employment opportunities (3.60) as the primary barrier to return for this cohort. This is reflected in the preferred supports which also take a more balanced feel to include access to relevant authorities in Ireland (2.81), access to information on public services (2.80) and employment information (2.71).

Community Engagement: Challenges and The Future

The core challenges for this age group were access to reliable information (2.98) and access to community networks (2.61). Most respondents are not part of a diaspora organisation (58.70%). The key engagement area remains culture, heritage and sport (68.83%) followed by business (22.43%). In terms of key priorities for the new strategy, this is visualised below.



Figure 21 Preferred Priorities of New Strategy for Respondents Aged 45 - 65

Respondents Aged Over 65

There were 1,065 respondents in this age category. The identification shift for this dataset is that ancestral diaspora (49.77%) outnumbered first-generation diaspora (46.76%). This is layered into the fact that a smaller percentage were Irish passport holders (64.60%).

54.18% were male and 45.73% were female. Again, given the age profile, the data seems to indicate a settled diaspora, with a large percentage of respondents in this age cohort last living in Ireland over 20 years ago (44.79%) or having never lived in Ireland (43.00%).

Intention to Return and Preferred Supports

There was also a lighter intention to return with 47.32% indicating no. Only 18.78% indicated that they would like to return so the report does not provide a detailed overview of the barriers and supports given the smaller dataset. Consistent themes emerging however in terms of the process and facilitation of services to support return for those that do want to. This spoke more to the practical realities of such return given the age and more prominent ancestral profile of the diaspora in this category. These are unpacked more in the analysis on the position paper also.

Intention to return
19%

Community Engagement: Challenges and The Future

The primary challenge for this age group was access to reliable information (4.51) which was much larger than the next issue ranked. In terms of addressing this issue, the informational flow is helpful in that this age group places stronger emphasis on newspapers. Whilst personal networks remain the most used avenue, newspaper (41.58%) and social media (44.78%) were closely matched for this age group.



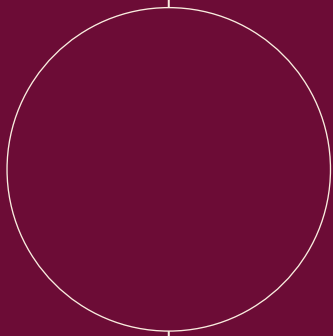
Figure 22 Preferred Priorities of New Strategy for Respondents Aged Over 65

Just over 43% were a member or volunteering with a diaspora organisation. Culture, heritage and sport were the most prominent (74.22%), but this age group sees a more prominent focus on areas such as welfare and genealogy. For the next strategy, this provides the logic for the priorities identified below by this age category.

It is clear for this age group that direct engagement with culture, heritage and sport as the glue of engagement will be critical in ensuring that they feel supported. There are also higher demands on digital engagement which is indicative of the opportunities in digital platforms working in areas of ancestry, genealogy and wider storytelling.

The data from the Global Irish Survey for Individuals unearths a layered and nuanced diaspora maturing across geographies and generations are different paces. The Government's new strategy can embrace these data findings to ensure it secures the impact of previous work and strategies. It can also enact the findings to look forward with a new understanding of purpose.

Both can be further strengthened by understanding the insights shared by those working on the front line of service provision in diaspora engagement at home and abroad at an organisational level. The report now turns its attention to those voices.



03.

**Global Irish Survey
for Organisations**

This section of the report outlines the primary findings drawn from the data submitted via the Global Irish Survey for Organisations.

The analysis extracts key trends and insights on the composition of the organisations, audience engagement, organisational development realities as well as the challenges, priorities and supports expressed by organisations for the new strategy.

3.1

A Snapshot Overview

This snapshot overview is an analysis of the overall data submitted in this survey (120 respondents). It provides insights in the following four areas:

- **Structure and Size of the Organisations.**
- **Audience and Engagement Priorities of the Organisations.**
- **Funding and Challenges of the Organisations.**
- **Preferred Supports and Priorities for the Organisations in the Government’s new Diaspora Strategy.**

Structure & Size of the Organisations

As part of the eligibility criteria for the survey, it was important that the data was delivered by respondents with the authority and experience to do so on behalf of the organisation. Therefore, access was only available if the respondent was a founder or director/executive leader of the organisation. Respondents also had to have the primary mission of being “directly and primarily focused on engaging, servicing or supporting the Irish diaspora”.

Of the respondents, 25.83% were founders and 74.17% were a director/executive leader. 86.67% identified as a not-for-profit, 3.33% identified as an informal group, 2.50% were a for-profit organisation and 7.50% identified as other. This size of the organisation in terms of staff and volunteer numbers is shown in *Figure 23*.

