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Changes in the Practice of Diplomacy 2000-2020

Case study: Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs

Thesis presented by

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for the degree of

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Declaration

This is to certify that the work I am submitting is my own and has not been submitted for another degree, either at University College Cork or elsewhere. All external references and sources are clearly acknowledged and identified within the contents. I have read and understood the regulations of University College Cork concerning plagiarism and intellectual property.

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1. Abstract

As the practice of diplomacy has undergone dramatic change in the first two decades of the 21st century, this thesis examines to what extent those changes have had an impact on Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs as the principal actor in Irish diplomacy and foreign policy. Interviews were conducted with a cross-section of serving senior Irish diplomats to investigate how the Irish foreign service – the Department of Foreign Affairs and its diplomats – has responded in a time of challenge and change.

A study of the literature suggested that the changes to the practice of international diplomacy could be categorised under three headings – actors, issues and systems. A wide-range of state and non-state actors now participate in international diplomacy, meaning that foreign ministries engage with a far greater range of stakeholders than heretofore. As the distinction between domestic and foreign policy issues becomes less clear and as the diplomatic agenda widens well beyond the traditional areas of international peace and security, foreign ministries are dealing with more complex and cross-cutting issues than ever before. These changes have impacted on both the foreign ministry as an organisation and the individual diplomat practitioner. A review of the literature on Irish diplomacy revealed a gap in respect of how these changes have influenced the role and work of the Department of Foreign Affairs since 2000. By interviewing serving diplomats, insights and analysis were obtained that might not otherwise have been available.

The research uncovered developments in the relationships between the Department of Foreign Affairs and other state actors such as the Department of the Taoiseach, other government departments, the state agencies and the parliament. Interaction with non-state actors such as the Irish public, the diaspora and civil society were also considered.

The widening of the diplomatic agenda was also reflected in the research in relation to newer issues like values-based diplomacy, climate change and migration, while more long-standing areas of focus such as economic and trade diplomacy, consular work and security and defence issues were also examined.

Changes to both the size and organisational culture of the Department of Foreign Affairs emerged as significant themes in the research. Finally, topics related to the individual diplomat were considered including the rise of public diplomacy and whether the

characteristics and skills that diplomats have traditionally prioritised enable them to operate successfully in this more complex and challenging environment.

2. Introduction

The practice of international diplomacy has undergone significant change in the early decades of the 21st century, driven by the forces of globalisation, including advances in information and communications technology and a growing interdependence between states, along with a greater level of turbulence in international affairs. This research project sets out to review the main themes and trends in the practice of international diplomacy between 2000 and 2020, and then to identify where and how these developments have impacted Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs[1] as the principal player in Irish diplomacy.

The practice of diplomacy, the working methods, and the structures of the Department of Foreign Affairs have changed dramatically over this same period; this review seeks to establish to what extent the changes that have occurred have been driven by global trends, and whether there are any impacting factors that are specific to the Irish case. The case study examines the extent to which DFA is impacted by wider trends, while also uncovering context-specific factors that have caused changes to the practice of Irish diplomacy since the beginning of the century.

While extensive research has been done on Ireland's foreign policy, little research is available on the practice of Irish diplomacy and the work of the Department of Foreign Affairs as experienced by diplomats themselves. This project seeks therefore to provide unique insights on how these practitioners have experienced the changes that have occurred in the period since 2000, and to draw some conclusions based on their reflections.

The period under review coincides closely with an expansion in the breadth of Irish diplomacy following the conclusion of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, which allowed the Department of Foreign Affairs to widen its lens and to look beyond the relationship with Ireland's nearest neighbour following a thirty year period during which the search for peace on the island had, naturally, been the foremost priority. The growing level of European engagement in foreign and security policy was another avenue through which the agenda of Irish diplomacy broadened.

[1] The terms Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department and DFA are used interchangeably.

A review of the literature, which is predominantly U.S. and U.K. focused, signals three overarching categories in which the changes that have occurred to the practice of international diplomacy can be studied – the actors, the issues, and the systems for the practice of diplomacy.

One of the key themes that emerges from the international literature is the increase in the number of stakeholders engaged in international diplomacy compared with earlier eras, when the main participants were diplomats and high level politicians. In this regard, state and non-state actors can be examined separately.

Linked to this theme is the broader and deeper level of international activity on the part of state actors other than foreign ministries. This means that foreign ministries no longer have a monopoly over the state's international projection, and are no longer the gatekeepers of how the state interacts internationally. In the Irish case, the roles of the Departments of the Taoiseach and of Finance have grown, although across government all departments are now engaging internationally more frequently and more extensively. The state agencies tasked with promoting Ireland abroad have also expanded their reach globally in the same period, and their interaction with DFA has changed and developed. Similarly, the role of the Irish Parliament (Oireachtas) in influencing Irish diplomacy in these years has evolved.

The literature indicates the growing role of non-state actors engaging in international relations, including religious organisations, large technology companies, terrorist groups and a range of other stakeholders. In the Irish case, the primary non-state actors influencing the foreign policy making process can be identified as the Irish public, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), in particular those in the development aid sector, and to a lesser extent the wider policy ecosystem including think tanks and universities. Notably, the Irish Government's engagement with the diaspora has changed markedly over the period in question.

A further development in modern diplomacy is the growing number of issues that diplomats are required to engage with, which go well beyond what might be considered the 'classic' foreign policy issues that would have preoccupied them in earlier eras. In many cases, there is a significant overlap with what would have previously been considered purely domestic policy issues. Examples in this space include climate change, migration, social issues,

corporate tax and public health – all areas beyond the traditional diplomatic agenda. A challenge that emerges for foreign ministries in this regard is how coherence between the domestic and foreign aspects of these policies can be ensured.

The increased importance of economic and commercial diplomacy in recent decades is a notable feature of diplomatic practice generally, and this is also the case in respect of Irish diplomacy. The range of tasks and functions that the Department of Foreign Affairs and its embassies have taken on has become much more diverse in this area. The response to the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) and the consequent structural changes to the Department's responsibilities over the period can also be said to have impacted the approach to this type of diplomacy.

As global travel has increased (pre-pandemic), citizens are travelling in greater numbers and to more far-flung locations than before. The number of significant events involving tourists – whether terrorist attacks or natural disasters – has also increased. Therefore, the attention paid to the consular role of foreign ministries and their missions has grown. The Department of Foreign Affairs has always placed a high degree of importance on citizen support, which can at least in part be attributed to the nature and size of Ireland's society and political system. Unlike some foreign ministries, there is no formal separation between diplomatic and consular work. International trends in terms of the volume and complexity of cases and incidents have also had an impact on the Department.

In terms of organisational structure, most foreign ministries have gone through structural changes as they have sought to respond to changing priorities and increased demands. In the Irish case, the most significant development has been the expansion in the size of the Department both at headquarters and abroad, growing from an organisation of just under 1,000 staff in 2000 to over 1,600[2] by the end of 2020, with the mission network growing from 58 embassies and consulates to 92 in the same period. Inevitably, the scale of growth has had a significant impact on how the Department operates and organises itself.

Amidst all the changes at the macro-level to international diplomacy and to the Department of Foreign Affairs as an organisation, at the micro level the individual diplomat remains a key player. The changes to the volume of information received and the pace at which

[2] Figures exclude locally recruited staff but include the staff of the Passport Service.

diplomats have to react, are factors that are impacting on the practitioners of diplomacy. The requirement for diplomats to engage in public diplomacy is one of the key global trends in diplomacy since 2000, and this can be expected to influence Irish diplomats no less than their international peers. Increased demands for transparency mean that growing areas of diplomatic activity no longer take place behind closed doors with implications for the day-to-day work of diplomats. The Department's expansion has required a step change in governance and management arrangements, which has also affected the role and tasks of diplomats both at headquarters and in missions. At the same time, a question arises as to whether diplomats have the necessary characteristics and skills to equip them to adapt and thrive in this time of turbulence and change.

To identify how these global trends have impacted in the Irish case and what other factors have influenced changes to the practice of Irish diplomacy between 2000 and 2020, serving senior officials in the Department of Foreign Affairs have been interviewed and the results are set out in the following dissertation. The objective is to provide a synthesis of the assessments from diplomats themselves of how the Irish foreign service – that is the Department of Foreign Affairs and its diplomats – has responded in a time of challenge and change.

3. Methodology

Research question

This research project was originally conceived in 2016 as a study of the evolving role of the Foreign Ministry in an increasingly complex and globalised world. The conceptual framework was intended to look at 'Future Diplomacy' and its implications for Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs. It was found that the literature in relation to Ireland's diplomacy (as distinct from foreign policy) was not extensive.

The original research proposal evolved partly due to the passage of time and partly to narrow the scope sufficiently for meaningful conclusions to be drawn.

The final research question is: as international diplomacy and diplomatic practice have changed in the first two decades of the 21st century, how have these changes impacted Irish diplomacy and diplomatic practice? The conceptual framework proposes that the changes can be categorised under three headings – actors, issues and systems. The following further sub-questions are also examined:

- How has the proliferation of state and non-state actors engaged in international diplomacy affected DFA?
- How has the widening of the agenda beyond classic foreign and security policy issues had an impact?
- To what extent have organisational changes in the Department and the practice of diplomacy by Irish diplomats been driven by global trends?
- Are there other factors specific to the Irish case that have caused changes to how Irish diplomacy is practiced in the same period?

Research design

It was decided to set a specific time period, 2000-2020, and within that, using the Department of Foreign Affairs as the case study, to examine what changes have occurred globally to the practice of diplomacy and how these have been reflected in the work of DFA and its diplomatic staff. The single country case study is a type of comparative design comparing different periods of time (Halperin & Heath, 2017). The selected case study can be said to be purely descriptive, in that it is not intended to advance or apply a theory, but is

a piece of primary research which seeks to describe a particular phenomenon (changes to the practice of diplomacy) in a particular country (Ireland) (Halperin & Heath, 2017: 215), and therefore make a contribution to the research on this topic.

Given the subject matter, a qualitative approach was deemed to be most appropriate, seeking to capture general trends over a lengthy period, rather than specific changes that might be captured in a quantitative way (Mahoney and Goertz, 2006). It was decided to interview practitioners - serving diplomats - in a semi-structured format as the basis for the research. The semi-structured interview form was selected to allow for greater levels of insight (Heath & Halperin, 2017: 298), and for responses to be probed and expanded upon.

The interviews undertaken can be considered as 'elite' interviews, given the high level of influence on policies in the research area exercised by the participants in their role as senior diplomats (Heath & Halperin, 2017). The primary purpose was to obtain new information about the practice of Irish diplomacy that would not otherwise be available.

Literature review

The focus of the research was narrowed initially by the literature review and an analysis of global trends. A range of texts were examined to capture the main changes to the practice of diplomacy during the period in question. The body of literature in the English language in this area is predominantly U.S. and U.K. focused, and studies on the practice of Irish diplomacy are limited. In this sense, the research is intended to begin to address the gap in the existing literature. As stated by Wiseman, '[the recent] spike of interest in diplomacy and diplomatic studies notwithstanding, there is a great deal still to learn about the foreign services of democratic countries' (2020: 786).

The questions or prompts used to guide the semi-structured interviews emerged from the review of the literature and were intended to capture the main trends and themes in modern diplomacy.

Data collection

While the initial research proposal foresaw interviews with a range of actors, including some of DFA's stakeholders (other foreign ministries, non-governmental organisations), it was

ultimately decided to focus on the cohort who are principally responsible for the practice of Irish diplomacy, that is, serving Irish diplomats.

In total there are around 400 Irish diplomats currently serving at headquarters and overseas. From this potential pool, fourteen currently serving diplomats were selected for interview. While not an exact science, every effort was made to obtain a representative cross-section of those whose careers have coincided with the period 2000-2020, seeking to ensure a balanced sample from the perspectives of gender, age, grade, areas of expertise, career history and current role. Two of the interviewees had not served for the full twenty year period having joined the Department in 2004-2005.

Interviews with the participants lasting one hour each took place in May and June 2022[3] by video-conference – some interviewees were serving at DFA headquarters, while others were serving in Ireland's diplomatic missions overseas.

The interviews were semi-structured and based on a series of seven prompts which had been shared in advance with interviewees (see Appendix I). Interviewees were reminded at the outset that the research related to changes to the practice of diplomacy, rather than changes to Irish foreign policy, though inevitably it proved impossible to treat the former in complete isolation from the latter.

It is noted by the researcher that although recent significant events such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine were beyond the scope of the research, some observations and comments from interviewees to some extent reflect the events that occurred in 2021-2022.

All of the interviews were recorded using the VoiceMemo App and transcribed using the website trint.com. The transcripts were then edited by the researcher to ensure that they aligned with the recordings of the interviews. All interview transcripts were then fully anonymised, redacted where appropriate, and stored as required by UCC's ethical approval process.

[3] One in-person interview took place in August 2022.

Analysis of data

Some issues that had been expected to arise, for example the evolving role of the European External Action Service and its impact on the Department of Foreign Affairs, were not referenced during the interviews, and were therefore removed from the scope. The scope was further narrowed with a focus specifically on the practice of diplomacy, eliminating aspects related to changes to Ireland's foreign policy.

The final transcripts of the interviews were analysed and synthesised under three headings – Actors, Issues and Processes. The final section was later re-named 'Systems', to better reflect the themes that emerged from the interviews. Within these three sections, sub-headings were included to provide structure, and to reflect the dominant themes and topics addressed by the interviewees.

Limitations

Certain limitations should be noted in respect of the research. In the first instance, the researcher is herself a serving Irish diplomat and was therefore interviewing her colleagues all of whom were known to her, which meant that she was more fully embedded in the topic than a researcher who was not a member of the Department of Foreign Affairs staff, and that the interviewees responses might be influenced by their relationship with her. As a serving diplomat, it was also important that the researcher's own opinions and views did not impinge on either the follow-up questions during the interview process, or on the synthesising and writing up of the responses, though this possibility could not be eliminated entirely.

A further limitation was the tendency amongst the interviewees to focus to a large degree on the period from 2015 to 2020 in terms of examples and reflections. Given the breadth of the topic and the limited time available this is perhaps natural, and suggests that the time frame might have been shortened or the questions and prompts might have been more clearly drafted to draw out more specifically what changes had occurred over the twenty year period.

The research topic is broad and each of the headings and sub-headings could themselves be the subject of separate research projects. Some conclusions may also warrant further

quantitative investigation to validate them. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the dissertation provides a useful snapshot at a particular moment in time, of how significant global trends in diplomacy have played out in the Irish context.

4. Literature Review

This review is divided into two parts. The first relates to recent literature on the practice of diplomacy in the 21st century covering the period 2000-2020, and how the practice has changed and evolved. The second part of the review looks at the existing research as it relates to Irish diplomacy and identifies a gap in the research in relation to how trends in international diplomacy are impacting Ireland, and specifically the Department of Foreign Affairs, as the primary actor in Irish foreign policy. This establishes the basis for further primary research to investigate how the evolving nature of diplomacy has influenced the work of the Department.

International Relations, Foreign Policy and Diplomacy

International Relations (IR) evolved over the latter decades of the twentieth century as an academic discipline distinct from the study of politics, although there is considerable conceptual overlap (Heywood, 2013). Heywood suggests that a distinction can be drawn between the role of the State in political science, where the State is a macro-level actor, and in IR where the State is a micro-level actor. IR simply defined is the study of how states or territories interact with one and other in the international arena. Realist theories of IR emphasise the use of force and balance of power dynamics as the major determinants in international relations, whereas a more idealistic or liberal strain highlights processes of integration and cooperation, including in relation to the rule of law and concepts of human rights, as the means by which states can coexist peacefully.

