

# Exploring Diaspora Strategies: An International Comparison

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background to the workshop**

Whilst migration has long been a characteristic of societies, the last two centuries have witnessed the mass mobility of populations, with millions of people moving across the planet to take up new lives in new places. In some cases, such migration has been of necessity forced through persecution or starvation or economic hardship, in other cases it has been a strategic choice motivated by ambition and opportunity. Whatever the reason, citizens of one nation have uprooted their lives, negotiated a transnational journey, and made new lives for themselves in a new nation, often within fairly large groupings of fellow migrants. Originally conceived of to refer to populations living in exile, the concept of diaspora has more recently been broadened to concern mass migration in general and to second, third, and later generation descendants. Robin Cohen (1997) thus identifies five different types of diasporas:

- victim diasporas (e.g., populations forced into exile such as the Jewish, African, Armenian diasporas);
- labour diasporas (e.g., mass migration in search of work and economic opportunities such as the Indian and Turkish diasporas);
- trade diasporas (e.g., migrations seeking to open trade routes and links such as the Chinese and Lebanese diasporas);
- imperial diasporas (e.g., migration among those keen to serve and maintain empires such as the British and French diasporas);
- cultural diaspora (e.g., those who move through a process of chain migration such as the Caribbean diaspora).

Diaspora populations are then diverse in nature, shaped by the reasons for migration, the scale, timing, and geography of flow, how they interact with social, political, economic, cultural, and environmental conditions in destination regions and how they were received in their new host country, and how they view their original homeland and its culture. And while they might eventually adopt the citizenship of their host, diasporan identity, and that of subsequent generations, remain inflected with the

nation they left, sometimes in very explicit ways through public acts of celebration and memory, sometimes much more implicitly through family histories and stories. Moreover, whilst many diasporic journeys are unidirectional, or involve infrequent trips back to the original homeland, in today's globalised world some diasporas are highly mobile and transnational, shuttling back and forth between their new place of residence and their homeland, often in complex circular routes. The very term diaspora then has become synonymous with complex, dual or even multiple identities, often expressing an 'in betweenness' of home and destination cultures.

At the same time, for the homeland, losing a sizable proportion of its population to transnational migration often has a significant impact on the national economy and psyche. Whilst the debate on the effects of brain drain on national economies in the short, medium, and long term is clearly a lively and open ended one, it is often the case that the homeland hopes that migrants will return in due course, or will help the homeland economically, culturally, socially, and politically, due in part to continued patriotism or obligations to family still living there. In addition, homelands recognise that they still have obligations to migrants who remain citizens despite being resident abroad. As a result, homelands often seek to stay in contact with their diaspora for a number of reasons, both strategic and obligatory.

Whilst hitherto most of the policy debate around migration focused upon questions of assimilation and integration and how to accelerate this process, because of both the complexity of diasporic identities, and activities and emerging needs with home countries, the focus today is often equally concerned with the ties that migrant groups retain, construct, and rebuild with their home country. Diaspora strategies, although traceable back to the 1960s and earlier, have gained attention on the back of this renewed interest in transnationalism.

A diaspora strategy is an explicit and systematic policy initiative or series of policy initiatives aimed at developing and managing relationships with a diaspora. These policy initiatives are diverse in nature and need not be over-determined. As such they can vary from highly formalised and structured programmes to projects that are quite light in conception and application. A diaspora strategy is perhaps best thought of then as an overarching framework for providing a level of coherence to the range of

diaspora policies devised and implemented by a variety of agencies. Given the varying reasons for migration, the scale, history, geography, and nature of individual diaspora, why homelands wish to engage with their diaspora, and the ‘foreign affairs’ institutional apparatus already existing in home countries, it is no surprise that how different nations have formulated diaspora policy varies substantially.

The *Exploring Diaspora Strategies* workshop sought to explore in detail how different countries have started to formulate and implement diaspora strategies. It brought together key policy makers and implementers from Australia, Chile, India, Ireland, Jamaica, Lithuania, New Zealand and Scotland, plus the World Bank, to share their experiences and to consider what constitutes best practice with respect to the development and rollout of diaspora strategies depending on context and circumstance. In particular it focused on the different approaches countries have taken to issues such as overseas supports, philanthropy, returnee policy, and business networks vis-à-vis their diaspora populations. These countries, plus the World Bank, were selected as each has been at the forefront of developing different kinds of diaspora strategy programmes, and their work has been noted as being particularly innovative with respect to how they have tried to engage their diaspora.