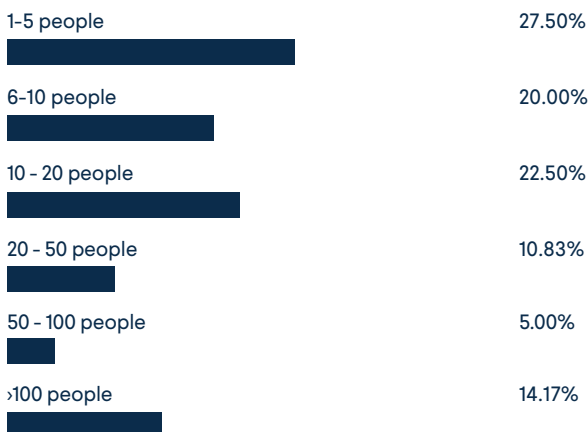


Figure 23 Breakdown of Organisation Size (Staffing & Volunteers) as per Respondents of Global Irish Survey for Organisations

The prominence of small to mid-size organisations is aligned with other non-survey data available, for example, the scope of funding allocated through the Emigrant Support Programme. This is an early data reflection point to consider strategic interventions that can help such organisations evolve and elevate their organisational capacity. This will cut across peer support (for example, organisations networking with each other), fundraising, governance and operational capacity when mapped with other data extracted from the survey later.

There is an indication that the organisations are approaching an important juncture in their respective developmental journeys where there is a desire to mature capacity. Whilst it is not the job of the DFAT to be solely responsible for this, there is an opportunity to consider intentional and targeted capacity development support that could, in turn, represent strategic value for public money. This is reflected in the fact that the data in terms of engaged audiences also seem to represent that existing organisations represent value for the funding allocated.

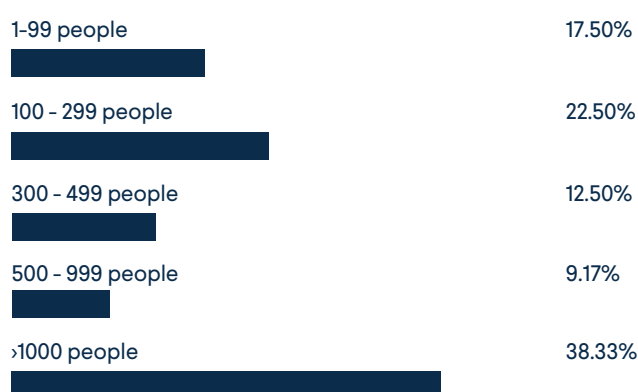


Figure 24 Annual Average Number of Diaspora Engaged by Organisations

Whilst not all organisations will need extensive growth, considering the constituencies they serve, a process of in-depth exchange with organisations servicing the diaspora may help identify a cohort ready for strategic investment. Scaling these organisations can then be pursued, depending on their capacity and community demand. By reconfiguring existing convenings such as the Global Irish Civic Forum, a more strategic focus on organisational capacity could be enhanced.

Audience & Engagement Priorities

Across the operational landscape, there are organisations accessible to different age groups in the diaspora. Whilst slight variations occur in the profile of these organisations, which will be explored later, this is an organic outcome of the evolving needs, interests, and opportunities across the diaspora as their diasporic journey matures, as shown in the data from the individual survey.

Furthermore, the emergence of a mobility rather than migratory lens to diaspora movements over recent years will likely accelerate this. These are also important insights for organisations to embrace. Agility in design and delivery of services may be a determining dynamic of effective operations moving forward. This is not unique to organisations engaging diasporas. The reality is that the pace of change shaping the world is only going to increase and this needs to be integrated into organisational delivery across the public, private and third sectors.

The data on audience is also telling more broadly on priority audiences.

	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	6 (%)	Total	Score
18 – 24	15.00	6.67	9.17	9.17	13.33	46.67	120	2.61
25 – 34	10.00	19.17	11.67	16.67	39.17	3.33	120	3.34
35 – 44	12.50	15.83	23.33	35.83	6.67	5.83	120	3.74
45 – 54	23.33	15.00	31.67	19.17	7.50	3.33	120	4.17
55 – 64	18.33	31.67	10.00	9.17	25.83	5.00	120	3.92
Over 65	20.83	11.67	14.17	10.00	7.50	35.83	120	3.21

Table 12 Breakdown of Primary Age Groups Engaged by Organisations

The prominence of older age groups (post – 45 age groups) in the most populous engagement categories (i.e., ranked 1 or 2 by organisations of audience engaged) shows that the diaspora organisational architecture at that level is built. This is an important legacy of instruments such as the ESP as it delivers the ethics of care that is central to that programme.

Whilst a relatively light priority of early age groups engagement may be correlated to the fact that the early journey of emigration may not rush an affiliation to a diaspora organisation, it may be problematic in other areas. It may indicate a shortcoming in terms of strategically nurturing generational diaspora engagement when viewed in the lens of ancestral or affinity diaspora. Furthermore, the deeper activation of engagement between ages 25 – 34, and more particularly, 35 – 44 in ranking 2 and 3 indicates that there is scope to build pipelines through such cohorts to earlier engagement. This may be important for the work on returning to Ireland noted earlier.