The literature also highlights the implications of globalisation for state sovereignty during the period 2000-2020 and this evolution provides the background to the research, though it is not its primary focus. Sieb identifies the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the U.S. as a defining moment of change for the world order which, coupled with the rise of the internet in the early decades of 21st century, have had a transformative effect (2016).

Foreign Policy is defined as the decisions governing authorities make in the name of the state to realise international goals (Kegley, 1999). In other words, as Thakur says, 'foreign policy and diplomacy involve a delicate balancing of interests, goals, issues, principles, values, demands, and pressures from a diverse array of actors, domestic and international, governmental and non-governmental' (2013, 71). Traditionally, foreign policy has been the

sole preserve of the sovereign state, which has been the primary actor in foreign policy. While this is still nominally the case, the role of other actors has increased.

Diplomacy can be described as the practice or implementation of the foreign policy of the sovereign state. In his classic text, Barston defines it as follows: 'diplomacy is concerned with the management of relations between states and between states and other actors. From a state perspective, diplomacy is concerned with advising, shaping and implementing foreign policy' (2019: 1).

White contends that diplomacy is essentially a communications process refined and professionalised over centuries: 'Diplomacy in world politics refers to a communications process between international actors that seeks through negotiation to resolve conflict short of war' (2005: 388).

The practice of diplomacy is what diplomats do in representing states and implementing or executing foreign policy, whether at headquarters or abroad, whether in the bilateral (state-to-state) sphere or at a multilateral organisation (Cooper et al., 2013). It is therefore a policy instrument, rather than a global process (White, 2005). Diplomacy also provides the codes of behaviour that facilitate international political intercourse (Cooper et al., 2013).

This research is focused on the practice of diplomacy, and Irish diplomacy in particular, in the period 2000-2020. The themes that emerged from the contemporary literature and can be broadly categorised as referring to actors, issues and systems.

Traditional diplomacy has been described as 'highly formal, institutional, interpersonal, slow and usually protected by secrecy' (Gilboa, 2001: 1), whereas, diplomacy in the 21st century is characterised by Cooper et al. as an exercise in the management of complexity (2013).

Some of the literature on modern diplomacy suggests that it is the rapid developments in information and communications technologies, more than any other factor, that have had the most transformative impact in the period 2000-2020 (Fletcher, 2016). This gives rise to a need to re-examine the premises of traditional diplomatic practice and potentially to develop a different conception of the diplomatic craft for the 21st century due to 'the changing nature of diplomacy in the information age and the difficulty of keeping government communications under wraps in an era when transparency reigns' (Heine,

2013: 54).

Further to this Greenstock says, 'diplomacy interprets power, and if the nature of power is changing in the modern age then the practice of diplomacy must adapt to those changes or lose its relevance' (2013: 120). However, there is no consensus in the literature that there has been a complete transformation in diplomactic practice in this period. On the contrary, Barston argues that 'diplomacy is the subject of constant change, rather than major shifts constituting a new form' (2019: 6) and that the fundamental underlying principles of diplomacy remain unchanged.

There is, however, general agreement that far from marking the decline of diplomacy, all of these changes mean that 'diplomacy as a set of processes continues to be of central importance to the global policy milieu and these processes need to be constantly re-evaluated' (Hocking, 2012: 9).

This review considers briefly some of the classic texts on diplomacy, as well as some newer literature, including on the 'future of diplomacy'. Texts on Irish diplomacy, including Government publications, are also considered.

Actors

The State

A major question in the recent literature is how the erosion of state sovereignty has impacted on both the practice and conduct of diplomacy and whether in fact changes to the 'sovereignty-based rules that have provided the framework for diplomacy over the last four centuries or so' will ultimately result in a transformation in how diplomacy is practiced (Hocking et al., 2012: 74). Historically, the units of the international system have been states. The representatives of those states abroad and in international organisations have been diplomats – traditionally a small group of professional practitioners in what is an ancient profession, (Cooper, 2013). Diplomacy has therefore been described as an elitist activity (Seib, 2016).

Much of the most recent literature reflects on how the erosion of state sovereignty, what Cooper calls 'the retreat of the state' (2013: 42) is impacting on diplomacy. Heine argues

that it is the innate connection to the state that creates contemporary challenges for diplomacy:

> *The whole apparatus of traditional diplomacy is anchored in the nation state. At a time when the nation state's fabric is pulled in different directions from 'above' (that is, from an international environment demanding the surrendering of ever larger portions of national sovereignty), and 'below' (by regionalist movements and by pressures for greater local autonomy from the central government), this puts diplomats in a complex situation* (2013: 55).

In parallel, diplomacy is being opened up to a multiplicity of other actors (Hocking, 2012: 5). One of the most significant features of modern diplomacy is the increase in the volume of 'government agents' or state actors involved (White, 2005).

The Foreign Ministry

Despite the changes, foreign ministries continue to be 'prominent department[s] of central government in most states' (Berridge, 2015: 9) and the primary actor in the execution of the state's foreign policy. Indeed, the role of the foreign ministry in a turbulent global context is arguably more important than ever in providing analysis and advice to government: 'the contested and unstable international system post-2000 has […] meant that the political functions of foreign ministries – assessments, options, advice and warning, have assumed greater significance' (Barston, 2019: 29).

The Prime Minister's office

In most countries, offices of state such as the Head of State and/or Government engage in high level diplomacy and other forms of international networking. Within government in many countries, there is a natural tension between foreign ministries and prime ministers' offices regarding international affairs (Wiseman, 2020). This is in part due to the growth of what Barston calls 'personal diplomacy' and the increased engagement of senior leaders in the process of diplomacy, sometimes bypassing foreign ministries and embassies altogether (2019). Barston argues therefore that even within government 'external policy is no longer necessarily the preserve of the ministry of foreign affairs' (ibid., 14). As Greenstock says, '[b]ecause domestic issues are so entwined with external ones across the whole field of

government, the personal input of the head of government into foreign policy, whatever the nature of the state's constitutional arrangements [...] becomes a political necessity' (2013, 112).

Other state actors

Other ministries are also increasingly engaged internationally, for example finance and agriculture ministries. State agencies, such as investment promotion agencies, also have an international projection. Heine says that 'more and more ministries and government agencies are 'getting in on the act' with their own 'Office of International Affairs', which conducts a parallel diplomacy' (Heine, 2013: 61).

Other government ministries may assign officials to overseas embassies though this has not always been welcomed by diplomats. 'In recent decades, finance ministries of major and aspiring economic capitals assigned to the embassies in other capitals their own officials to handle their business…This was often resisted in foreign ministries' (Malone, 2013: 128). Berridge suggests that this loosening of the foreign ministry's grip on its monopoly on international relations means that: 'what the foreign ministry is now inclined to aspire to…is a coordinating role in foreign relations' (2015: 15).

Non-state actors

The range of non-state actors with international reach includes religious movements and institutions, technology companies, humanitarian and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), universities and think tanks, diaspora groups, and terrorist networks.

The spectrum of non-state actors ranges widely 'from the benign, like the Gates Foundation, to the malign – like al-Qaeda – [and they] have steadily eroded what was once the near monopoly on power enjoyed by states and governments' (Burns, 2019: 11-12).

The public

The general public in many countries now play a more activist role in diplomacy than in the past, when the public was the audience but not a participant. This is largely due to developments in media (Seib, 2016), and can be a significant influencer of the timing and indeed the substance of foreign policy choices by governments. Along with increased visibility comes a need for greater accountability on the part of diplomats. This can

sometimes create conflicts for diplomats between the need for secrecy or confidentiality, and their requirement to be media performers (Cooper, 2013).

Issues

The widening content

In the post-Cold War era, as the threat of an East-West conflict receded, the scope of diplomacy widened to include a greater range of issues and policy well beyond the traditional peace and security agenda leading White to conclude that 'the substance of global diplomacy covers a wider agenda of issues than ever before' (2005: 393).

Increasingly, the issues that preoccupy diplomats have a direct read across to the domestic policy arena (Cooper et al., 2013), and the lines between domestic and foreign policy are becoming more blurred (Hocking, 2012). This is what Barston terms the 'widening content of diplomacy' (Barston, 2019: 8). This means that foreign ministries can no longer operate at one remove from the government departments who are engaged in developing policies that will have an impact abroad, as well as at home.

Heine attributes this widening to 'the disconnect between […] international flows and the lack of suitable global governance institutions and mechanisms to deal with the challenges created by them' and suggests that this 'has added numerous issues to the international agenda, with which often understaffed and underfunded foreign ministries find it hard to cope' (2013, 56).

Examples of new agenda items are climate change, taxation of multinational corporations, and migration. The challenge of ensuring coherence between the international and domestic policy approaches is one that has increased substantially over the last twenty years. In more recent times, public health has emerged prominently as a foreign policy issue due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Economic diplomacy

Commercial and economic diplomacy has become much more integrated in the core work of embassies, and the overlap between commercial and political work has increased

significantly. Diplomats now frequently play a key role in opening export markets, in attracting foreign direct investment and in developing air connections between countries, for example. Experienced diplomats have noted the rising importance of 'economic statecraft and commercial diplomacy' (Burns, 2019: 415) and the need for foreign ministries to develop greater skills in this area, while integrating it with other aspects of policy. Foreign ministries can play a key role, for example, in assessing foreign investments in critical infrastructure.

Engagement in the commercial sphere can sometimes give rise to ethical issues for diplomats and embassies. These can relate for example to supporting companies or businesses that have dubious human rights records, or whose products are used for malign purposes such as the arms industry. Therefore, foreign ministries and individual diplomats now have to contend with a greater range of competing interests and to strike a balance in the promotion of these interests and foreign policy values.

Values-based diplomacy

The engagement of foreign ministries in the promotion of certain human rights and values has become more intense and prominent in recent years. It is now commonplace for EU and other likeminded foreign ministries and embassies to promote, for example, LGBTQ rights in their countries of accreditation.

Consular

Increased foreign travel by citizens to more diverse locations, combined with a rise in global instability, has led to a significant increase in the volume of consular work being carried out by foreign ministries (Hocking, 2012).

The consular role of diplomatic missions was often seen in the past as a poor relation to classic diplomatic work, but as international travel has increased exponentially, these tasks have become more prominent. It is now the source of a significant media, public and political interest in many countries. In some cases, a focus on consular work can be at the expense of more traditional tasks (Okano-Heijmans, 2013). This was particularly evident during the early months of the Covid-19 crisis.

Systems

Foreign Ministry structure

The structure of the foreign ministry is evolving continuously – in addition to both geographic and thematic sections or desks, it is now common in developed states to have a policy planning function and other more strategically focused sections (Berridge, 2015), with 'different models moving in and out of fashion' (Barston, 2019: 19).

One structural aspect that can impact on a country's diplomacy is the size of its network of overseas missions. In recent times, the growth of economic diplomacy has become an important factor in decisions on the opening and closure of missions: 'economic factors are among the more important influences leading to increases or reductions in representation' (Barston, 2019: 23). In 2012, Hocking et al. anticipated the possibility that diplomatic networks of missions would be scaled back, including in particular by EU member states in other EU countries (Hocking et al., 2012).

How missions remain connected with HQ is also an area of change and development and recent years have seen a growing trend for periodic conferences at Head of Mission level, either at headquarters or on a regional basis in the field.

Transparency

An increased degree of transparency, whether as a result of Freedom of Information legislation, hacking or leaking, is now a feature of diplomatic life (Heine, 2013), and this has consequences for all aspects of diplomatic communications – between diplomats and other diplomats, between diplomats and contacts, and between diplomats in the field and their headquarters. Diplomats serving in certain countries can also expect to be surveilled by the host state.

Clearly, it is becoming increasingly difficult for diplomats to continue to conduct diplomacy behind closed doors. This can be seen as a positive development with public scrutiny ensuring more robust policies and a healthy democratisation of diplomacy. On the other hand, it can in some circumstances diminish the capacity of diplomats to navigate compromises, a key feature of successful diplomacy.

Barston describes the relationship between 'open' and 'secret' diplomacy and contends that

'much of modern diplomacy remains conducted on a confidential or secret basis with open elements, rather than there being an overall shift to the open conduct of relations' (2019: 112), as he argues that 'secrecy…is an integral element of successful negotiations' (ibid., 113).

Public diplomacy

The role of the media as a tool for shaping and influencing diplomacy had already been fully recognised by the early years of the century (Gilboa, 2001). Developments, in particular the advent of social media, have greatly accelerated this change.

One of the most discussed trends in modern diplomacy is the rise of public diplomacy, broadly defined as government-to-public diplomacy. And the publics are not only foreign ones: 'it is now widely recognized that it is as important for [head office] to engage in 'outreach' at home as it is for its missions to undertake this abroad' (Berridge, 2015: 19). Communications is not just an external or international matter – Seib suggests that it is increasingly important for ministries of foreign affairs to communicate domestically with their own publics (2016). 'Any nation that fails to take seriously the transformative power of new media will be limiting its diplomatic effectiveness' (ibid., 9).

Seib's central premise is that the future of diplomacy is intrinsically linked to the future of media. He suggests that media proficiency is now a key element of the diplomat's toolkit. This represents a change from the traditional practice of the diplomat retreating from the spotlight and allowing political leaders to carry out the presentation of policy.

The pace of social media engagement and the pressure to respond at speed are challenges to the more traditional, considered approach to crafting messages following considered reflection. One of the challenges of digital diplomacy is how to measure success, and how to ensure tight linkage with foreign policy objectives so that the engagement is not just contributing to social media noise.

In using social media, there is pressure on diplomatic missions and practitioners to create high-quality content. To do this effectively, new media skills and resources are required. Seib contends that in future the most successful diplomats will not necessarily be those representing the most powerful states; rather, they may be those whose states develop the

most compelling narrative. Similarly Nye suggests that 'conventional wisdom has always held that the government with the largest military prevails, but in an information age it may be the state (or non-states) with the best story that wins' (Nye, 2015: 105).

Information gathering and political reporting

Traditionally, a key aspect of an embassy's role has also been to gather information and report on political developments in the host state to inform the policy development process at headquarters (White, 2005). This role has been dramatically undermined in recent decades by developments in information and communications technology and the 'breaking news' aspect of reporting is now effectively obsolete. Diplomats are no longer the owners of certain types of information – anyone with a smartphone can access in real time what is happening around the globe, for example, during the attempted coup in Turkey in 2016. This can apply equally to the initial interpretation of events. The added value that a diplomatic mission can bring in this scenario is via its on-the-ground contacts, and access to information and analysis that are not widespread, often the type of information that can only be gleaned from elite or political contacts.

Barston talks about the increase in the 'volume of traffic' and 'receipt of several hundred emails daily' (2019: 15) which are the result of advances in information and communications technology. In the midst of a proliferation of information sources, therefore, Seib anticipates a potential role for diplomats in curating the vast quantities of data which are now emerging, to ensure that their clients, both political and public, are provided with the analysis to allow them understand significant developments (2016). The need to identify and to counter disinformation is a further challenge (Greenstock, 2013).

Craft of diplomacy

Amongst the increasingly diverse range of actors engaging in diplomacy, the individual diplomat, guided by the values and interests of their home state, remains a key player. While diplomacy may be considered a profession or even a craft, formal training for diplomats varies considerably from country to country. In some countries, political figures are appointed to Head of Mission posts, though this remains the exception rather than the rule and has happened most often in the U.S. foreign service.