The objectives of the workshop were:

- To further develop ‘networks’ of policy makers, researchers and academics, for improved sharing of practice;
- To foster dialogue, perhaps leading to policy transfer;
- To update developments in diaspora policy and thinking;
- To bring new countries and new people into the conversation;
- To reflect upon possible ways to move the policy and research agendas forward.

This report is structured into two main sections. The first section summarises the strategies and policies examined during the workshop. In his presentation, Alan Gamlen referred to the existence of an emigrant state within each country – a set of agencies charged with managing emigration. Through mapping all the departments, ministries, consulates, organisations and agencies which engage and interface with their diasporas – whether these be public, private, or voluntary – it becomes possible

to better understand the character of a country's emigrant state, and effectively this section seeks to reveal, however partially, the emigrant states of the participating countries. In the second section we set out some emerging themes which we feel merit further reflection when formulating diaspora strategies. These, in part, were prompted by the workshop presentations, but also draw on recent literature. Finally, we conclude by identifying 17 key sets of questions that policy makers might find useful as they seek to develop and roll out diaspora strategies in their own countries, and by forwarding some recommendations concerning future collaboration and work

Before continuing, it is important to note that the 'Exploring Diaspora Strategies' workshop needs to be framed as one of a series of recent workshops, seminars, and comparative analyses. Clearly, beyond mere curiosity, countries are finding it of immense value to learn more about how colleagues from around the world are thinking, strategising, and acting in relation to the formulation of diaspora strategies. The World Bank Knowledge for Development Programme lies behind many of these collaborative exchanges. Recent workshops include: Global Workshop on Migration of Talent and Diasporas of the Highly Skilled, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2005; How to Leverage Talent Abroad to Benefit Home Countries? Experience and Results Agenda of Diaspora and Venture Capital Networks, Washington, DC. USA, 2007; Mobilizing the African Diaspora for Development Initiative, Washington DC, USA, 2007; and Accessing Global Knowledge Workshop, New Delhi, India, 2008. In addition, a whole number of institutions around the world are promoting comparative and collaborative research. These include the Program on International Mobility run by the MacArthur Foundation (focussing mainly upon India, Mexico, Russia and Nigeria), the Diaspora Research Program at George Washington University, the UNDP in New York, and the Migration Policy Institute. Finally, the work of AnnaLee Saxenian on Indian, Chinese, and Taiwanese diasporic networks in Silicon Valley, California, has set the tone for much of the comparative analyses of diasporic business groups.

### **Papers presented at the workshop**

The workshop took place from Jan 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The event started with an evening reception on the 26<sup>th</sup>, followed by two full days of papers and discussion. The full list of papers is presented below and the accompanying PowerPoint slides can be

accessed via the workshop website: <http://www.nuim.ie/nirsa/diaspora>. Each country provided an introduction to aspects of their own diaspora strategy through a single presentation with the exception of Ireland, the host country. It is important to note that because a diaspora strategy is likely to straddle a number of state bodies, and because presenters were asked to speak about the area of strategy that they were active in, there is clearly more going on in particular countries than the presentations and this report discuss. Whilst some of the most critical aspects of diaspora strategy were examined in the workshop, by no means was a full picture of all the activities going on in any country discussed.