The indication from the data shows the progress has been made in certain areas but other constituents in the Irish diaspora are still marginalised, particularly LGBTQI and the Traveller Community.

	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	Total	Score
Irish (White)	93.33	5.00	0.83	0.00	0.83	120	4.90
Irish (Non-White)	2.50	32.50	38.33	20.00	6.67	120	3.04
Irish (Mixed-Race)	1.67	42.50	40.00	15.00	0.83	120	3.29
Irish Traveller Community	2.50	5.83	5.83	37.50	48.33	120	1.77
LGBTQI	0.00	14.17	15.00	27.50	43.33	120	2.00

Table 13 Breakdown of Primary Identities Engaged by Diaspora Organisations

Another important constituency to consider for strategic support will be the Survivors of Institutional Abuse. Policy consideration should be given to how existing or new organisations can be supported to dilute their marginalisation. Critical support can be given to identifying how such communities can be empowered to build grassroots organisations that are representative and led by the communities most impacted by those feeling marginalised.

This is particularly prominent when the engagement areas of organisations are considered. Organisations were asked to indicate all the areas in which they operate given that many adopt multiple service areas (for example, some may work in culture and education).

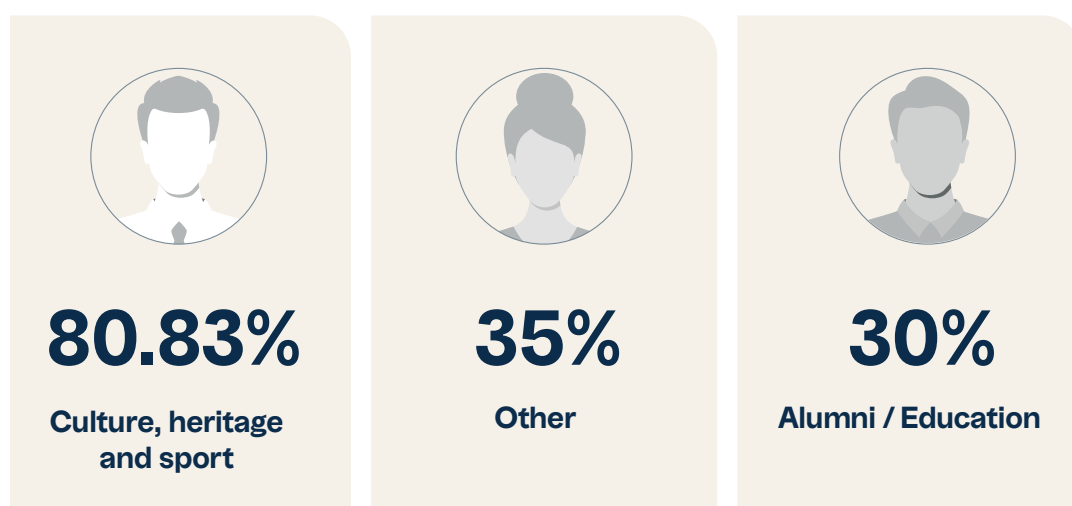


Figure 25 Overview of Key Services Provided by Organisations

The prominence of culture, heritage and support (80.83% of respondents indicated they engaged through these areas) is expected given the centrality of these issues to the Irish diaspora. Whilst culture and heritage are organically prominent, the role of sports requires additional consideration. Whilst organisations such as the GAA, FAI, Irish Rugby and others have become important community hubs for the Irish diaspora, there is also an embryonic elevation of sports diplomacy for Ireland that can be wired with diaspora engagement.

For example, the recent collaboration with the NFL and universities in the United States around sports diplomacy can have lasting impacts around generational engagement of the ancestral diaspora. This will require the creation of legacy engagements around such collaborations. This can be a critical enabler of building in affinity and reverse diaspora too which is a shortcoming based on the data of the individual survey.

Funding & Challenges

An important finding from the survey was that organisations indicated a diversified financing model. This is an important counter to a potential perception of donor dependency on the DFAT for many organisations. Therefore, with a baseline set of access points to diverse financial resources for organisations, it is an opportune time for the DFAT and its beneficiaries to shape a more intentional framework to help organisations activate such a range of resources for sustainability.

The prominent challenge for organisations is that whilst access to diversified funding is available, it tends to be short-term in nature. This is naturally aligned to many challenges facing the non-profit sector, which comprises most respondents to this survey.

Public funding cycles tend to be short-term and project-based with good cause to ensure efficient allocation of public monies and impact measurement. The argument here is that whilst this can be an important stream for organisations, it is also worth considering how such supports can be more strategic in their support of organisations. The onus for this is on both sides of the equation – public financing and organisations themselves.