Traditional skills such as a knowledge of the history, culture and language of a host country can aid the diplomat in their role in analysing and interpreting that country for headquarters. 'The fundamentals of the craft – the core qualities and roles that have always been the essence of what is required of effective diplomats [are]: smart policy judgement, language skills, and a sure feel for the foreign landscapes in which they serve and the domestic priorities they represent' (Burns, 2019: 12). Burns continues that 'judgement, balance, and discipline remain the core qualities of diplomatic practice' (ibid., 408).

A diplomat should have a 'depth of judgement based on experience accumulated over time and aggregated across the different parts and functions of the department. Generalist and specialist skills are often combined' (Cooper et al., 2013: 15), while diplomats increasingly need to have to have managerial skills leading to what some characterise as an unwelcome 'bureaucratisation' of diplomacy (ibid., 26).

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Irish Diplomacy

The following section sets out a review of the extant literature insofar as it relates to Irish diplomacy.

Ireland is an EU member state, an island off the west coast of the European continent, which has been independent since 1921. The Department of External Affairs[4] was established in 1919, even before the international recognition of the State, a statement of belief perhaps by the founders of the State on the need for an outward-looking perspective (Gibney et al., 2019).

In the early years of the independent State, the focus of the Department of External Affairs was on securing international recognition of the Irish Republic and later the Free State. The initial efforts to create a foreign service were de-stabilised by Civil War divisions, although from the early 1920s a formalised, organised foreign service began to take shape, with envoys uniformly loyal to the pro-Treaty position (Kennedy, 1997). Under the leadership of Joseph Walshe, who served as Secretary of the Department from 1922 – 1946, this more non-political and centralised approach to the practice of diplomacy by the State's emissaries overseas was strictly implemented (ibid.).

In the early years, diplomatic missions were established London, Geneva and Washington. However, the Department remained very small, with an estimated 50 staff in total in 1927 (Gibney et al., 2019). In time, the focus of the Department gradually extended to the articulation of a foreign policy independent of Britain, including through engagement at the League of Nations. This ultimately led the State to adopt a policy of neutrality in the Second World War, a position that became a central plank of Irish foreign policy in the succeeding decades.

In the post-war era, the Department began to expand at headquarters and abroad, and in joining the two multilateral behemoths of the twentieth century, the UN in 1955 and the European Economic Community in 1973, became fully engaged in international diplomacy. Membership of the United Nations became a cornerstone of Irish foreign policy (Gibney et al., 2019), encapsulating a sense if Ireland as 'a neutral mediator seeking international

[4] The Department of Foreign Affairs was known as the Department of External Affairs from 1922 – 1971.

justice and peace, conscious of the rule of international law' (ibid.). Significant themes in the State's external engagement in these decades were participation in the first international peacekeeping missions, efforts towards limiting the proliferation of nuclear weapons and a commitment to overseas development aid.

A recognition of the need for Ireland to become more integrated in the global economy provided the impetus for efforts to join the European Economic Community (EEC) which commenced in the early 1960s. Ireland eventually joined the EEC, following the endorsement of necessary changes to the constitution by a popular vote. The trajectory of European integration in the ensuing decades would profoundly influence not only Ireland's diplomacy and foreign policy, but also many aspects of domestic policy. As the country became more outward-looking, the number of diplomatic missions tripled between 1973 and 2011.

The efforts that culminated in the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) in 1998, brought an end to the period knows as 'the Troubles' in Northern Ireland (Doyle, 2012). The successful conclusion of the GFA allowed space for Irish diplomacy – and the Department of Foreign Affairs as the primary actor in Irish diplomacy – to broaden its horizons and gave rise to a greater level of confidence and ambition. For the previous thirty years, from the onset of 'the Troubles' in the late 1960s, the primary preoccupation of the State's foreign policy had been with bringing political violence on the island of Ireland to an end (Tonra, 2002). The Agreement also allowed the Irish state to 'no longer exclusively [be] defined through its position (mental and geographic) as an 'island behind an island'' (ibid.). Tonra also notes the increased cosmopolitanism, internationalization of Irish culture and secularization of this period, which later became known as the 'Celtic Tiger' era, and was accompanied by a growing national self-confidence.

As a result of being one of the most globalised countries in the world and an unprecedented national banking collapse, Ireland was heavily impacted by the Global Financial Crisis[5], and Irish diplomacy pivoted during and after this period to prioritise national economic recovery and the restoration of the country's international economic reputation.

[5] The Global Financial Crisis occurred from 2007-2009, however, its impacts were most acutely felt in Ireland between 2009-2012. References to the aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis are intended to refer to the period after 2013.

The decision in 2016 by the United Kingdom to leave the European Union was a further decisive moment for Irish diplomacy, and one which resulted in a greater interconnection between the two main themes of Irish diplomacy: EU membership and the peace process in Northern Ireland.

Ireland's historical experience has strongly influenced its foreign policy, with themes of migration, hunger, conflict resolution, post-colonialism and independence given expression through the policies and priorities adopted. In recent years, domestic social change has opened up possibilities for projecting and supporting values of human rights, tolerance and respect for diversity, in ways that were not previously possible.

As a small country with little power in the realist sense, Ireland has always relied on the principles of cooperation and interdependence in its foreign policy. It is natural for a small, post-colonial state to be drawn to the amplifying possibilities of multilateralism, most particularly at the EU and the UN (Government of Ireland, 2014), and the equal recognition of all sovereign states. As the 'narrative' has become an increasing feature of international projection by states, Ireland has been well placed to elaborate its own national story. 'On a per-head basis, Ireland has a good claim to be the world's most diplomatically powerful country' (Economist, 2020).

Actors

The Department of the Taoiseach

The prime minister's office, which in Ireland is known as the Department of the Taoiseach, has an extensive role in Ireland's international relations, and the Taoiseach, as Head of Government, participates in numerous summits and Heads of Government formats. The relationship between the Taoiseach and the Minister for Foreign Affairs 'is […] of central importance to the conduct and efficacy of Ireland's foreign policy' (O'Brennan, 2012: 85).

A certain tension between prime minister's offices and foreign ministries is a normal feature of the government landscape in most countries. Over the last two decades, various factors have served to increase the international role of the Taoiseach as the Head of the Government and consequently of the Department of the Taoiseach (Government of Ireland,

2014). The European Union is a key forum through which Ireland engages internationally and the European Council sits at the apex of its various institutional structures, as the forum where EU Heads of State and Government meet. Compared with twenty years ago, the European Council is now engaged to a far greater extent in setting the foreign policy agenda for Europe and the member states (Tonra, 2017).

The delegation of responsibilities between the two Departments has varied in the period 2000-2020, particularly in relation to the two priority policy areas of Northern Ireland and the European Union. Despite a number of structural changes, including the move for a time of the European Union Division from DFA to the Department of the Taoiseach, the relationship has reflected the principle that strategic direction is provided by the Department of the Taoiseach, while expertise and capacity are provided by the Department of Foreign Affairs. For example, in the period 2016-2020, the Department of the Taoiseach was responsible for coordinating the Government's overall approach in relation to the UK's departure from the EU (Brexit)[6].

Other state actors

A variety of state entities, both government departments and state agencies, have become increasingly active in the international sphere over the last twenty years. As described in the *'Global Island'* foreign policy strategy, '[a]ll Government Departments are external actors, reflecting the growing extent to which domestic and external policy making are connected' (Government of Ireland, 2014: 9). The departments with the most significant international profiles are Finance, Defence (peacekeeping), Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Justice (visa and migration policy) and Agriculture. The international role of the Department of Finance in particular developed significantly during the financial crisis and its aftermath (O'Brennan, 2012).

As a reflection of this engagement, officers from the Departments of Finance, Agriculture, Justice, Education, Defence and Trade, as well as Garda Liaison Officers are assigned to some Irish embassies abroad (Government of Ireland, 2018). Despite this increased level of international activity by departments other than Foreign Affairs, however, there is little

[6] Following the general election in 2020, responsibility for cross-Government coordination on Brexit was assigned to DFA.

existing literature on the diplomacy carried out by these departments, or on their relations with the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Ireland's economic state agencies also have significant overseas projections, in particular IDA Ireland[7], Enterprise Ireland, Bord Bia[8], Tourism Ireland and to a lesser extent, Science Foundation Ireland. From 2011-2022, the Export Trade Council chaired at Ministerial level was responsible for coordinating these agencies and relevant departments. Overseas, Local Market Teams are coordinated by in-country Ambassadors[9]. This cross-Government coordination mechanism is particularly useful in Ireland's most important markets such as the US and China (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, 2017). In some locations, diplomatic missions are co-located with state agencies under what is known as the 'Ireland House' model (Government of Ireland, 2022).

Parliamentary oversight of Ireland's international relations has traditionally been weak (Tonra, 2006), with the Oireachtas having little impact on the development and delivery of policy. One possible exception to this general rule is in relation to Ireland's approach to the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP). O'Brennan suggests that 'like other national parliaments in Europe, [the Oireachtas] casts only a rather modest influence on policy initiatives coming from the executive in foreign affairs' (2012: 90). Indeed, parliamentary oversight of foreign affairs is relatively new: a Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs was only established for the first time in 1993 (Tonra, 2002). With some adjustments to nomenclature, three committees have exercised oversight of Ireland's foreign policy in recent years: The Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, the Joint Committee on EU Affairs and the Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.

Non-state actors

Tonra et al. (2012) describe some of the many actors who have emerged in recent decades seeking to influence policy making including NGOs, activists, political parties, think tanks,

[7] The Industrial Development Agency (IDA) is responsible for attracting inward foreign direct investment to Ireland.
[8] The Irish Food Board
[9] The Local Market Team concept will be reviewed in 2022/2023 as part of the most recent Trade and Investment Strategy (Government of Ireland, 2022).

universities and media. Ireland's development aid agencies, for example, have long had a strong presence in the developing world; these agencies were successors to the Catholic missionaries of earlier times (Gillespie, 2012). Civil society in Ireland now however encompasses a wide and increasing range of solidarity and advocacy groups beyond the development aid sector (ibid.). It is contended that while 'the scope for great democratisation of foreign policy [to involve a broader range of actors] exists, […] the mechanisms and processes through which that might occur are exceptionally weak' (Tonra, 2006: 202).

The public

Interest amongst the general public in Ireland in the work of the Department of Foreign Affairs has generally been focused on specific policies at particular times. For example, there was significant public interest in the cause of East Timorese independence in the late 1990s. Again, the exception to this general rule is the longstanding public interest in the Palestinian cause, which consistently generates a high level of public engagement.

At the beginning of the period under review, it was believed that 'the level of direct public interest in foreign policy in Ireland remain[ed] limited' (Tonra, 2006: 121). This was despite the efforts at public inclusion which formed part of the drafting process of the White Paper on Irish Foreign Policy in 1996 (Department of Foreign Affairs, 1996). Tonra concluded therefore that '[foreign policy] is insulated to a greater comparative degree from the vicissitudes of public opinion and party politics than almost any other area of public policy' (Tonra, 2006: 123). This was not consistently the case throughout the period however, leading Tonra et al. to suggest in 2012 that 'public scrutiny and analysis of [foreign] policy has rarely been higher' (2012: xix).

According to Gillespie, 'it normally takes specific events to spark public debate' (2012, 109) such as 9/11 and the war on terrorism, the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Ireland in 2011, or the financial crisis. The decisions by the electorate to reject ratification of the Nice (2001) and Lisbon (2008) Treaties by referendum were moments of heightened public engagement.

Diaspora

The Irish diaspora, especially in the United States, has been an active player in Irish foreign policy over many years, particularly in relation to the peace process in Northern Ireland. Over the last twenty years, the Irish Government's engagement with the 70 million strong Irish diaspora has been transformed through the establishment of a dedicated Irish Abroad Unit in the Department of Foreign Affairs in 2004, and significant increases in the funding provided to diaspora organisations as part of the Emigrant Support Programme, which is administered by the Department[10]. This enhanced connection with the diaspora was a key element in the approach to the State's recovery from the financial crash, including through the establishment of the Global Irish Economic Forum series of conferences, which met four times between 2009 and 2015, along with the Global Irish Network of high level members of the Irish diaspora (Tonra, 2017).

Following referendums in Ireland to legalise same-sex marriage (2015) and access to abortion (2018), a challenge emerged in ensuring that the diaspora retained a sense of connection, but without allowing them to dictate or define 'Ireland' or 'Irishness' in narrow ethnic, religious or social terms (Ó Beacháin, 297). The Government's most recent diaspora strategy highlighted the importance of an inclusive approach to the concept of Ireland's diaspora (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2020: 6) moving beyond traditional Irish-American stereotypes.

Issues

The widening content

Certain themes have historically been prominent in Ireland's foreign policy, such as disarmament, human rights, development aid and peacekeeping. The peace process in Northern Ireland, which culminated in the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, remains the defining, existential issue for Irish foreign policy, and its importance as a focus of the work of the Department of Foreign Affairs has not diminished in the years since the Agreement.

[10] The Emigrant Support Programme disbursed funding of €13m in 2021.

The global trend towards a lessening in the distinction between domestic and foreign policies is strongly evident in the Irish case, captured neatly by the phrase 'the world is no longer foreign' in the Department's 2014 Foreign Policy statement *'Global Island'* (Government of Ireland, 2014).

The rise transparency in diplomacy means that the challenge of ensuring coherence between domestic and foreign policy has grown. An additional factor for Ireland in the blurring of these lines has been the expansion of areas of EU competence and the 'Europeanisation' of domestic policy making in many sectors (O'Brennan, 2012).

Examples of policy areas which have both domestic and international dimensions include Ireland's low corporate tax rate (Barry, 2012), and debates around whether this policy can be consistent with the state's development policy. Similarly, support for an ambitious global response to climate change is difficult to reconcile with an agricultural policy that supports intensive meat-based production. A further example is the potential for dissonance between the country's support for refugees and persons displaced by war on the one hand and the treatment of asylum seekers in Ireland on the other. These examples demonstrate the clash between values and interests that diplomats must manage and balance, and where laudable foreign policy objectives may be difficult to reconcile with domestic political realities.

Economic diplomacy

Following the Global Financial Crisis, economic and commercial work became a greater feature of the work of Irish embassies and the Department of Foreign Affairs. In fact, the GFC provided a catalyst for the Department to focus the work of missions for a defined period on a particular set of messages and tasks related to Ireland's economic status, and later on economic recovery (Tonra, 2017). 'The entire ministry and the diplomatic representation were effectively reconfigured to emphasise and support the economic and trading dimension of Ireland external activity and to bring greater coherence to the quest for international recovery' (O'Brennan, 2012: 88). These efforts raised the profile of the Department across Government and provided an opportunity for it to demonstrate the important role it could play at a time of economic crisis. In more recent times, the Brexit process provided a further opportunity.

During the period 2011 – 2020, the Trade portfolio was added to the Department's responsibilities and name, and the Department was given an enhanced focus on trade and economic recovery (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2014). However, in practical terms this related to trade promotion, while responsibility for international trade negotiations, and the State's trade promotion agencies remained with the Department of Enterprise. Following the general election in 2020, 'Trade' was removed from the Department's title and responsibility transferred to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment[11] (McDonagh, 2021).

In relation to commercial diplomacy, Irish embassies have increasingly played a role in promoting Irish companies, in support of jobs and investment in Ireland in recent decades.