Mark Boyle/Rob Kitchin, NUI Maynooth	‘Fostering Dialogue Between Diaspora Strategies’
Yevgeny Kuznetsov, World Bank	‘How Can Talent Abroad Help Build Institutions at Home: Lessons from Various Generations of Diaspora Initiatives’
Alan Gamlen, Oxford University	‘Diaspora Engagement: What, How, Why?’
Ray Bassett, Irish Abroad Unit	‘Irish Abroad Unit’
Kingsley Aikens, Ireland Funds	‘The Global Irish Making a Difference Together’
Stephen Hughes, Enterprise Ireland	‘Enterprise Ireland and Networks’
Aine O’Neill, NUI Maynooth	‘Diaspora Knowledge Networks’
Vida Bagdonaviciene, Ministry of National Minorities and Lithuanians Abroad, Lithuania	‘Lithuanian Diaspora Policy Overview’
Lincoln Downer, Jamaican High Commission London, Jamaica	‘Jamaican Diaspora Policy’
Lev Freinkman, World Bank	‘Role of the Diasporas in Transition Economies: Lessons from Armenia’
Tim Oberg, Advance, Australia	‘Advance Australia’
Molly Pollack, ChileGlobal; Marcelo Vasquez, Fundación Chile, Chile	‘Talent Network for Innovation’
Gurucharan Gollerkeri, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, India	‘Engaging the Diaspora for Development’
Anna Groot, KEA, New Zealand	‘New Zealand Global Talent Community’
Irene Johnstone, GlobalScot, Scotland	‘GlobalScot: Advice, Access, Aspiration’

## **SECTION 1 – KEY ISSUES DISCUSSED AT THE WORKSHOP**

This section deals with the key issues discussed at the workshop. These included: 1) the scope and range of diaspora strategy initiatives; 2) the administration of diaspora strategies; 3) the infrastructure connecting diaspora and homelands; 4) the extension of citizenship to diasporas (in particular, welfare and voting rights; 5) the building of diasporic patriotism, supporting cultural activities, education and language learning; 6) the development of remittances and philanthropy; 7) the building of business networks; 8) the nurturing of return migration; 9) promoting the idea of affinity diasporas; and 10) researching the diaspora and providing a research and evidence base for a diaspora strategy.

### **1) Scope and range of diaspora strategy initiatives**

It is clear that in most cases diaspora policy making is a recent (past decade), growing, and nationally significant area of activity. Needless to say, the scope and range of diaspora policies and programmes varies markedly between countries. Strictly with reference to the presentations made at the workshop, in some cases such as Lithuania and Jamaica, the focus is on supporting overseas populations and encouraging return migration. In other cases, such as Chile, Australia, and New Zealand, the focus is on creating diaspora business networks that can help the homeland. Ireland, India and Scotland have more plural approaches, encompassing overseas supports, remittances, philanthropy and business links. Of course, only certain agencies from participant countries were present and in each case (or at least most cases) a broader range of diaspora policy activity is happening. This diversity in scope across countries is to be expected given differences in the nature of the respective diasporas, where they have migrated to, the economic and cultural conditions in the homeland, and in the varying aspirations of the homeland in engaging with their diaspora. Policies enacted by homelands in order to engage with their diaspora include:

- Providing consulate and embassy services;
- Extending and upholding citizenship rights;
- Offering welfare assistance to the diaspora living abroad;
- Encouraging return migration and providing return facilitation services;

- Extending voting rights and encouraging electoral participation;
- Supporting cultural activities and language learning;
- Creating, facilitating and nurturing diaspora social networks;
- Creating and fostering information flows and portals;
- Facilitating short-term and tourist home visits by the diaspora;
- Counselling advice from diaspora leaders;
- Seeking expert advice and training from diaspora professionals;
- Seeking remittances to support extended families and providing the necessary financial infrastructure;
- Encouraging philanthropy to support the homeland;
- Fostering business partnerships and venture capital investment;
- Supporting diaspora business networks and meetings;
- Creating specialist business knowledge networks;
- Establishing business mentoring and student intern schemes;
- Rewarding diasporians who make a significant contribution to the homeland.

In addition, some countries have started programmes aimed at establishing an affinity diaspora. An affinity diaspora is a collection of people, usually former immigrants and tourists or business travellers, who have a different national or ethnic identity to a nation state but who feel some special affinity or affection for that nation state and who act on its behalf, whilst resident in the state, after they return home, or from a third country.

## **2) Administration of policies and programmes**

Given this diversity of policies, it is not surprising that a critical question concerns how a country seeks to create an effective structure through which all this activity can be best coordinated and harnessed. There is a wide variety of institutional arrangements that look after and oversee diaspora policies and programmes. Differences in administration diverged along three lines: first, the institutions responsible for engaging the diaspora; second, the strategies through which these institutions engage; and third, how they measure the effectiveness of their work.