Figures 26 and 27 below capture this tension between access to diversified funding and the challenges facing organisations on sustaining this in the long-term.

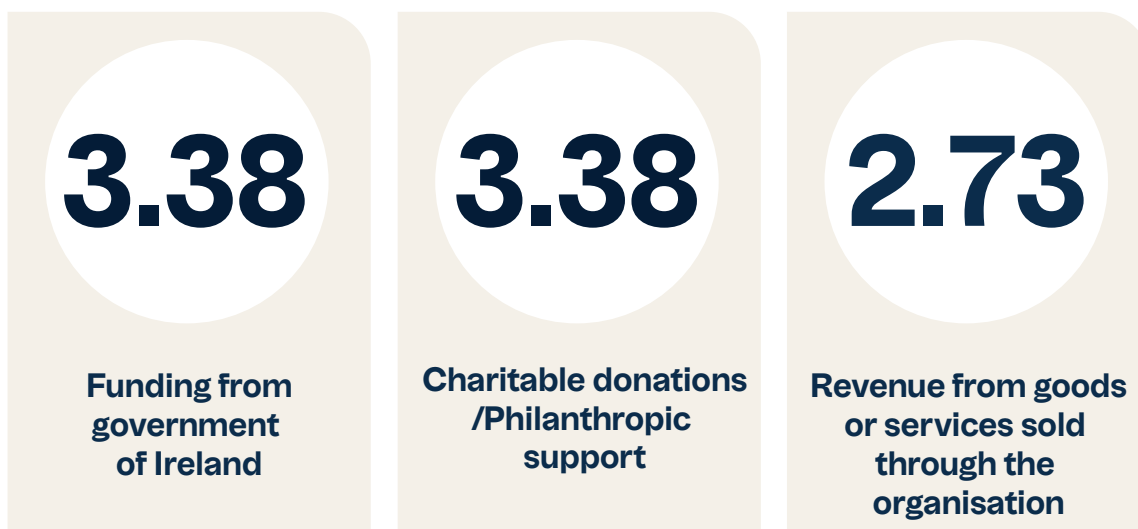


Figure 26 Overview of Resource Mobilisation by Organisations

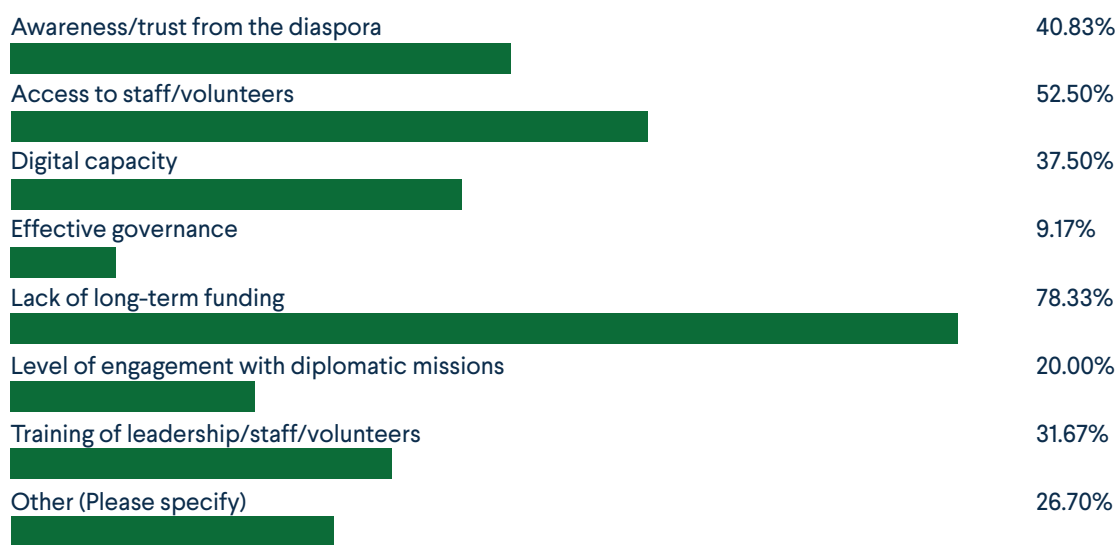


Figure 27 Overview of Key Challenges Faced by Organisations

Responding to this tension will require negotiated leadership by both sides of the equation. By investing in strategic supports to better integrate the organisations with each other and prioritising organisational development, organisations can emerge with better capacity to meet the evolving demands of their work.

Supports & Priorities

The organisations also advocate for such in their preferences for support. Whilst ongoing grant funding is most important (scored 4.28 out of 6), the next two priorities are to support strategic networking amongst diaspora organisations (3.24) and to provide capacity building training (2.77).