Values-based diplomacy

In the period since the constitutional change in Ireland providing for same-sex marriage, the Department's capacity to be a leader internationally on LGBTQ issues and support for LGBTQ communities, particularly in countries where their human rights are threatened, has been greatly enhanced (Ó Beacháin, 2016). It also became possible to resolve issues that had arisen in relation to DFA participation in non-inclusive St Patrick's Day parades in the US in the early 2010s (Ó Beacháin, 2018). Both at headquarters, as part of the wider Civil Service, and in its missions, the Department has been to the fore in seeking to ensure full equality and recognition for the LGBTQ community (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2021).

Ireland's aid programme has for many years been a central element of its international projection. Irish Aid, which administers the programme, is integrated in the structures of the Department of Foreign Affairs, as a Division within the Department, while also being a separately branded entity. As O'Brennan noted, administration of a substantial aid programme (€870m in 2020) 'presents organisational challenges that differ substantially in both scale and nature from the traditional activities pursued by the department' (2012: 89).

[11] Also known as the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation during the period 2011 – 2020.

Climate change

Climate change has emerged over the last twenty years as one of the most prominent cross-cutting global issues, and one which has significant domestic and foreign policy implications. The lead department in Ireland for Climate Changes is the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications. In 2020, the Department of Foreign Affairs established a Climate Unit within the Development Cooperation and Africa Division.

Consular

Consular work is a core function of the foreign ministry and often the main part of the ministry's work through which it interfaces directly with members of the public. Like other foreign ministries, the Department of Foreign Affairs has experienced a significant increase in both the scale and complexity of consular work, due to an increased level of foreign travel by Irish citizens and the range of destinations they live in and visit. Ireland has had a strong tradition of providing effective and humane support to Irish citizens in difficulty abroad. Unlike other foreign ministries, DFA does not have a separate consular 'stream' of officers and all diplomats therefore can expect to engage in consular work over the course of their careers.

The Department's Consular Strategy 2019-2022 sets out the Department's response to these changes, highlighting the importance of supporting citizens abroad in particular during times that they may find themselves in difficulty (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2019). The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in the early months of 2020 saw the Department mount the most significant consular operation in its history, with a majority of missions focused on supporting citizens and assisting their repatriation to Ireland (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2021).

Security and Defence policy

Ireland's traditional policy of military non-alignment, which dates from the Second World War, is an area that has come under great scrutiny as the international security context and architecture has changed and evolved (Tonra, 2006). As the nature and conduct of conflict between States has changed dramatically, in particular following 9/11, there has been little public debate around the evolving nature of the threats faced by Ireland and the EU, and

how Ireland could contribute to addressing them[12]. Defence cooperation in the EU has progressed significantly in particular since 2010, along with debates about the EU's 'strategic autonomy'. The lack of public discourse in Ireland, as well as the continued strong attachment of the Irish public to the policy of neutrality, may have acted as a constraining factor for Irish diplomacy over these years.

Systems

Foreign Ministry structure

Significant organisational change has occurred in the Department of Foreign Affairs over the last two decades, in particular in the period since the GFC. Some of these changes have been as a consequence of Civil Service Renewal, for example the greater degree of cross-government coordination, which sees the Secretary General of the Department participate in regular meetings with his counterparts across Government as a member of the Civil Service Management Board.

Relative to similarly-sized European partners, Ireland has traditionally had a small foreign ministry (Government of Ireland, 2018: 24). The Department has over 1,600 staff, around one quarter of whom are diplomats (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2021). Around 50% are working at headquarters at any one time with the remainder serving overseas. This means that Irish diplomats tend to be generalists, who are required to adapt and adjust as the objectives and priorities at headquarters or at the mission evolve.

The mission network has also been relatively smaller than those of peers: as recently as 1970, Ireland had just 20 overseas missions (Tonra, 2002). Ireland's embassies also tend to be smaller and have fewer staff than their peers: it was reported in 2015 that 60% of missions had just one or two diplomatic staff (Government of Ireland, 2014). Over the twenty years under review, the expansion of the Department's mission network has waxed and waned with significant numbers of new missions opening in the early 2000s (Gibney et al., 2019) followed by a period of retrenchment after the GFC. In the immediate aftermath

[12] The Russian invasion of Ukraine in early 2022 has given rise to some tentative debates and surveys of public opinion in this regard.

of the financial crash, significant pressure was brought to bear as part of wider public sector cuts in expenditure to reduce Ireland's already modest network of 76 missions at the time to just 55 (Tonra, 2017), though this was largely resisted[13].

However, the overall trend since 2000 has been one of expansion; the mission network had grown to 92 overseas missions by 2020, with further mission openings planned up to 2025 as part of the Government's *'Global Ireland'* initiative, which was launched in 2018 (Government of Ireland, 2018; Ó Beacháin, 2018). This initiative bucked the international trend for downgrading the international 'bricks and mortar' presence of foreign ministries (Hocking, 2013), while also including the phasing out of 'single-diplomat missions'.

Public diplomacy

As public diplomacy has emerged as a key tool for foreign ministries, Irish diplomats have adapted and adjusted, and are more visible now in traditional and social media than at any time in the past. As is the convention for civil servants generally, diplomats at headquarters rarely appear in print or broadcast media, though media appearances by Ambassadors in their countries of accreditation have become more common. Generally, the only occasions on which Irish Ambassadors serving abroad appear in Irish media are when a major incident or crisis had taken place and they are invited to comment, e.g., wildfires in Greece in 2019.

In general, the approach taken by Irish diplomats to digital diplomacy has been relatively cautious and soft-focused. Typically, official embassy accounts retweet statements by the Minister, which contain non-controversial content seeking to promote Ireland and Ireland's policies, such as details of cultural events or travel advice.

By 2020, the use of social media had become prevalent in the Department both at individual level and at business unit level. Not only missions but also some units at HQ had their own Twitter accounts, for example the Disarmament, and Conflict Resolution Units in the Political Division. Some individual diplomats have succeeded in capturing public attention for their innovative use of social media, for example, the former Ambassador to the US, Dan Mulhall, who has more than 25,000 Twitter followers.

[13] In 2011 three diplomatic missions were closed – to Tehran, the Holy See and Timor Leste.

Craft of diplomacy

Irish diplomacy has a positive reputation internationally (Government of Ireland, 2014) and Irish diplomats believe themselves to be highly regarded by their peers, though there is no empirical evidence to confirm whether this is the case or not.

During the period under review, the Third Secretary grade ceased to be the only entry point for a diplomatic career; as part of Civil Service reform after the Global Financial Crisis, and with increased mobility between Government Departments, open competitions took place for officers to join the diplomatic ranks at First Secretary, Counsellor and for senior leadership positions in the Department.

In the Department of Foreign Affairs, little formal training has generally been provided for newly-recruited diplomats, other than basic induction. Formal training has remained relatively ad hoc and piecemeal with 'on the job' training still the primary way to develop expertise on diplomacy and foreign policy, whether at bilateral or multilateral level.

In smaller foreign ministries like Ireland's, diplomats are expected to shape as well as execute policy. The academic background of Irish diplomats has tended to be diverse, reflecting the 'generalist' approach to recruitment in the Irish civil service. However, this has at times led to gaps in specialist expertise. For example, the Department has traditionally been weak in the area of foreign language skills, in particular the 'hard' languages, such as Russian, Arabic and Chinese.

Literature Review Conclusions

The review of the literature provides the background to the qualitative research and brought to light issues both where the Irish experience seemed to closely reflect developments in global diplomacy, and also other areas where the changes did not resonate so deeply.

Amongst the key trends and themes shown by the literature to have had a significant impact on the work of the Department of Foreign Affairs was the increased international activity of other state actors, and the evolving approach by the Department to coordinating these projections by other parts of government as its monopoly on managing the State's

international relations was eroded. A growing role for the Irish public was also noted, as well as a greater degree of structured engagement by the Department with the Irish diaspora.

The broadening of the range of issues beyond classic foreign policy topics also appeared to have impacted in the Irish case, along with the resulting challenge of ensuring consistency and coherence between how the State projects internationally and acts domestically. The rise of economic and commercial diplomacy also seemed to have had a significant influence on the work of Ireland's diplomatic missions, in particular in the period following the Global Financial Crisis. This coincided with the assignment of responsibility for some aspects of international trade policy to DFA.

As constitutional change occurred in respect of social issues in Ireland, opportunities arose for Irish diplomats to play a more visible role, for example, in supporting LGBTQ rights internationally. At the same time, traditional areas of work, including in the consular area supporting citizens, appeared to remain a priority. The rise of public diplomacy and digital diplomacy and a greater emphasis on communications also seemed to have affected the way in which diplomats in Department approached their roles.

It is also noted that some themes from the international context were not strongly reflected in the literature focused on the practice of diplomacy by the Department of Foreign Affairs. This appeared to be for two reasons. In the first instance, the size and relative importance of the State as an actor on the international stage is so much smaller than, for example, the U.S. or the U.K. on which much of the literature (in English) is focused. For example, themes around engagement of non-state actors like Al-Qaeda, foreign publics or technology companies did not appear to be as relevant for DFA. Secondly, the themes may have resonated but there was no literature available yet given how recently some of the trends have emerged. In a sense, this highlights the value of the research in addressing a gap in the literature.

It is also clear that there were some factors that were not necessarily reflected in the international literature on changes to the practice of the diplomacy generally, but which may have been significant in influencing changes in the Irish case, in particular the financial crash and later the significant expansion of Ireland's diplomatic mission network.

Irish diplomacy, as distinct from foreign policy, like diplomacy in general, has undergone significant changes since 2000. The literature on these developments is sparse and the research that follows aims to examine and illuminate some of the questions that arise.

The prompts and questions that emerged from the literature review and that formed the basis for the semi-structured interviews with practitioners are in Appendix I. They reflect the core themes of actors – both state and non-state, issues – including economic and consular, and systems – including the foreign ministry and the diplomat.

5. Presentation of research

Actors

One of the most significant changes to the practice of diplomacy over the last twenty years or so has been the proliferation of actors, both State and non-State, engaging in international relations.

State Actors

The literature suggests that the growth in the number of state actors engaging in international relations has led to a diminution of the foreign ministry's monopoly over the state's international projection.

The Department of Foreign Affairs

In the Irish context, participants agreed that the increased level of international engagement by other organisations representing the Irish Government had increased the challenge around ensuring coherence across different parts of Government with respect to external interlocutors, though there were different views on what role, if any, the Department of Foreign Affairs should play as a convenor of these stakeholders. A number of interviewees noted that, over the last twenty years, the importance of DFA conducting diplomacy at home with other parts of Government, in addition to engaging with international partners, had been recognised more clearly, and that the Department was now more fully embedded in whole-of-government structures than was the case in 2000. This was reflected in the participation of the Secretary General of DFA in the Civil Service Management Board and in the assignment of officials from a range of government departments to Irish Embassies overseas.

One participant characterised the approach as 'looking inward to project outward' adding that '[DFA] needs to have the networks inwards [within Government] to share the value add that comes from the products which the Foreign Ministry shapes and provides to central government'. The importance of personal relationships and contacts in this regard was stressed as often being more important than structures, and that this is a feature of the civil service and public administration in Ireland more generally. One interviewee suggested that

DFA had tended to prioritise the maintenance of good relations with partners across Government, at times at the expense of coherence.

Overall, the consensus view was that a combination of process and personal relationships was key to achieving positive outcomes: 'Mechanisms that allow for the flow of information, the pooling of intelligence and the shaping of policy and lines to take are really what you're looking for.'

There was also general agreement that the belief that DFA was disconnected from other government departments had largely dissipated, and that the Department was more connected across the civil service than ever before. The perception, which had endured over many years, that DFA was an elitist, isolated part of the civil service, had changed. Ministers and officials also had more contact with Embassies as they travelled more frequently and developed greater awareness of the work of the mission network abroad.

Department of the Taoiseach

Interviewees generally acknowledged that a sometimes tense relationship between the prime minister's office and the foreign ministry is a universal issue not unique to Ireland and that while the relationship between DFA and the Department of the Taoiseach could at times be contentious, this was felt to be no more or no less so that in other countries.

Over the period from 2000-2020, different structures were tried with a view to connecting the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Foreign Affairs. This included the secondment of diplomatic staff to the Department of the Taoiseach for periods of time. In the first decade being reviewed, this generally involved a small number of officials at very senior levels. From 2011, the European Union Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs was fully located in the Department of the Taoiseach having moved from DFA. It then reverted to DFA in 2016 in the aftermath of the Brexit referendum. The settled view amongst those interviewed was that it makes more sense for this function to rest in the foreign ministry, not least because it makes sense for the same teams to have responsibility for bilateral relationships with EU countries and EU policy engagement with EU countries.

All of those who expressed a view placed a high value on the continued secondment throughout the period of DFA officials to the Department of the Taoiseach, currently to the

EU and International Affairs Division[14]. They were viewed as playing a key role in building relationships and ensuring a steady flow of information in both directions, which was to the benefit of both departments.

The lead strategic role played by the Department of the Taoiseach in respect of existential issues such as the NI peace process was universally acknowledged and it was agreed that this has not changed. In more recent years, strategic direction in terms of policy has continued to be driven by the Taoiseach's department, including the response to Brexit and the development of the *'Global Ireland'* strategy. For very significant cross-cutting issues over the 20-year period, which necessitated the bringing together of Cabinet Subcommittees or Secretaries General, it was agreed that the Department of the Taoiseach should have and did play a central role.

One interviewee commented that in general it had suited the Taoiseach's Department to 'leave [DFA] to it' in specialist foreign policy areas. Another interviewee noted that foreign ministries probably tend to agonise unnecessarily about the respective roles of the two departments and whether the foreign ministry role is being downgraded. Foreign ministries, including DFA, continue to have a clearly defined role, despite the widening agenda and the number of cross-cutting crises requiring the increased engagement of prime ministers' offices.

Brexit was cited by several interviewees as an example of where the Department of the Taoiseach played a leading role, while DFA also had a central role in the cross-Government response. It was felt that the coherence and coordination between both had worked well in a way that might not have been the case in earlier times. It was suggested that this was indicative of a clearer sense amongst stakeholders of the respective roles of the two departments.

[14] In August 2022, four DFA officials were on secondment to the Department of the Taoiseach.

Other Government Departments

While there has always been a strong tradition of working closely with the Departments of the Taoiseach and Justice in relation to Northern Ireland, the number and depth of relationships between DFA and the rest of the civil service has increased dramatically. The general consensus amongst those who were interviewed was that other government departments became much more engaged internationally over the twenty years due partly, but not entirely, to Ireland's EU membership.

The wide-ranging reforms that were implemented across the Civil Service following the Global Financial Crisis and an increase in mobility between departments were perceived as key drivers of DFA becoming much more networked across the public administration. Civil servants from across government now engage on a regular basis in a variety of multi-lateral fora in contrast with the early 2000s, when international engagement was the exception. Overall, the level of international engagement and awareness on the part of other government departments that emerged following the GFC was seen as a positive development and complementary to the work of DFA.

While interviewees gave examples of DFA's relationships with a range of domestic departments, the Department of Finance was the one referenced most frequently as a key partner. Since 2011, again in response to the GFC, DFA officials have been seconded to the Department of Finance, and this arrangement was highlighted by a number of interviewees as a positive development in building relationships to cut through institutional suspicion and a reluctance to share information.