### *Institutions responsible*

In some countries, a diaspora strategy is coordinated through a single or principal government institution such as Lithuania (Department of National Minorities and Lithuanians Living Abroad), India (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs), Armenia (Ministry of Diaspora) and Jamaica (Diaspora and Consular Affairs Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade). As such, there is a government minister to oversee diaspora affairs, with a full government department who oversee issues such as the legal status and voting rights of the diaspora, the welfare and rights of the diaspora in their new locations, cultural and social links to the diaspora, remittances and philanthropy, and the development of business relationships with the diaspora.

In other countries, engagement with the diaspora is the remit of a state agency or the non-for-profit NGO sector has taken a lead role. For example, in Chile, DICOEX – the Direction of Chilean Communities Abroad, a state agency set up in 2000 – is responsible for the development and coordination of policies aimed at engaging Chilean nationals living abroad. In addition it seeks to protect the rights of Chilean nationals in their host countries; promotes national identity preservation; encourages the diaspora to take an active part in the development of the country; and works with Chilean organisations overseas. It is supported by the Inter-ministry Committee for the Chilean Community Abroad and ProChile (export promotion). In addition there are five specialist NGO agencies working with the Chilean diaspora (ChileGlobal; BIONEXA; PymeGlobal; ChileTodos; EuroChile). Advance (Australia) and KEA (New Zealand) are non-for-profit NGOs working independently of governments to provide select services to the diaspora. In some cases, such as Scotland and Ireland, there is no one agency that coordinates diaspora policy and programmes, with a plethora of organisations taking an active role with no central oversight or coordination.

Case Examples – The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and the Ministry of Diaspora in Armenia
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India has a full State Ministry – <i>The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs</i> – dedicated
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to matters relating to the 25 million Indian-born migrants who reside in over 110 countries worldwide. The Ministry recognizes the Indian diaspora as extending to third generation descendants. As a centralized, single agency it represents something of a test bed for those nations who are considering the prospect of formulating and managing a diaspora strategy from a coherent centre rather than through a diverse set of organisations. The Ministry coordinates six instruments of engagement: consulting the diaspora through worldwide annual meetings; encouraging investments from overseas; fostering philanthropy; promoting knowledge transfer and knowledge networks; supporting overseas education; and cultivating and building social and cultural identities. Interestingly the Ministry promotes the idea that Indian diasporians' first loyalty is to the destination country and that Indian patriotism should be consistent with building affiliation to the new home. The Ministry defines three important challenges for the future: enhancing linkages with development work, promoting circular and return migration, and addressing the needs of specialised groups (e.g., youth, women).

Armenia, an old nation but a new state, has a significant diasporic population estimated at around 5 million people. This diaspora is well resourced, skilled, talented, well connected, capable, and willing to engage. Until recently however the Armenian state has lacked the institutional structures necessary to harness this resource productively. What humanitarian and infrastructural support a disenfranchised diaspora was able to provide was often used counter-productively. Since 2000, however, the relationship between the Armenian state and the Armenian diaspora has begun to change, initially through a series of conferences with the diaspora. More recently, a new Ministry for Diaspora Affairs has been established. The diaspora is now included as a partner in formulating a vision for the new Armenia (Armenia 2020 strategy), promoting inward investment through the Armenian Development Agency and the globalisation of indigenous firms through Armentech, and in proposing and financing new major public-private partnerships. The Armenian case provides lessons both for willing diaspora groups (that they should seek suitable institutional forms before engaging and investing) and home states (that without proper institutional frameworks much effort can be dissipated without effective results).

### *Strategy in relation to diaspora*

Irrespective of which organisations within a state choose to engage the diaspora, there also exist differences in how states choose to strike up and fortify relationships. The issue was clearly articulated by Yevgeny Kuznetsov from the World Bank and can perhaps be called ‘the Kuznetsov Problem’: *how can government provide a coherent centralised framework to assure diverse bottom up initiatives that fit specific local circumstances?* We would regard this as a first order question when thinking about establishing strategies and securing their sustainability.

Drawing on the work of Sean O’Riain (2004) on the nature of developmental states, we can identify at least five levels of state engagement with their diaspora (we are indebted to Aine O’Neill for an earlier formulation of these categories with specific respect to Irish diaspora knowledge/business networks – see her PowerPoint slides).