Figure 28 Preferred Supports for Organisations to be Integrated in New Strategy

In mapping this insight into earlier assessments on organisational size, an adaptable and blended model of support could evolve through instruments such as the Emigrant Support Programme. The other prominent challenges, such as access to staff/ volunteers and awareness/trust from the diaspora, pinpoint the need to supplement capacity development with interventions in areas such as communication and network building. This is reflective of the earlier findings in the individual survey on the level of involvement by the community in organisations. This could evolve into important interventions to spark and sustain new generations of leaders in the Irish diaspora in different markets.

In terms of priorities for the next strategy, organisations also seem to correlate the findings from the individual survey that the parameters of engagement are shifting. For example, the strong prioritisation of advocacy for the Irish diaspora further amplifies that indices of the vulnerable may be shifting. The higher value attributed in this survey to supporting the vulnerable also indicates that organisations are still experiencing this engagement need.

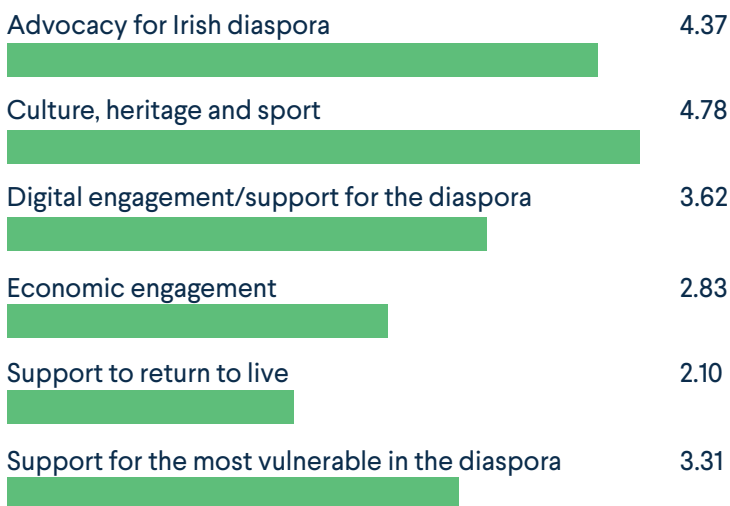
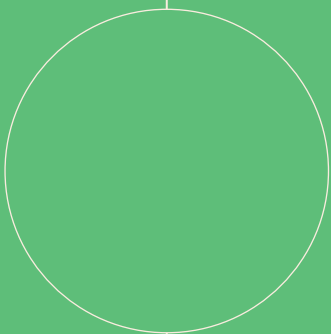


Figure 29 Preferred Priorities for New Strategy for Organisational Respondents to Global Irish Survey for Organisations.

In delivery, it is also clear that organisations are now clear that they need to be high-tech and high touch. Whilst digital engagement is ranked as third priority for the new strategy, this is echoed in the organisational responses on how they engage currently with the diaspora. In-person events and social media led the way with 95% noting they use both these tools followed by professional networks (42%). The future of Irish diaspora engagement is unquestionably high-tech and high touch.

The report now concludes with a short analysis of the non-survey consultation inputs shared through the Global Irish Position Papers. These papers provided critical confirmation of many of the themes emerging from the surveys as well as proving to be an exploratory idea bank for other challenges, opportunities and tools to address these in practice.



04.

**Global Irish Survey
Position Papers –
Ideation for the New
Diaspora Strategy**



The next strategy must build on existing pillars while addressing new migration patterns, global instability, and domestic challenges”.¹²

There were approximately 40 submissions via the Global Irish Position Paper option. Within this number, there were 36 full position papers submitted. A small cohort of responses were submitted within the body of an email rather than a position paper. In respect of the wishes to embrace an inclusive process, the insights shared in this format were also considered as contextual insights.

4.1

Profile of Position Paper Submissions

Irish-based organisations and individuals comprised the largest number of respondents. This re-emphasises the importance of the domestic and diaspora audience in shaping the next diaspora strategy. In total, there were 13 papers from Ireland, 9 from North America, 7 from Britain and 7 from the rest of the world.

The submissions represented a hybrid blend of perspectives not just across geographies but across constituencies within the Irish diaspora. Given the importance of the position papers as a tool to hear inputs representing communities that may not have had access to the online surveys, key inputs were shared for marginalised groups such as the Gypsy, Roma and Travelling communities, Irish Prisoners Overseas, Survivors of Institutional Abuse and others. Simultaneously, other submissions represented the voice of industry, entrepreneurs and professional networks. Other submissions reflected on the practical realities of individuals that have returned to live, work and study in Ireland.

The position papers help build the robustness of the representative nature of voices within this report particularly given that some submissions reflected community-led undertakings of their own consultative tools within their constituencies. For example, several of the position papers noted that their submissions were based on collective community insights generated through their independently hosted workshops and roundtables. This speaks to the multiplier impact in how such papers reach beyond the sole submission numbers.