The role played by the embassy network in delivering messaging from the Department of Finance to challenge negative representations of Ireland and its economy and economic model in the early 2010s was seen as an important element in the State's recovery from the financial crisis. It was also believed that there is now a greater understanding across government of how the embassy network might be utilised to achieve objectives, such as in lobbying for the appointment of Irish candidates to EU and international bodies, for example. This change was described as follows by one interviewee:

> *And at the same time [post-GFC], Department of Finance realised that they needed to be more engaged internationally. And they embraced that quickly. They saw the*

value of our mission network and their engagement with us has been transformed in the last decade.

Some interviewees suggested that secondment arrangements into a wider range of government departments than just the Department of Finance would further enhance DFA relationships across the system.

While 'silo mentalities' still exist in parts of the Civil Service, it was believed that they are less common than twenty years ago and formerly challenging relationships have often been overcome using personal contacts. It was suggested that DFA has had positive relationships with Department of Agriculture in particular, perhaps a reflection of the experience of that department engaging internationally over decades dating back to Ireland's accession to the EU, and the long tradition of the assignment of agriculture attachés to Irish embassies abroad. In general, the increase in the numbers of officials assigned from other government departments (including the Departments of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and Justice) to missions abroad was viewed very positively.

Several interviewees noted that many domestic departments have very small International Sections/Units and that this can act as a constraint on their capacity to cooperate with DFA and act internationally. At times, there may have been unrealistic expectations about the ability of these sections to engage across the full range of international work and with the large number of regional desks in DFA.

The example of Brexit was cited as a case of positive engagement by DFA with departments, particularly the leadership provided by DFA in relation to Brexit preparedness domestically and on North-South issues. While not strictly a foreign policy issue, the Department's role in convening stakeholders and facilitating connections for departments with EU partners was felt to have been greatly appreciated.

The Government's strategy *'Global Ireland: Ireland's Global Footprint to 2025'* (launched in 2018) was also referenced as an example of building a whole-of-Government approach to international engagement and increasing awareness across other departments of the importance of international engagement. It was felt that there was less of a requirement in more recent years for DFA to 'convince' other departments of the importance of international engagement than was the case in the past. While it was acknowledged that

the *'Global Ireland'* strategy has strong political support, this hasn't always fully trickled down from political to official level in all Government Departments.

The complexity of global challenges makes it likely that the international role of other parts of government will increase in the time ahead. The Covid-19 pandemic was a particular example where the Department of Health was compelled to interact in the international arena in a much more active and practical way than was previously the case. At this time, DFA was able to provide important inputs from across the mission network on the progress of the pandemic across the world, in particular in other EU Member States, again demonstrating added value to the wider government system. Overall, there was consensus around the fact that there is more engagement and improved relationships between DFA and other government departments across the board compared with 20 years ago.

Permanent Representation of Ireland in Brussels

The unique role that Ireland's role Permanent Representation to the European Union in Brussels plays was noted by several interviewees, in terms of its importance not just for policy coherence but for how DFA is perceived across government. The majority of government departments have officials seconded to the Permanent Representation where leadership is provided by two DFA officials at Ambassador level. A number of interviewees emphasised the importance of building positive relationships in Brussels, which carry across to headquarters and which can be an important factor in improved inter-institutional relationships.

State Agencies

In addition to its diplomatic missions, the State is also represented overseas by a range of state agencies with a variety of economic promotional mandates. The four main State Agencies with whom the Department of Foreign Affairs interacts are the IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Tourism Ireland and Bord Bia, all of whom have networks of representative offices overseas. The evolution of DFA's economic and commercial role is explored below in the Issues section. In this section the question of how the relationships and engagement between DFA and the state agencies has changed and developed between 2000 and 2020 is examined.

A common theme in comments in relation to the DFA's interaction with the state agencies was the tendency at times for the Agencies to see local diplomatic missions as competing with them or seeking to, as one participant said, 'eat their lunch'. At the same time, several interviewees referred to positive experiences of cooperation in the field, including collaboration in Local Market Teams. As in other areas, it was felt that many of the positive relationships were driven by positive personal engagement in-country by the diplomats and their state agency counterparts.

The role of Local Market Teams (LMTs) chaired by DFA Heads of Mission was described as having operated in an uneven manner across the world and with variable results[15]. The inclusion of Trade, Finance and Agriculture Counsellors (officials assigned from home Departments) in the LMTs was considered important in ensuring that perspectives from across government were embedded in the State's strategic approach in-country.

There was a general sense that while coordination at headquarters improved over the period, and particularly since the GFC, gaps remain in terms of agreement on strategic priorities in Dublin and how these are signalled to officials in the field. A number of interviewees commented that if a country was not a priority market for the state agencies, there was minimal engagement or support for the trade promotion work of embassies. However, there was believed to be a better sense than before of how missions could assist the state agencies in meaningful and appropriate ways, for example by the Ambassador hosting a dinner for clients or by providing invitations to diplomatic receptions. One interviewee commented:

> *So Foreign Affairs has a softer diplomacy role, networking role, and agencies have targets and they're judged by those targets. And we haven't always appreciated that or respected that. And they haven't always recognised and embraced the added value that missions and [the Department of] Foreign Affairs can bring.*

Interviewees expressed frustration at attempts by state agencies to deliver ministerial visits without the full inclusion of diplomatic missions. Examples were given of where ministers were not fully briefed on some of the political and geopolitical issues in the country they

[15] The latest strategy Trade and Investment Strategy 2022-2026: Value for Ireland, Values for the World published in 2022 seeks to address these issues.

were visiting, and this had on occasion exposed ministers to a level of unnecessary risk as they engaged with their governmental counterparts. It was also felt that significant inward investment decisions should take account of the political geopolitical environment in a more systematic way.

A gap between the theory and practice of the 'Ireland House'[16] model was noted by some interviewees. It was recognised that DFA does not have the capacity or the remit to drive coherence with the state agencies and that this would require clearer political direction. It was also recognised that at times DFA may have overstepped and exceeded its formal mandate; in this regard, the example of a pilot scheme to appoint Commercial attachés in diplomatic missions in 2019 was referenced.

Overall, most, though not all, interviewees felt that there had been an improvement in coherence over the period but that this was often personality-driven through officials in-country engaging with each other to reach understandings in relation to their respective roles, and how the relationships could function in a mutually beneficial way. As one interviewee noted 'I think if you're sitting around waiting for all the systems and procedures at the centre to be in place before you move on [trade promotion as a Head of Mission], you could be waiting for a long period of time.'

Parliament – the Oireachtas

As a result of Ireland's parliamentary and proportional representation electoral system, it was noted that parliamentarians tend to prioritise local issues over a national platform encompassing foreign policy issues. Many of the interviewees concurred with the assertion in academic literature that the Irish parliament has been a weak foreign policy actor. There was also general agreement that the Parliament has been a receiver of product from the Department of Foreign Affairs, rather than having had a significant impact on the development of foreign policy. There was a broad consensus that this had not evolved significantly in the period under review.

It was suggested that if the volume of Parliamentary Questions was used as a proxy for Parliamentary interest, this would reflect a relatively small subset of issues where individual

[16] This refers to the model whereby diplomatic missions and State Agency overseas offices are co-located in the same premises.

parliamentarians had a particular interest. It was also noted that major geopolitical issues including around security and defence policy were rarely the subject of substantive deliberation and debate in the parliament.

There was general agreement that parliamentary committees usually rallied 'behind the Irish flag' and that they rarely challenged the consensus on foreign policy issues. Interviewees commented that Committee Chairs generally welcomed DFA briefing and the support provided by the Department. A number of interviewees commented that many Oireachtas members had a positive impression of DFA as a result of overseas visits, and that the service given by embassies to visiting parliamentary delegations was perceived as being very good. However, some interviewees commented that visiting parliamentarians did not always bring a clearly defined agenda and therefore could need direction and guidance. Some individual parliamentarians did not wish to cooperate with embassies. However, these were considered to be exceptions to the rule.

Some interviewees referred to a trend in the early 2000s of a single issue giving rise to a large number of Parliamentary Questions, driven by an active civil society group, and that this occurred less frequently in the second half of the period under review.

The significant degree of interest on the part of members of the Oireachtas in the Middle East Peace Process was cited as an exceptional case, and it was agreed that parliament had been relatively assertive on this issue. This was deemed to stem directly from the wider long-standing societal interest in the issue, similar to the level of engagement on apartheid and Timor Leste independence in earlier years.

One interviewee cited the enhanced role for the parliament on EU matters foreseen in the Lisbon Treaty. However, this had not resulted in a more engaged approach despite the fact much of the legislation agreed at EU level would have strong local resonance. A view was expressed that interest in EU issues in general was low amongst parliamentarians.

Some interviewees commented that the Oireachtas was relatively poorly connected with peers in other EU member states and in third countries and that this was a factor limiting its ability to influence debates on international issues. The one exception cited to this rule was the relatively stronger connections with the British parliament.

A couple of interviewees argued that while the parliament might not have a major impact on policy formulation, it did influence how the Department acted and that the Department had shown itself to be sensitive to parliamentary criticism. In this regard, interest tended to focus on issues that directly affected constituents, for example, consular or passport issues.

Non-State actors

A range of factors have resulted in greater levels of public engagement in foreign policy issues globally. In Ireland, this has expressed itself in a more general appetite amongst the Irish public for information about the work of Irish diplomats. Ireland has a long tradition of engagement by NGOs, particularly in relation to human rights and development, in its foreign policy.

General public

Interviewees expressed the view that the Irish general public is broadly well-informed and engaged on international issues, comparing favourably with publics in other countries, and that this remained reasonably constant notwithstanding dramatic changes to the media landscape. One interviewee referred to the reduction of the number of foreign correspondents in the main state-owned broadcaster RTÉ over the period and the consequent introduction of a DFA-funded programme to support coverage of foreign policy issues[17]. A particular trend over the decade 2010-2020 was the rise of social media and the role it played in making foreign policy more accessible to the public and increasing public discourse on foreign policy issues. As a result, citizen engagement has become more important to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Interviewees noted that there was sustained strong public support for the development aid budget administered by the Department. This continued to be the case even during the financial crisis. Strong public support was also noted for Ireland's traditional international peacekeeping role. Many participants believed that the Irish public's strong instinct for

[17] The Global Ireland Media Fund was launched in 2020: https://www.dfa.ie/news-and-media/press-releases/press-release-archive/2020/december/global-ireland-media-fund-.php.

charity and justice had not diminished, with broad public backing for the values-based approach that characterised Irish foreign policy in the period.

A theme identified by many of those interviewed was the tendency amongst the Irish public to be more engaged on human rights issues, than on harder security issues. A number of interviewees felt that this was due to the perception that Ireland does not face external security threats. Some interviewees noted that international security debates had not tended to resonate strongly with the Irish public and that this was perhaps driven to some extent by the country's geographic location. The continued attachment of the public to Ireland's traditional policy of military non-alignment was cited as an example of how public opinion can act as a constraint on policy development or evolution (further discussed in Issues chapter).

As reflected in parliamentary engagement, there continued to be strong Irish public interest in the conflict in Israel/Palestine, with views predominantly favourable to the Palestinian cause. This was considered to be partly attributable to an identification with the situation in Northern Ireland and partly due to the Irish public's strong human rights perspective on foreign policy issues.

One interviewee cited the example of the 'No' votes in referendums on the Nice (2001) and Lisbon (2008) Treaties as evidence of the public's capacity to disrupt the Government's settled approach to international issues. In these cases, the public had delivered shocks to the system and these shocks led to an increased recognition of the need for outreach by the Government and the Department to the public on international issues. Later in the period, public engagement on the consequences of the Brexit referendum in the UK was considered positive, but arising due to its extensive domestic ramifications and impact on Northern Ireland more so than the impact on international relations.

One interviewee suggested that engagement by the public on foreign policy issues was intermittent rather than constant over the period. In this regard, the groundswell of public opinion in relation to the second Iraq War was mentioned and the challenge this presented for the Department at the time in relation to stopovers by U.S. military aircraft at Shannon Airport. While it is beyond the scope of the time period under examination, the groundswell of public support for Ukraine following the Russian invasion in February 2022 was also

raised by some interviewees as an example of how the public mood could result in very quick action at government level. 'The will of the Irish people to assist [Ukraine] translated into our diplomatic approach and response, and [the government's policy] was…fuelled by that.'

Diaspora

Several interviewees referred to the Department's and the Government's increased level of engagement and connection with the Irish diaspora over the twenty-year period. One interviewee noted that diaspora policy effectively didn't exist in 2000, whereas it had since become a central element to how the Department pursues a range of traditional and non-traditional foreign policy objectives; since the early 2000s, 'a sense of both our responsibility to the diaspora and the opportunities from the diaspora has [had an] enormous [impact on] so many aspects of policy'.

One interviewee mentioned the Gaelic Athletic Association and the positive role it has played in terms of the diaspora work of the Department and increasingly so over the twenty years, including in regions outside of the traditional centres of Irish emigration.

Civil Society

The general view amongst interviewees was that the NGO sector in Ireland continued to play an influential role throughout the period under review, particularly in the areas of human rights and development aid.

Some interviewees suggested that the NGO sector's focus on a values-based perspective (international development aid, human rights and humanitarian issues) led to an imbalance in the discourse on foreign policy over the period, and that this had also had an impact on the Department. A gap in terms of Irish NGO engagement on international security and defence issues was noted by a number of participants.

Since many NGOs active on international issues depend on funding from the Government, this was seen as potentially militating against a more robust and challenging relationship between the sector and the Department.

One interviewee commented that in some cases the influence of certain civil society groups had been profound and perhaps out of proportion to the degree of public support for a

particular issue. Several interviewees recalled that development NGOs had over the period become partners for the Department in the delivery of aid programmes, that this was a positive development, and that the partnership approach had become more structured and consistent over the 20 years.

Two positive examples of how civil society engagement had influenced policy were raised, namely, the dialogue mechanisms put in place to prepare for Ireland's term on the UN Security Council and the business and civic stakeholder groups established in the wake of the Brexit referendum. Both were considered examples of civil society engagement where communities and NGOs influenced the Department's approach.

Think tanks and Universities

Overall, there was broad agreement that the think tank ecosystem in Ireland remained relatively shallow with little significant progress over the period. The Institute for International and European Affairs (IIEA)[18] was considered a good partner for the Department and an expansion in its level of activities in the latter years of the second decade was noted. However, it was generally agreed that the IIEA viewpoint tended to align with DFA on most issues. A number of interviewees suggested the establishment in Ireland of an organisation similar to the think tank Chatham House would be useful, to challenge Irish foreign policy orthodoxies and to present other perspectives.

A view was expressed that Ireland had not yet developed a substantial cadre of foreign policy academics. It was noted that the teaching of International Relations had only begun at Irish universities in the early 2000s, with the country's newer universities being more advanced in this regard. The work of Dublin City University on developing academic programmes focused on International Relations was mentioned in particular.

The predominance of theory over practice in international relations teaching was also noted. One interviewee commented that the 'area studies and the language [learning] that would underpin really good international relations teaching are not necessarily there'. It was felt that there was a need for more in-depth research in Ireland on international policy issues and global trends potentially linking think tanks and academics with practitioners. The

[18] Formerly the Institute for European Affairs.

Department's Policy Planning Unit established in 2015 had begun to take some initiatives in this space, but it was felt that ideally the impetus would come from outside the Department and would be independent.

Overall, interviewees agreed that the increased participation of a range of actors, both state and non-state, in international affairs was reflected in the Irish case.