4.2 Thematic Findings of Position Papers

“Our own experience demonstrates that even symbolic support from the Irish Government - such as a visit from the Consul General or a public letter of endorsement - acts as a force multiplier”.¹³



Figure 30 Overview of Thematic Findings from Global Irish Survey Position Papers

The range of perspectives represented within the papers means that a thematic analysis of the most consistent themes is a logical analysis approach. These are explored below with some contextualisation in different geographies when appropriate. In essence, they reflect some of the primary arguments outlined in this report thus far. The other value is that the papers provided practical ideas for action on the findings. Some of those are shared in this analysis.

The submissions speak to the necessity of segmentation particularly in care and service provision to those most marginalised (such as survivors of institutional abuse). This cuts across not just the provision of service but the design and communication on accessibility to such services.

Other priorities include the importance of developing a more integrated and holistic approach to streamline return. This was strong in terms of the practical realities of return. The position papers also include inputs from the private sector on how this is a critical innovation for Ireland's competitiveness in talent attraction.

There is a clear desire in the position papers to shape more meaningful evidence-based work on diasporic wellbeing as well as organisational development for those engaging the diaspora. They are advocating that the needs and opportunities of Ireland's diaspora engagement are shifting and the new strategy may need more creative, sustainable models to meet those.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that a consistent theme across the position papers was the spirit of appreciation and thanks for the work of the DFAT. Repeated submissions spoke to the potency of the work of Irish diplomats in helping their work. In fact, many respondents would like to see more of this, and this area is where the report begins the analysis of the position papers.

Appreciating Diaspora Diplomacy: Training for a New Era

Within the position papers, there was a strong recognition of the support and leadership provided by the DFAT. There was also a dawning realisation that the nature of diaspora diplomacy is shifting and that the government cannot be expected to do it on their own. Linking back to survey findings, the prominence of advocacy for the diaspora in priorities for the next strategy was reasserted in the position papers. This amplifies that solving this advocacy question through multistakeholder diaspora diplomacy will be critical for the DFAT to improve engagement of the diaspora.

For example, submissions ranged from energising the DFAT's existing strengths – "its global reach, convening power, and diplomatic network"¹⁴ – through to unleashing talent attraction through to the importance of the DFAT embracing more strategic grassroots partnerships to ensure community-specific supports are designed together with those most in need of them. These are all different forms of diaspora diplomacy.

Reimagining the ESP: From New Vulnerabilities to Evidence-Based Answers

“The question of who constitutes a ‘vulnerable migrant’ may also need to be reconsidered. As the pandemic revealed, many migrants who may not previously have been considered vulnerable suddenly became so, particularly in relation to mental health”.¹⁵

Another consistent theme was a strong support towards the sustaining of the ESP. Repeated appreciation was shared on the intrinsic value that the ESP provides. That said, several submissions actively pursued ways to innovate the ESP. Some of these were related to other key findings from the surveys in terms of organisational and leadership development. However, within the context of the analysis here, there were repeated ideas shared on how the ESP could evolve operationally in terms of financing and scope of work.

Related to the perception of how government funding can condition the market, many submissions advocated for the insertion of new priority streams within the ESP. Whilst many submissions advocated for the continuation of welfare as the primary focus of the ESP, there were recommendations on inserting key strategic strands for support in areas such as:

- Specifying strands of support for communities of need (e.g., prisoners, survivors of institutional abuse) with “increased investment in culturally competent, community-led services abroad that address both historic injustices and modern realities”.¹⁶
- Blending agile, demand-driven funding with multiannual funding.
- Creating a dedicated research strand within ESP to ensure evidence-based funding decisions.
- Creating a dedicated grant stream to launch specific capital funding through the ESP for acquisition or refurbishment of diaspora cultural centres.
- Piloting a Cultural Hub Network Fund initiative in key regions (prioritising a project within each Consular Region) to establish community-led cultural hubs as models for national replication.
- Creating an annual Irish Startup Showcase.¹⁷

A Coordinated Response to Return

A linkage to the reimagining of the ESP to the new realities of diaspora engagement for Ireland was clearly articulated in strong feedback on ensuring the new strategy prioritises the facilitation of return for the diaspora. The issues faced by many in returning, vulnerable diaspora or otherwise, was also amplified in the feedback. A strong demand emerged for clearer guidance and inter-agency coordination on supporting return for first-generation and ancestral diaspora.

A snapshot of the feedback to deliver this included:

- Increase embassy staff, introduce standard timelines for decisions and introduce expedited processing for Irish entry visas for diaspora.
- Optimise processes around foreign birth registry by modernising the portal and include a facility to apply for an Irish passport for successful applications whilst allocating resources to address the backlog and to improve processing times.
- Ensure marginalised returnees are recognised in cross-departmental policies.
- Establish fast-track assessments of Habitual Residence Condition for social welfare eligibility in crisis cases.
- Reduce visa and preclearance delays for spouses and partners of returning Irish citizens.
- Implement reciprocal driving licence exchange with the USA.
- Streamline Professional Qualification Recognition.¹⁸

Additional insight was drawn on the importance of supporting practical elements of return beyond these technical areas to include financial education on issues such as pensions and tax. Infrastructural challenges linked to the cost of housing and living were also highlighted.