Issues

One of the most significant changes identified in the literature to the practice of diplomacy since the turn of the century is around the widening scope of diplomacy, that is, the increased variety of policy areas on which diplomats and Foreign Ministries engage beyond what might be called 'classic' foreign policy issues.

Interviewees generally agreed that many of the issues on the agenda of the foreign ministry are no longer exclusively domestic or foreign and that DFA had become much more engaged in dealing with the domestic aspects of global challenges, for example, the Global Financial crisis, the pandemic and the war in Ukraine. These shifts impacted on the work of DFA and its diplomats in the period 2000-2020, as the complexity and turbulence of the global environment required DFA to engage on a wider agenda.

Economic and trade policy

Many interviewees noted that there was a significant shift in the Department of Foreign Affairs' focus towards economic and trade issues, as a response to and in the aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis. The cross-cutting challenge presented by Brexit, which had wide-ranging impacts across many areas of political and economic affairs, may have accelerated this process.

In general it was felt that towards the end of the 2010s the balance between the work of the Department on traditional foreign policy and geostrategic issues on the one hand, and on economic and commercial issues on the other had stabilised, though some uncertainty still remained regarding the Department's role, in particular the role of missions overseas in the latter area.

Several interviewees expressed pride in the Department's response to the GFC and the key role it played in restoring Ireland's international reputation after the financial crash and Ireland's entry into an IMF programme in 2011. Diplomats had delivered the key messages about Ireland's recovery effectively and that this had served to influence the international debate. During the period 2011-2014 the work of many of the Department's diplomatic missions pivoted to a considerable extent towards economic and commercial work. The Global Irish Economic Forum was another example of how DFA had shown that it could add

value, though some resistance both within DFA and on the part of other stakeholders to DFA leading on this initiative was mentioned.

In the aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis and the general election in 2011, the designation 'Trade' was added to the title of the Department. The 'Trade' responsibility was formally removed in 2018. However, it was recalled that full responsibility for Trade had never been moved from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, which had retained oversight of the state agencies mandated to promote trade overseas and also of the State's international trade policy and negotiations. It was felt therefore that there had been structural limitations on the extent to which the Department, during the period when it was nominally the 'Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade' could fulfil its mandate in the latter area. Some interviewees also referenced the shortcomings of the Export Trade Council, which had been intended to coordinate the approach to overseas trade at Ministerial level, and there was a general view that it had not operated effectively or reached its potential as a forum.

As regards the Local Market Teams overseas, a number of interviewees expressed the view that their potential had not been fully realised and that there was an inconsistent approach across different regions. While they could and did gather useful intelligence and insights, these were not always communicated to headquarters in a structured way. It was suggested that DFA sometimes lacked credibility in chairing Local Market Teams because trade promotion and policy were not perceived as core elements of its work.

Some interviewees noted that a lack of clarity as to the Department's role in economic issues persisted throughout the period and that there was a perceived lack of strategic guidance from headquarters to missions. Some of the areas referenced where missions could engage meaningfully included economic and trade promotion, economic reporting and messaging, influencing economic policy debates at EU and global level, supporting business networks and Irish companies, and promoting bilateral economic relations with partner countries. Nevertheless, the challenge of demonstrating the 'value add' that DFA could bring was deemed not to have been fully resolved by 2020.

A number of interviewees mentioned that the shift towards economic and trade work had sometimes been an uncomfortable one for the Department. One interviewee spoke of not

feeling ‘on solid ground’ when dealing with economic issues and added that it never felt like the core of what the Department does or what it is good at. A recognition was expressed by several interviewees of the need for diplomats generally to have a greater level of economic expertise: ‘I think it is increasingly difficult to be an effective foreign policy practitioner…if you don’t combine an understanding of the economy and what is the basis of our prosperity in your foreign ministry for a full toolkit.’

One interviewee noted the growing interdependence of economic and political policies in a more complex global environment. This meant that Foreign Ministries and diplomats needed to understand the international energy sector, for example, in a way that was not as necessary or as important 20 years ago: Irish diplomats now ‘need to understand global economic trends. Because [these trends] are drivers of the problems that traditional foreign policy interventions seek to resolve, look at resource competition or the impact of climate change, or food security, it’s about economic competition.’

It was suggested that the Department’s new economic and trade focus on occasion sat uneasily alongside its traditional focus on human rights. There could for example be a discomfort with the State’s trade relationships with countries with poor human rights records. The tension between trade policy and the Department’s work on international development was also referenced. These were felt to be ongoing and perhaps inherent issues that have not been fully resolved, though they may in some areas have become more acute. It was noted that Ireland was not unique in facing the challenge of reconciling these inconsistencies.

Values-based diplomacy

The particular experience of Ireland in relation to LGBTQ rights, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and domestic constitutional changes in recent years all resulted in significant changes to the approach taken by DFA to these issues in international fora between 2000 and 2020, where the State’s foreign policy approach had previously been constrained by the domestic position.

Some interviewees referred to the capacity of the Department to engage internationally on LGBTQ issues and how this had been transformed over the period in particular as a result of the same-sex marriage referendum in 2015. One interviewee recalled that even relatively

recently (late 2000s) there had been a nervousness across the government system at headquarters about positions that Ireland would take on LGBTQ resolutions at the UN. Reference was also made by a number of interviewees to issues around participation in non-inclusive St Patrick's Day parades in the U.S. and the challenges this had often presented for missions and diplomats.

Following the referendum, it became possible for Irish diplomats to take a visible leadership role on the rights of LGBTQ people around the world and to engage in public diplomacy on these issues including with reference to Ireland's particular national experience. Ireland's diplomats now routinely participate in Pride marches in support of local LGBTQ communities in their countries of accreditation and can do so with the full backing of the political system. One interviewee said that the story of the transformation of Irish society over the last twenty years was 'a good story for Ireland and for Irish diplomacy'.

Several interviewees recalled the challenge of articulating the Irish position on SRHR in international debates over much of the period under review due to the Irish Constitutional prohibition on abortion, which was removed following a referendum in 2018. Officials recalled a high degree of caution in articulating the Irish position and the challenge of having at times to defend a position that was at odds with their own personal beliefs. The approach on this issue was out of line with the country's general approach to human rights issues, and it led to Ireland being allied with a small number of similarly minded countries, which one interviewee characterised as a 'lonely group at the UN'.

Over the years when Ireland's position began to evolve, interviewees recalled the challenge of ensuring coherence between the international articulation of the national position as the public debate shifted in Ireland. However, it was fully recognised that State's foreign policy could only reflect the domestic policy at a given moment, even if international debates might over time influence the debate at home. While there may be tendency within the Department of Foreign Affairs to be progressive on such issues, the importance of diplomats putting their personal views aside and promoting the policy nevertheless was fully recognised.

It was agreed that these constitutional changes had allowed Ireland to take a higher profile within the EU and to be more consistent in its human rights policies. One interviewee also

noted the important role that changes in these areas had in allowing for greater connection with members of the Irish diaspora and Irish emigrants, who had felt alienated as a result of the conservatism of earlier years. At the same time as Ireland's values have evolved, a more the conservative world view continues to prevail in many parts of the world, and new challenges have arisen, including in the U.S. where the 'culture wars' continue to impact on politics. One interviewee commented on the challenge of engaging diplomatically with stakeholders in traditionally friendly countries whose values can at times be very different to those now promoted by Ireland.

Another interviewee, however, commented on the importance of not tilting too far away from interests in the pursuit of a values-based foreign policy. While the Department's approach had shifted over the 20 years, ensuring that there is a balance between promoting interests and values is something that needed to be continuously monitored.

Climate Diplomacy

The majority of interviewees viewed the establishment of a dedicated Climate Unit within the Department positively, though there were mixed views as to the extent to which climate considerations have been fully integrated across the work of the Department. Some interviewees expressed uncertainty as to Ireland's overall position on this issue. Climate change issues were characterised by one interviewee as an 'add-on' rather than core to the work of the Department. However, as it is not the lead policy Department, DFA is constrained in its diplomatic approach to this issue.

A number of interviewees raised the risk of an emerging incoherence for Ireland on the international stage between the wish to set and meet ambitious targets in view of the growing climate emergency, and at the same time ensure that the impact on Ireland's agriculture sector is taken into account. It was felt that domestic policy has not caught up with the debate internationally, and while the DFA instinct might be to 'tell a good story' on Ireland's progress, that needs to be balanced with the reality of progress at home to ensure that a disconnect does not emerge. One interviewee summed it up as follows:

> *We don't have core policy lead on many of these issues like climate. We're not the lead in negotiations on our emission targets. We don't have to deal with the domestic consequences of it. We don't do legislation. And yet we get to kind of lecture the*

world on being responsible in this space. So we have to…manage that with sensitivity, I think.

One interviewee also noted the growing challenge of reconciling the development aid work of Irish Aid with the overall national approach to climate change. Another interviewee spoke of the risk of getting too far ahead of the evolving public debate on the issue in Ireland and believed that the implications of the targets that have been set are not fully understood by the general public. This would continue to constrain Ireland's capacity to act internationally on the issue.

Migration

Along with climate change, migration was cited as a challenging cross-cutting issue, particularly in the latter part of the period under review.

The important human rights aspects of the migration issue were noted and notwithstanding the foreign ministry instinct to perhaps be more progressive than other parts of government, it was understood that DFA and its missions needed to articulate all dimensions of the State's response to migration, rather than a one-dimensional humanitarian-focused perspective. A challenge was felt to have emerged around the need to take account of how the domestic system has responded to the issue and to be honest with partners, in particular EU partners on the frontline, in framing Ireland's contribution to the international debate. The risk of pursuing a human rights-driven policy which is not coherent with what can be delivered domestically was mentioned by some interviewees.

One interviewee spoke of the strong Irish public support for the work of the Irish Defence Forces rescuing migrants in the Mediterranean in 2015-2016. It was suggested that this support did not always translate into support for migrants in Ireland and that there could be a risk in getting ahead of the Irish public in interventions at the international level.

Overall, a view was expressed that Ireland did not have a strong voice internationally on migration and that the approach domestically had been a factor that constrained the capacity to act internationally.

Consular Issues

Looking back over the last twenty years, an increase in the scale and complexity of consular work was noted by most interviewees. Consular work was recognised by many interviewees as the most visible way in which DFA delivers its public service mission while at the same time being the area of the Department's work with the most potential to generate a negative reaction. Some interviewees commented that the public's perception of DFA in general was linked to the capacity to deliver on consular issues. A number of interviewees also referenced how rewarding and fulfilling they had found work done in this area over the course of their careers.

Because Ireland remains a small, cohesive society, it was suggested that the human aspect of consular cases often made it a political priority. Political engagement on consular cases had always been a feature of the Irish system and this continued to be the case during the period under review. Most interviewees noted the trend towards Irish people travelling more (pre-pandemic) and to more far-flung places, which has led to an increase in the volume of work. As Irish citizens work in and visit more complex environments, the nature of the work has also changed, with a rise in the number of citizens with mental health issues, for example, needing support.

Media interest in consular cases has increased, with social media also fuelling greater visibility. These changes have been accompanied by a rise in public expectations and greater sense of the Department and its diplomats being exposed to complaints from citizens. Interviewees agreed that Ireland continues to provide a very high level of support to citizens compared with peers, up to and including what one interviewee characterised as 'pastoral care'.

The trend of large consular events throughout the period was noted – interviewees mentioned 9/11, the 2006 tsunami and a series of other subsequent consular crises. There was a sense that consular crises now occur more frequently and/or that Irish citizens were more likely to be caught up in them.

Again, consular crisis response was seen as an area where there is a risk of not responding sufficiently quickly or not being perceived to have responded effectively – one interviewee called it 'the ultimate test of whether citizens are being served or not'. Overall, there was

agreement that the Department's capacity to respond in this area has improved greatly, with clearer systems and greater resources replacing what was a more ad hoc system in the early 2000s.

While the need to professionalise the Department's consular response was recognised, it was felt that Ireland's missions were generally too small to allow for dedicated consular specialists in all locations. A number of interviewees also expressed the view it was important that Irish diplomats would continue to engage in consular work, including as Heads of Mission.

It was generally agreed that the Department had responded effectively to the very significant challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic, and that continued global instability is likely to mean a greater need to mount complex consular responses in the period ahead.

Security and defence issues

While security and defence policy has always been a core aspect of Ireland's foreign policy, some interviewees noted the increased need to be fully engaged in 'hard' aspects of security policy in a way that had not been as apparent in the early 2000s. One interviewee noted the paucity of expertise in relation to security issues in Irish society, not just in the foreign policy space. It was felt that there was a growing recognition of the threats to freedom and democracy in Europe, as well as consideration of Ireland's capability to respond to those threats.

One interviewee spoke of a realisation post-Brexit[19] of the need for Ireland to be more fully engaged on geostrategic and international security policy issues, with an enhanced understanding of the security concerns of partners. This focus was not mutually exclusive with the Department's work on economic and trade policy, but a more integrated analytical approach would assist in greater recognition of risks and in policy development to mitigate the challenges. One interviewee commented that ultimately all of these elements are connected – international security and stability depends on preventing the factors that lead to failed states.

[19] Further heightened by Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

As previously noted in reference to the Irish public, a lack of exposure to geopolitical risk was believed to have led to a lack of attention being paid to these issues in public debates. Over the period in question, the nature of threats faced had evolved to include hybrid and cyber threats, and one interviewee noted a growing awareness of the risks posed to Ireland's foreign direct investment base by security threats and weaknesses in the State's capacity. One interviewee commented on the importance of ensuring that DFA is fully networked and linked in to cross-Government bodies in this area including the National Security Cyber Centre and the National Security Analysis Centre that was established in 2019.

As was the case in relation to the proliferation of actors engaged in international affairs, the extension of the work of diplomats to a wider range of cross-cutting issues than before, was also found to be true in the case of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Systems

This category of issues is intended to encompass issues that relate both to the foreign ministry as an organisation and the role of the individual practitioner of international diplomacy, with some overlap between them.

Expansion of the organisation

The development most frequently cited by interviewees as having impacted most significantly on the practice of Irish diplomacy between 2000 and 2020 was the growth in the size of the Department.

The growth in the number of missions overseas in particular was considered significant, growing from 58 in 2000 to 93 in 2020. Becoming a larger organisation with much broader coverage internationally has given enhanced credibility to the foreign policies promoted by Ireland. At the same time, the expansion of the mission network has had an impact in terms of HQ's capacity to service the network both from an operational and a policy point of view. The pressure to fully resource this larger organisation was felt to have not been fully resolved by 2020, and there was a consensus that global challenges and the consequent workload of missions would not reduce in the time ahead.

The placing of internal governance and management within the Department on a more structured and formalised basis, in the aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis was seen as a positive development. This reflected a strengthening of governance across the public service more generally. A number of interviewees noted that the biggest operational change over the twenty years had been the professionalisation of the Department's corporate services functions, including in the areas of human resources, finance and property management. This had led to a more systematic approach rather than a reliance on individuals. Some interviewees mentioned the resulting compliance burden on missions and how this could affect day-to-day work.

A further change identified, resulting from advances in technology, was that contact between embassies and headquarters had become much easier with a sense of greater HQ oversight of missions. Paradoxically, although there was greater contact between HQ and missions than before and that missions felt less isolated, missions and Heads of Mission had

more autonomy than was previously the case, as well as being more empowered to act in the field. In any case, it was agreed that it would not be practically feasible for HQ to give instructions across the board on every aspect of Embassy business. With this increase in mission autonomy, one interviewee spoke about the importance of striking the right balance in terms of ownership of policy between HQ and missions.