The DFAT and partners have made important progress in building some of these answers already. The level of community awareness of such work may not be at the level that is required. This reflects the interconnectedness of the recommendations shared in the position papers and surveys.

A recurring essence of the feedback, captured in one submission, was to “advocate for stronger policy alignment and for sustained national focus on and funding for diaspora related activity”.¹⁹ This report would be remiss not to acknowledge that such investment must include investment into the DFAT also.

Investing in Organisational & Leadership Capacity

Another consistent theme within the feedback of the position papers was the need to ensure that evidence-based work is required to “respond appropriately to the needs of the contemporary diaspora, including recognising that the type of support needed has changed in some respects”.²⁰ Beyond the advocacy for multi-year funding through the ESP, more strategic thought was also shared in respect to how to build organisational and leadership capacity within the diaspora.

A sample of feedback shared in this regard included:

- Enhance support to help organisations build more financial and human resourcing by providing training and capacity building.
- Recognise and resource initiatives for emerging community leaders with skills in governance, advocacy and stewardship.
- Invest in digital adaptation for clubs and societies, enabling them to reach wider audiences and sustain participation.
- Resource ESP organisations to adopt inclusive outreach reflecting diaspora diversity.
- Address fragmented approaches to better enhance coordination and collaboration across diaspora leaders and organisations.²¹

Aligned with the last point, other feedback spoke to recognising the importance of diaspora organisations as key civic actors within diaspora engagement. For example, this was amplified by entities in the diaspora and in Ireland. Within Ireland, regional bodies were positioned as a key player in being “strategic backbone organisations” to help reduce fragmentation of effort and engagement.²² Within these recommendations, the layering of intergenerational engagements also emerged.

Going Generational: From Community to Language

The position papers also highlighted the power of intergenerational engagement as a key part of the reframing of Ireland’s diaspora engagement work. For example, one academic research report shared via the position papers outlined findings that that the composition of diaspora organisations as they sit today may not be capturing the evolving hybridity of contemporary Irish diaspora identity in Britain.

They noted that in their research on the Irish community in Britain, a very small proportion of their research sample (300) seemed to “be ‘stitched in’ to Irish community groups”.²³

Beyond this, the importance of incentivising student return, the promotion of the Irish language and wider inter-generational engagement was strong across several of the submissions. A sample of the feedback received includes:

- Support for parents wishing to pass on the Irish language to their children.
- Community-based language classes, professionally taught and open to all.
- A menu of online learning and conversation opportunities for scattered learners or those who prefer digital learning - of a high standard and professionally delivered or monitored.
- Fund intergenerational and inclusive cultural projects that engage both established and emerging Irish identities.
- Support initiatives that reflect the plurality of Irishness in Britain, including those with multiple heritage.
- Explore introduction of a Diaspora Tuition Fee, Diaspora Scholarship Fund and/or a Diaspora Education Taskforce.
- Explore a government-supported Graduate & Young Professional Programme for market diversification, for example, in Japan.
- Prioritise inclusive programming that speaks to younger generations, families, and multicultural audiences.²⁴

These insights mirror another important theme in the papers – finding the balance between the digital and in-person experiences of diaspora engagement.

Embracing AI & New Technologies

Another important theme to emerge was the recommendation to embrace AI and new technologies. Critical insights were shared on how this could optimise pre-departure support as well as in-field diaspora engagement. This was not to overtake in-person convenings through diplomatic engagement or platforms like the Global Irish Civic Forum but to supplement them.

As one paper notes, “the increasing role of AI is also going to have a profound effect; some study needs to be undertaken to determine the implications for the Irish living abroad and their engagement in their local communities and with Ireland”.²⁵ This mirrors the earlier assertions on the need for more robust research, development and innovation (RD&I) to underpin evidence-based engagement. This RD&I can optimise value for the allocation of taxpayer money to responsibly streamline diaspora engagement through new technologies if deemed appropriate.

A Values-Led Engagement

Finally, a strong consistent theme across the papers was to ensure Ireland's work on diaspora continues to be led by a values-based and inclusive model. Inclusivity cuts across many of the above themes.

This included a noticeable concern amongst the diaspora on the perception of Ireland and the nation's reputation in the world in relation to anti-immigrant and far right agitation. As noted in earlier sections of this report, this has also translated to some of the perceptions and opinions shared by a cohort of the diaspora. This divisiveness needs to be diluted.