Organisational culture

Most interviewees referred to changes to the organisational culture of the Department over the twenty years under review. By 2020, the culture was much more open, involving communication with a much wider range of stakeholders. This was reflective of what the literature refers to as the shift from closed to open diplomacy. One interviewee called it a 'more inclusive, expansive and interconnected approach to diplomacy'. This required the Department to begin to communicate in different ways and through different channels with these stakeholders (see Public Diplomacy below).

Many of those interviewed referenced the highly personalised way in which the Department operated in the early 2000s, with colleagues tending to know the majority of their peers across the Department and having a greater awareness of who to call on various issues. Inevitably this informal, connected approach had not survived the rapid expansion of the Department, though many interviewees felt that retaining an element of the personal and collegial ethos was important.

Many interviewees reflected on the challenge for the Department in ensuring that staff continued to feel a sense of connection with each other and with the organisation. Both formal and informal internal communications methods were believed to be necessary in a way that was not the case going back to the early years of this century, when the so-called 'Hourican's effect'[20] provided an opportunity for staff of all grades to get to know each other outside of the workplace. At the same time, the limitations of the highly personalised system were acknowledged:

> *I think the way in which we worked meant that we were more insular, which was a bad thing, but we were probably closer…I think people knew each other a lot more.*

[20] Hourican's pub on Leeson Street was the favoured pub for DFA staff until its closure in 2015.

And so there was a stronger [] tighter bond in the organisation, but I don't think it was an organisation that was professionally managed in a modern sense and it was more ad hoc.

Many interviewees noted the significant turnover in personnel that was a feature of the period from 2015 to 2020 in particular. This was partly attributable to the rapid expansion of the Department and partly due to increased levels of mobility across the Civil Service. This led in the last 4-5 years under review to the recruitment and entry of a significant number of officers across all grades in the Department, most notably at the First Secretary (Assistant Principal grade) level, who had not previously worked as Third Secretaries and who not therefore been exposed to the type of 'on the job' training which had traditionally occurred. The sense of ongoing change and disruption was exacerbated by the 'postings churn' which is impacts the Department of Foreign Affairs uniquely amongst government departments.

Overall, the increased diversity of the staff cohort was viewed positively by interviewees as it brought in different skillsets, experiences and perspectives, as well as challenging 'groupthink' and insularity in the organisation.

However, some interviewees described how the rapid influx of officers had led in the short term to gaps in terms of awareness and experience of the culture of the Department, described as 'how we do things' and 'the tone, touchpoints and skills'. One interviewee, who was strongly supportive of new voices coming into the organisation, felt that it was 'important that it would not happen to such a degree that the cohesion and culture of the organisation is diluted'.

It was agreed that efforts to build an *esprit de corps* and integrate newer colleagues more fully should continue[21]. While it was acknowledged that the Department could not have expanded as rapidly as necessary without bringing in large numbers of new staff, interviewees suggested that it was important at the same time to preserve the sense of a coherent foreign service, with a strong institutional memory and robust systems for sharing information and knowledge. This pointed to the importance of refreshing and investing in the organisational culture and ensuring that all staff relate to the goals and objectives.

[21] It was noted that the impact of the pandemic had increased the challenge in this regard.

A number of interviewees noted that effective diplomacy requires a combination of learned and taught skills and the need for officers to be supported to continue to develop professionally throughout their careers. The lack of a strong tradition of written instructions and formal guidelines across a range of areas of diplomatic work was noted, and this had led to a reliance on the institutional memory of officers. A number of interviewees described as important the need to distinguish between the role and responsibilities of diplomats as distinct from activists, including in relation to the expression of personal views while operating in an official capacity.

It was noted that some peer foreign ministries have a centralised premises in one location with a shared canteen for the whole ministry. The dispersal of the Department of Foreign Affairs at HQ across a number of different buildings in Dublin and Limerick was not thought to be conducive to cultivating a sense of connection and collegiality.

Several interviewees referenced the need for the Department as a foreign service to reflect the society it represents and that this would naturally lead to a changing profile and demographic over time, reflecting the significant changes in Irish society since 2000. One interviewee also commented that it was important that the Department as part of the Irish Civil Service continue to be a vehicle for advancement for citizens from across society.

Transparency

The introduction of Freedom of Information legislation in the late 1990s was referenced by a number of interviewees. It was felt that officials became more careful about recording information that might ultimately be released into the public domain at an early stage.

One interviewee recalled the secrecy that applied in relation to meetings on Northern Ireland in the early 2000s in contrast to how meetings in later years, for example on Brexit, were widely publicised. In some cases, this more open approach could be effective particularly on issues that are not just owned by governments and where reaching outside the traditional diplomatic world could have a positive impact and it was felt that Irish diplomacy had adapted well to this new networked form of diplomacy.

However, a fully transparent and open approach was felt by some interviewees to have limits and to not always be compatible with effective diplomacy. One interviewee talked

about the importance of having frank internal discussions on sensitive areas of policy about which not all information should be public. Similarly another interviewee commented that 'ultimately negotiations between states cannot be conducted in a context of complete openness', not least because interlocutors from other states may be representing systems with differing approaches to transparency including very closed, even authoritarian, regimes.

Public diplomacy

A number of interviewees expressed the view that the most significant change to the work of diplomats and to the practice of diplomacy over the twenty years under review was the growth of public diplomacy. Where diplomats previously prioritised discretion and remaining in the background where 'the whole point of diplomacy was not to be seen', the requirement to communicate externally and present the work had grown significantly over these twenty years, especially in the period after the advent of social media.

It was also noted that the practice of policy being articulated by set-piece speeches at large multi-lateral conferences (for example, the UN General Assembly in New York) was no longer as important and that even the traditional press release was in decline, with policies now more often articulated by tweet, an innovation which can be challenging for officials. The pace of events and the need for immediate reactions and positions to be articulated is a significant shift from the practice of earlier times where language was thoughtfully crafted.

Interviewees felt that diplomats now need almost professional media skills and that expectations are much higher in this regard, with the communications aspect of the job having moved well beyond just delivering pre-written speeches. Social media was also believed to be a much larger element of the job as a means of building interpersonal connections and engaging with various stakeholders. There is an increased focus on projecting and promoting Ireland through these new channels.

Several interviewees mentioned the role public diplomacy had played in communicating with audiences 'at home' in Ireland – those internally within the Department and externally. One interviewee suggested that social media had almost become a reporting mechanism for missions and a tool for them to increase the visibility of the mission's work at HQ. In terms of communicating with non-DFA audiences, the role of social media in showing the value to

the general public of having Irish embassies overseas was mentioned; one interviewee also spoke about the role social media played in communicating to Irish diaspora communities about the activities of DFA missions in the their countries of accreditation.

In relation to public diplomacy a number of interviewees noted that its value can be very location specific and highly contextual, particularly for Irish diplomats. In some locations, where Irish diplomats do not have the skills to communicate in the local language, the audience can be a small subset of the local public. The need to understand the local environment was noted, with one interviewee commenting that there would be no point putting out content that might be relevant to an Irish audience but not meaningful for the people of the country in which you are working. One interviewee contrasted the public diplomacy approach that a Consulate in the U.S. might take, for example, with that of an Irish Embassy in the Middle East. While public diplomacy could be a multiplier in terms of communicating messages, this would generally not be on the same scale for Irish diplomats as for U.S. or U.K. diplomats, for example.

Some of the interviewees noted that the greater visibility associated with public diplomacy was accompanied by greater scrutiny of the work of diplomats and a number also spoke of the reputational risks associated with social media diplomacy. These risks would naturally arise with civil servants speaking directly to the public, and there may be a need therefore for the approach to evolve in a more formalised direction. While the importance of public diplomacy was recognised, it was noted that it is a tool and shouldn't replace substantive work.

Information gathering and political reporting

The extensive impact across society of developments in information and communications technology was strongly reflected in responses from interviewees to the question around the most significant change to the way of working in the Department of Foreign Affairs and consequently to the practice of Irish diplomacy. Interviewees recalled the dramatic changes enabled by a succession of developments: email, internet access, smartphones, social media, messaging apps (such as WhatsApp/Signal) and video-conferencing.

These developments have brought about huge changes in terms of the pace of diplomacy, the volume of information speeding around the system and how the Department generates

and shares information. It was recalled that twenty years ago, diplomats spent a lot more time finding information that is now easily accessible online. One interviewee expressed the view that the current 'endless menu of information…can be paralysing'. The work of diplomats is now to a much larger degree focused on curating and analysing information, meaning that prioritising and selecting information has become a challenge. In terms of systems, the Department's capacity to manage large volumes of information, while still not ideal, has improved over time.

Characteristics and Skills

While agreeing that communications skills and public diplomacy had impacted hugely on the profile required of today's diplomats compared with the early 2000s, the majority of interviewees felt that the core fundamental characteristics and skills required to perform effective diplomacy had not changed significantly.

Interviewees outlined a range of characteristics that they felt were most important to the diplomatic role. These included energy, good judgment, good interpersonal skills, cultural sensitivity, curiosity about other countries, ability to engage, flexibility and adaptability under pressure, an interest in foreign policy and good analytical skills. Other skills mentioned were an understanding the domestic political context, networking, the capacity to give sound strategic guidance and advice to Ministers, and the ability to spot synergies and connections between issues.

The capacity to deal with a very wide variety of situations, sometimes simultaneously, from a Presidential visit to a consular case was referenced. The importance of personal resilience has also increased[22].

It was suggested that the increased informality of diplomacy globally played to the strengths of Irish diplomats, who have traditionally been regarded as good at networking and building relationships. One interviewee commented that Irish diplomats were generally regarded by peers as friendly, approachable and constructive and that it was important not to lose those skills. Another interviewee commented that while at certain times the traditional approach

[22] This was particularly the case during the pandemic.

to contact work, for example in Northern Ireland, had fallen away, its importance had once again been recognised in recent years.

Another skill identified by a number of interviewees was the importance of identifying key people who would be central to achieving the mission's outcomes. These could often be a small subset of people, including elites in politics and business. The capacity to have quiet words and build up a rapport with influential Ministers and senior policy makers with a view to exercising influence was seen as still central.

Several interviewees referred to the fact that the number of more intellectual 'quiet big thinkers' in the Department had declined over the period as the focus had shifted to the more externally-focused promotional work. One interviewee suggested there had been a shift away from the stereotype of the Ambassador or senior diplomat as an intellectual who thinks deeply and writes analytical reports.

Aside from a greater focus on communications, the other big change noted by interviewees was a much greater degree of focus within the Department on management skills. This development was generally welcomed. It was believed that certain behaviours that may have been tolerated in earlier periods were now clearly unacceptable and that the capacity of senior officials to manage teams effectively at HQ and in missions was seen as essential.

Similarly, the administrative burden was believed to have increased as more robust systems for governance and accountability had been put in place. These new systems were recognised as necessary; however, the administrative burden on managers, particularly at missions, was noted. Some interviewees felt that the Department had not yet 'got the balance right' in terms of the administrative burden.

A number of interviewees commented on how demanding the job had become compared with twenty years ago. Diplomats working on high profile issues found the work to be all consuming 'day and night, 24/7, eight days a week'[23]. In a general sense, the work had become more complex and demanding. Managing large volumes of email, the requirement to ingest vast amounts of information, the need to mentor and support junior colleagues and a culture of being 'on' all the time had all added to the stress felt by diplomats. It was

[23] The impact of the pandemic on interviewees was likely to be a factor in this issue being raised.

noted that the newer elements of diplomatic work around management and public diplomacy are additional to all of the other areas of work which continue to demand attention.

The Department's overall approach to language training was not felt to have progressed to any significant degree over the twenty-year period, remaining ad hoc and primarily the responsibility of individual officers. Some interviewees noted that the system did not seem to be able to provide for a strategic approach to language training, which would require the release of a certain number of officers at any one time for full-immersion language training. It was recognised that the ability of a diplomat to engage with the society around them is deepened and enriched by language capacity.

Overall, there was consensus that while the Department has grown in size, it remains too small for diplomats to specialise in particular areas and that the traditional generalist model is unlikely to change. The size of the system also means that it continues to be very reliant on individuals. Some interviewees questioned whether the system continued to recognise being a diplomat as a specific career and suggested that some of the consequences of not doing so have played out in recent years, with diplomacy no longer necessarily viewed as a life-long career in way that it was in the past.

Amidst all the changes and developments of recent times, the importance of resilience and an awareness of what the life of a professional diplomat entails was believed to be important for those commencing their careers as diplomatic representatives. It was agreed that the role of an Irish diplomat remains a rewarding and fulfilling career, involving varied and challenging work. And at the same time, the core principles that underpin Irish diplomacy were felt to have endured amidst all of the wider global change.

> *Why have Irish diplomats been effective for many years? I think it's because they are able to build good relationships. They are pragmatic, there are solutions orientated. We have a values-based foreign policy, but people generally don't accuse us of lecturing. We are generally empathetic to our citizens abroad but also tend to understand where other people come from. And so those qualities that are very much Irish qualities have been there in Irish foreign policy [and diplomacy] and they help us get things done.*

6. Conclusions

The period from 2000 to 2020 was one marked by turbulence in global affairs and ongoing evolution and change in the practice of international diplomacy. At the same time, Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs underwent unprecedented expansion.

From the early 2000s, the relative post-Cold War stability of the early 1990s gave way to a global political landscape characterised by multi-polarity, interdependence and recurrent global crisis. The period since 2020 has seen no lessening in the sense of turmoil, with the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and consequent global energy and food crises, and a growing sense of urgency about the climate emergency.

During the period since the turn of the century, Irish diplomacy has interacted on a wider canvas than ever before. The peace settlement on the island in 1998 allowed Irish diplomacy to broaden its scope. This coincided with a number of phases of significant growth in the size of the Department of Foreign Affairs, both in terms of Ireland's international presence – in Asia in particular, and more latterly in Latin America – and at headquarters.

Concurrently, the key trends that emerged in the practice of international diplomacy were ones that mirrored the expanding scale and complexity of the global political scene. This saw a proliferation of actors engaging in international relations and a shift from the sense of diplomacy as a closed or elite process to a more open, networked activity involving a range of state and non-state actors. Meanwhile, the range of issues on the diplomatic agenda expanded as the range of global challenges grew and as states' economies became more interlinked and interdependent. Waves of migration, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the impacts of climate change have all contributed to an increased sense of global disruption. While the role of the state had seemed to be challenged by the forces of globalisation in the early 2000s, more recent years have seen a renewed recognition of the importance of geopolitics and the centrality of the state in international relations.

The central research question was whether and how changes in international diplomatic practice in the 21st century have impacted in the Irish case, with a focus on the Department of Foreign Affairs as the primary actor in Irish diplomacy.

One initial conclusion that can be drawn is that some themes in the literature did not ultimately feature significantly in the research interviews. These include the 'Europeanisation' of Irish diplomacy, and the role of the European External Action Service (EEAS) and its impact on DFA. Undoubtedly Ireland's membership of the EU has had a significant and profound impact on its diplomacy, however, it may be that by 2022 this impact was so far embedded and implicitly understood as to be not worthy of comment. Initial expectations that the EEAS would render EU member state diplomatic missions obsolete have not come to pass, and this aspect was also not referenced by interviewees.