The pertinence of the values-led engagement also responded to the opportunities now opening for a reimagining of diaspora engagement in response to growing political instability around the world. In this age, the Irish diaspora, from the surveys and position papers, seem to be turning more towards home. Our values are a light to follow.



Conclusion

This report has worked to ensure that the voices and inputs of the diaspora are strongly reflected in the Government's new Diaspora Strategy. The findings are quite straightforward in many respects.

On the diaspora side, the findings are that the diaspora has changed and is changing. The diaspora clearly values support but are demanding deeper engagement. They, for the most part, want to be central actors in Ireland's future. They want to belong, to connect and to engage. There is a dormant majority awaiting ignition.

This is invaluable for Ireland.

On the domestic side, the findings are that the diaspora engagement is fast emerging as a public policy priority to help truly secure Ireland's future. In a time where Ireland is staring down turbulence and uncertainty, the diaspora is only going to grow in importance for the nation. It is Ireland's gateway to diplomatic and economic influence. It is Ireland's pathway to reputation and power.

This brings practical and policy implications for the new strategy. It means continuing important work in areas such as advocacy and wellbeing as well as heritage and identity. It means embracing work to engage the reality of diaspora mobility. It means creating new ways of connecting and contributing. It means having the courage to embrace global leadership on diaspora engagement as a manifestation of our agency, interests and values.

Essentially, the key finding of this report is that the time has come to reimagine Ireland's diaspora engagement to truly put it front and centre of Ireland's domestic and foreign policy.

This reimagining is about building through successes of the past. They have been hard earned and must be stewarded. However, this reimagining is also about embracing what was outlined at the start of this report—approaching the new strategy as a canvas to embrace ambition and risk, to design a new era of diaspora engagement, and to carry civic imagination for a better Ireland. That civic imagination does not disappear at Ireland's borders; it lives and breathes in the diaspora too.

The benefits from this civic imagination must be felt to be sustained. Therefore, the mission at hand is clear for Ireland's diaspora engagement:

It is to secure Ireland's future and the diaspora's future.

Nobody is going to do that on behalf of Ireland and the diaspora. They must do it together. The Government's new Diaspora Strategy and how it will be implemented are the perfect place to start.

Endnotes

- 1 Tonra, B. (2025). Ireland is riding two horses galloping in different directions across the Atlantic. Irish Times, October 29. Available at: <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/2025/10/29/ben-tonra-ireland-is-riding-two-horses-that-are-now-galloping-in-different-directions/>?
- 2 Quote from Peter Drucker.
- 3 The Diaspora Institute. (2025). Diaspora Diplomacy Training Programme. Dublin.
- 4 These represent the direct references to diaspora engagement in the PfG. There are also numerous strategic indirect impacts for other areas of the PfG that can be generated through diaspora engagement.
- 5 Cull, N. (2023). Reputational Security: Refocusing Public Diplomacy for a Dangerous World. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- 6 As argued by Paul Sharp, Professor of Political Science, University of Minnesota Duluth, in his review of the Routledge International Handbook of Diaspora Diplomacy.
- 7 As argued by Amelia Arsenault as provided in review of the Routledge International Handbook of Diaspora Diplomacy.
- 8 Liam Kennedy, (2022). "Introduction," in: Routledge International Handbook of Diaspora Diplomacy, 1st ed. New York and London: Routledge International.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 For copies of these documents, please see: Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, (2025), Government Action Plan on Market Diversification, Dublin (available at: <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/publications/government-action-plan-on-market-diversification.html>); Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland, (2025), Business Events 2030, Dublin (available at: <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/publications/business-events-2030.html>); and Government of Ireland, (2025), International Sports Diplomacy Framework, Dublin (available at: <https://www.ireland.ie/en/sports-diplomacy/>).

- 11 For copies of these documents, please see: Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, (2024), Global Citizens 2030 – Ireland’s Talent and Innovation Strategy, Dublin (available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-further-and-higher-education-research-innovation-and-science/publications/global-citizens-2030-irelands-talent-and-innovation-strategy/>); and, Irish Aid, 2019), A Better World: Ireland’s Policy for International Development, Dublin (available at: <https://www.ireland.ie/en/irish-aid/news-and-publications/publications/publication-index/a-better-world-irelands-policy-for-international-development/>).
- 12 Insight submitted via individual submission within the Global Irish Position Papers.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 This is a sample of insights shared across multiple submissions within the Global Irish Position Papers pertaining to this topic. It is not exhaustive.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 Insight submitted via individual submission within the Global Irish Position Papers.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 This is a sample of insights shared across multiple submissions within the Global Irish Position Papers pertaining to this topic. It is not exhaustive
- 22 Insight submitted via individual submission within the Global Irish Position Papers.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 This is a sample of insights shared across multiple submissions within the Global Irish Position Papers pertaining to this topic. It is not exhaustive.
- 25 Insight submitted via individual submission within the Global Irish Position Papers.