The role of technology companies as non-state actors is another topic that arises in the literature, with some large companies being wealthier and more powerful than many states. The presence in Ireland of the headquarters of many of the world's largest technology companies, and any consequent impacts on Ireland's policy approach not just in relation to corporation tax but also the increasingly charged issues of surveillance, data protection, privacy, cyber security and disinformation, might have been expected to have arisen in the interviews. However, this was not the case.

A further area in which there has been significant change is in relation to gender issues both as regards the improvement in gender equality in foreign ministries and the mainstreaming of a gender perspective on foreign policy. Definite progress has been made in the Department of Foreign Affairs since 2000 in terms of gender equality in senior diplomatic posts such that by 2020 33% of Head of Mission positions were held by women and the first female Political Director had been appointed in 2019. However, to date there has never been a female Secretary General of DFA nor since the foundation of the State has Ireland ever had a female Foreign Minister. Unexpectedly, these issues were not highlighted by interviewees.

The broad scope of this research topic means that some themes may warrant further investigation. It is clear, for example, that the Covid-19 pandemic impacted on the conduct of international diplomacy, though whether these changes will have a long-term effect remains to be seen. The Irish Government's approach to the diaspora is also an area where there has been significant change. The evolving views of the Irish general public in relation to Ireland's traditional policy of neutrality and how this will impact Irish diplomacy will be of interest in the time ahead. The specificities of Irish diplomacy, as distinct from Irish foreign

policy, and the organisational culture of the Department of Foreign Affairs may also warrant further investigation. A comparative study between Ireland and a similarly-sized country and foreign ministry such as Denmark or the Netherlands could illuminate some of the findings of this study further. Finally, further research on a particular cross-cutting issue such as climate change and how the State approaches it both domestically and in the international sphere would be a valuable addition to the research.

In this study, the Department of Foreign Affairs' interaction with a growing range of actors was examined and was found to be broadly consistent with global trends, including with regard to the challenge of ensuring coherence across the government system. In terms of the Department's relationships with other state actors – that is other parts of government – it was found that DFA became much more embedded across whole-of-government structures than was previously the case, with the Global Financial Crisis and ensuing civil service reform and mobility largely providing a catalyst for this. Reflecting the international trend, other parts of the state apparatus became much more active externally than before.

It was found that the relationships between the Department of Foreign Affairs and other government departments generally improved and that links and contacts deepened, underpinned by a range of structural innovations including secondments out of and into DFA. In terms of the natural tension between the Departments of Foreign Affairs and the Taoiseach, a clearer sense amongst stakeholders of the respective roles of these two departments seemed to emerge. Further, the relationship with the Department of Finance was found to be much closer, to the benefit of both departments. The interaction between the Department of Foreign Affairs, and the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces did not arise as a strong theme.

In terms of DFA's relationships with the state agencies responsible for promoting aspects of international trade, the picture continued to be challenging, with a heavy reliance on personal contacts to achieve positive outcomes and a sense that signalling from Dublin could be stronger than it has been. Various structural approaches to coordination were tried over the period, while a sense of competition between the state agencies and the diplomatic system appears to be an enduring feature of these relationships.

Cross-cutting challenges such as Brexit were believed to have accelerated the process of embedding a greater level of cross-Government cooperation and improving the visibility of DFA's role. Towards the end of the period the *'Global Ireland'* strategy (2018), which seeks to double the scope and impact of Ireland's international footprint by 2025, defined this approach and underpinned the continued political and cross-government commitment to Ireland's international presence and engagement.

The impression of a somewhat weak parliamentary approach to international relations emerged, which may be partly attributable to the highly localised nature of the Irish electoral system. While the parliament engaged on certain specific issues, the Oireachtas Committee system, for example, was not found to have an appreciable impact on the state's foreign policy. However, the Department was found to be sensitive and responsive to the parliament's interventions, particularly in relation to the provision of citizen services.

In relation to non-state actors, and where the Irish case differs from the literature, it was found that many of the prominent international actors such as technology companies, international terrorist groups and foreign publics did not become a greater focus for Irish diplomacy. The level of influence wielded by non-state actors – including non-governmental organisations, the general public in Ireland and to an increasing degree, the Irish diaspora – on the work of the Department was broadly the same throughout the period.

The level of interest amongst the Irish general public in international issues was characterised as intermittent. Where the public did engage, it could drive political interest in and commitment to an issue. While the rise of social media increased the level of citizen engagement in international affairs, its direct impact on the Department's approach to the development of foreign policy was less clear. Broad public support for the values-based approach that characterised Irish foreign policy in the period was found to be consistent, in particular the attachment to the policy of military neutrality.

The level of engagement by the Government with Ireland's diaspora increased substantially over the period under review; in this regard, Ireland could be said to differ from other countries, given the sheer size of the diaspora relative to the home population. Additional structures and funding have led to a more sustained and systematic approach to this

relationship, with the consequence that the diaspora has become a more central player in Irish diplomacy.

The role of Ireland's NGO sector was a consistent feature of Ireland's diplomacy over the first two decades of the century. This sector in Ireland is notable for the preponderance of development aid and human rights-focused organisations. The sector has also been heavily reliant on official funding and at the same time a partner for Government in the delivery of Ireland's overseas aid budget. More generally, the 'foreign policy community' or ecosystem in Ireland was found to be still underdeveloped compared with other countries.

The second major theme in the literature on changes to the practice of diplomacy is the lessening of the distinction between what is domestic and what is foreign policy, alongside the widening of the range of issues that are part of the diplomatic agenda. This general change was found to be fully reflected in how the work of the Department of Foreign Affairs has changed, with some aspects that were specific to the Irish case.

The rise of economic and commercial diplomacy impacted the work of the Department both at headquarters and at missions. The extreme impact of the Global Financial Crisis in the Irish case, gave a particular impetus to this work, and the necessary changes that followed, both at headquarters and in the field. The Department was found to have played an important role in the restoration of Ireland's economic and financial reputation after the financial crash.

Structural changes and an ongoing uncertainty regarding how DFA could specifically add value in relation to economic and trade policy persisted through the period. By 2022, however, it was found that the role of the Department in this regard had become clearer and that this was reflected in the Government's most recent strategy on *'International Trade and Investment: Value for Ireland, Values for the World'* (April 2022). A geopolitical context characterised by a significant overlap between economics and politics means that the Department and Irish diplomats will need to continue to engage and enhance their expertise in this area.

On a range of cross-cutting issues, for example, in relation to climate change and migration, a challenge was identified in ensuring that the foreign policy approaches did not 'get too far ahead' of the domestic position, both in terms of the capacity of the domestic system to

deliver and also the public mood and opinion. These types of issues, on which DFA is not lead Department, were expected to continue to be challenging from a diplomatic perspective. However, the constraints on the diplomatic approach and the risks of incoherence, in these two areas at least, are not unique to Ireland and affect other countries in a broadly similar way.

A further area in which the Irish case was found to reflect global trends was in relation to the provision of consular assistance and services to citizens, where growing levels of international travel have resulted in greater volume and complexity of cases and an increased likelihood of foreign visitors and residents being caught up in crises abroad. However, the Irish case could be said to differ somewhat from peers, given in the first place the sheer propensity for international travel amongst the Irish population, and secondly the high degree of political and media focus on consular issues, which lends continued importance to the Department's ongoing 'professionalisation' in this area. This area is likely to continue to be a high priority, not least given its importance to public perceptions of the Department.

In relation to human rights, two issues rather specific to the Irish case were prominent, LGBTQ and SRHR issues. The Irish position internationally on both had long been constrained by constitutional limitations. However, this changed dramatically with referendums on the two issues in 2015 and 2018. While Ireland has always had a strong values-based approach to foreign policy, these changes allowed for a fuller expression externally of this perspective, in line with societal change in Ireland over the period.

Issues related to international security and defence did not generally arise in the literature in relation to changes to the practice of diplomacy, since for most countries these areas would be a significant feature of the work of the foreign ministry. Ireland, however, has a long-established, unique approach to international security and defence issues, which has meant that this aspect has not been to the fore in Ireland's diplomacy. It was found that this was an area where the Department may need to play a more active role, including in analysing how these issues intersect with broader geopolitical and economic global trends.

The third theme in the literature relates to changes to the operational aspects of the practice of diplomacy and the systems that underpin it. In this regard, a trend in the

literature, particularly in the early years of the century, was of foreign ministries under pressure to downsize and find innovative ways beyond the traditional embassy to be present abroad. The Irish case reflects the opposite approach with recurrent phases of expansion (aside from the closure of missions to Tehran, the Holy See and Timor Leste in 2011 in the immediate aftermath of the financial crisis), culminating in the Government's decision as part of the *'Global Ireland'* strategy in 2018 to double the state's overseas presence by 2025. The relatively small size of Ireland's mission network at the outset relative to other similarly sized countries is, of course, another factor specific to the Irish case. This expansion and the related increase in staff numbers is arguably the most significant change to the practice of diplomacy by Ireland over the period.

The strong sense that the Department traditionally had of its own identity and culture was challenged by the growth in the size of the organisation, a high degree of mobility between staff in DFA and other parts of the civil service, and external recruitment to a range of grades across the Department. These changes necessitated a greater level of coordination and internal communication, with less reliance on individual contacts and institutional memory. More open recruitment led to the Department being less insular than in the past, while creating a challenge in preserving the ethos and identity of the organisation.

The increased focus on management, governance and professionalisation of corporate services featured in the literature and was a factor influencing foreign ministries generally, though perhaps in the Irish case the need for this became more acute due to the rate and extent of organisation's expansion. In DFA, these changes were also driven by the process of civil service reform post-GFC. Like other foreign ministries, contact between headquarters and missions became more frequent and intense, while a far greater degree of transparency applied to diplomatic work than was the case in the past.

The rise of public diplomacy is one of the main trends in the literature – indeed it is the specific focus of many texts, presented as 'the' key change to the practice of diplomacy, and it undoubtedly has had a significant impact on Irish diplomacy. In the Irish case, public diplomacy has been successively embraced, encouraged and, ultimately, more closely managed over recent years. In some respects, the rise of public diplomacy plays to the strengths of Irish diplomacy, with the increased emphasis on communications and storytelling. However, effective public diplomacy is highly context specific, and styles and

campaigns that may work for large, powerful countries may not always work in the case of smaller states.

Unlike some of the countries on which much of the literature is focused, Irish public diplomacy has tended to play a role in communicating with home (both DFA and the general public), and with the Irish diaspora rather than 'foreign publics' as such. A lack of local language skills may limit the capacity of some Irish missions to engage meaningfully with publics in their countries of accreditation, which could mean that this is a less useful tool for Irish diplomats, and hence the rise of public diplomacy may not have the same transformational impact in the Irish case. The traditional approach to building bilateral relations across the range of political, economic, cultural and educational sectors is likely to continue with public diplomacy as an additional tool for Irish diplomacy rather than replacing substantive work.

Like other foreign ministries, and indeed society generally, DFA has been deeply impacted by advances in technology. The impact on the traditional role of diplomatic missions in gathering information and reporting to headquarters has been no less profound than for other foreign ministries, and the Department continues to grapple with the challenges associated with the increased volumes and pace of communications. How the role of the Department in relation to curating this information in a systematic way evolves remains to be seen, as systems and individuals reach the limits of what they can absorb.

In looking at how changes to the practice of diplomacy have impacted Irish diplomats specifically, as distinct from diplomats in general, it is worth reflecting on the characteristics and skills that are associated with effective diplomacy and to what extent Irish diplomats embody these attributes. Despite all of the changes to practice, in particular in relation to communications and management, the core diplomatic traits have remained constant even as the context has become more complex. The importance of personal engagement and contact emerges strongly as a feature of Irish diplomacy and the Irish civil service generally. The high value placed by Irish people on interpersonal skills and the country's international reputation for empathy, openness and friendliness have always influenced the approach taken by diplomatic representatives and given rise to the impression that Ireland 'punches above its weight' on the international stage. It can be argued therefore that Irish diplomats are ideally placed to thrive in the era of open, networked, less formal diplomacy.

Emerging from this study is a sense of the Department of Foreign Affairs as a foreign ministry heavily influenced by international trends but at the same time demonstrating an ability to evolve and adapt to the changing international landscape and to major global events. Over the twenty year period examined in this review, the Department and its officers have demonstrated a capacity to shift focus and adjust its priorities, in line with international economic and geopolitical developments. All of which reinforces the case for why a small, peripheral country like Ireland should continue to prioritise and strengthen the systems that deliver its international engagement.

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Appendix I

Interview questions:

1) What do you think has been the biggest change to the practice of diplomacy in DFA since 2000? Do you think the changes represent a "transformation" or an evolution similar to previous eras? What are the main ways that technology has changed the practice of diplomacy?

2) Has DFA managed to engage effectively with the widening scope of diplomacy, on topics that often have a strong read-across to domestic policy areas? Examples climate, migration, LGBTQ issues?

3) Has DFA effectively managed to ensure coherence in the context of a greater level of international engagement by other Government Departments/State Agencies?

4) What non-state actors have had the biggest impact on Irish diplomacy during the period in question?

5) Has DFA responded well to the rising importance of "economic statecraft and commercial diplomacy"?

6) Has the relative importance of the Department's consular role increased/decreased during this period? What impact has that had on other aspects of work?

7) Have the characteristics/skills required to be an effective diplomat changed?

Appendix II



Information Sheet

Thank you for considering participating in this research project. The purpose of this document is to explain to you what the work is about and what your participation would involve, so as to enable you to make an informed choice.

The purpose of this study is to examine changes to the practice of diplomacy from 2000-2020, with Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs as a case study. Should you choose to participate, you will be asked to take part in a one-to-one interview with the researcher. This interview will be audio-recorded, and is expected to take no more than 60 minutes to complete.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no obligation to participate, and should you choose to do so you can refuse to answer specific questions, or decide to withdraw from the interview. Once the interview has been concluded, you can choose to withdraw your details at any time in the subsequent two weeks.

All of the information you provide will be kept confidential and anonymous, and will be available only to the researcher and Prof. Andrew Cottey (Thesis Supervisor). The only exception is where information is disclosed which indicates that there is a serious risk to you or to others. Once the interview is completed, the recording will be transferred to an encrypted laptop and wiped from the recording device. The interview will then be transcribed by the researcher, and all identifying information will be removed. Once this is done, the audio-recording will also be deleted and only the anonymized transcript will remain. This will be stored on the University College Cork OneDrive system and

subsequently on the UCC server. The data will be stored for a minimum of ten years. The information you provide will contribute to research for a thesis carried out as part of MRes Government and Public Policy.

This study has obtained ethical approval from the UCC Social Research Ethics Committee.

If you have any queries about this research, you can contact me at Deirdre.NiFhalluin@mac.com. Prof. Andrew Cottey can be contacted at A.Cottey@ucc.ie.

If you agree to take part in this study, please sign the consent form overleaf.

Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh, Éire
University College Cork, Ireland

Consent Form

I……agree to participate in Deirdre Ní Fhallúin's research study.

The purpose and nature of the study has been explained to me in writing.

I am participating voluntarily.

I give permission for my interview with Deirdre Ní Fhallúin to be audio-recorded.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study, without repercussions, at any time, whether before it starts or while I am participating.

I understand that I can withdraw permission to use the data within two weeks of the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

I understand that anonymity will be ensured in the write-up by disguising my identity.

I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the thesis and any subsequent publications if I give permission below:

(Please tick one box:)

I agree to quotation/publication of extracts from my interview ☐

I do not agree to quotation/publication of extracts from my interview ☐

Signed: …… Date: ……..

PRINT NAME: ……