Absent	the state leaves the formation of links between the homeland and the diaspora to the market or to autonomous social, cultural and political movements, with the diaspora self-organizing itself and its engagement with its homeland
Custodian	the state nurtures, protects, regulates, and polices new and emerging diasporic connections
Midwifery	the state identifies potential engagements and champions/leaders and mobilizes and cultivates them but leaves ownership in the hands of the diaspora
Husbandry	the state works with and re-energizes existing diaspora organisations and networks
Demiurge	the state directly creates and runs diasporic initiatives and networks, perhaps with the intention of letting the market assume responsibility at a later date.

Ireland and Scotland represent good case studies of countries who approach diaspora strategy from different ends of this spectrum. Whilst both adopt a plural, non-centralist approach (diaspora policy being joined up from a diffuse range of actors operating in different branches of the state), their programmes are quite different due

to the nature of how they engage their respective diasporas. The Irish approach, in particular with respect to business, is quite light and flexible in structure, ceding ownership of schemes to their members, and is developmental without being muscular. In other words it takes the form of midwifery and husbandry. The state's role is to nurture and incubate, not manage and over-determine. To that end, Ireland supports existing organisations without seeking any control and encourages the development of new social networks run by the diaspora for the diaspora (using the diaspora's own resources). As such, the Irish strategy has been 'to let a thousand flowers bloom'. This approach uses the idea of light incubation and practices forms of 'embedded autonomy' wherein the Irish state leaves an organisation/network to run itself, providing some minimal resources when needed (basic funding, advice, speakers, etc), and only steps in when the organisation/network needs to be re-energised.

Scotland, in contrast, has pursued a strategy that is more state centred in nature, being centrally managed, pooling resources into a smaller number of carefully delineated schemes. Here, Scottish state agencies function as scheme managers that actively control who can participate in a scheme and what members can do. Further, the Scottish schemes are underpinned strongly by new managerial structures and processes that emphasise accountability, transparency, productivity and value for money. Irish schemes are slowly transferring to this form of managerialism, especially with regards to accountability and transparency of spend, but there remains a greater recognition of the intangible benefits gained by fostering an engagement with the diaspora and an appreciation of the timeframe over which dividends will be returned.

What these administrative arrangements (both questions of who within states are charged with responsibility and how they exercise this responsibility) reveals is that *there is no one-size-fits-all approach to formulating and implementing a diaspora strategy*, nor should there be. There are very good reasons as to why the Irish and Scottish schemes differ, and why other countries have adopted different approaches, related to the nature of government within states (in particular the history of state institutions), the scale, nature, timing, and geography of the diaspora, and the relationship between the diaspora and the homeland. Indeed, it is unlikely that any

one government would succeed in building relationships with its diaspora by copying the model pursued by another, though that is not to say that it cannot and should not learn from others. The same is true for other countries. The important point is that a diaspora strategy needs not take the form of, or be best served by either, a) a highly centralised or highly dispersed set of responsibilities and actors, nor b) a formalised, top down, bureaucratically regulated, and managerialist, blueprint or, on the contrary, a bottom up, grass roots, diaspora initiated and anarchic strategy. Rather a strategy should be developed in a manner that is sensitive to the context in which it will operate and that is most likely to succeed in its aims.

#### *Measuring the success of diaspora strategies*

Operating diaspora programmes often involves significant investment by states and other organisations with respect to staffing and infrastructure, programme content development and delivery, and on-going evaluation and expansion. As a result, agencies running programmes seek to measure their success with respect to investment. Measures of success can focus on both tangible and intangible outcomes, and in the case of business-related ventures inevitably concern an economic assessment of the return on investment. Both countries, and schemes within countries, differ in how they measure success, varying with respect to tangible/intangible outcomes and the time period of evaluation. For example, Scottish Government's initiatives are accompanied by defined targets and associated tangible metrics for measuring progress and success. Essentially a scheme is defined as a success or failure principally on how much economic value it can be demonstrated to have leveraged over a specific, usually quite short, period. In Ireland, there is no rigid and robust set of metrics, nor a defined period in which to reach certain targets. Rather a scheme is evaluated by a mix of tangible and intangible measures, for example, the quality and strength of the network, feedback from clients and number of quotations and contracts. The issue of developing metrics and measuring policy impact in this specific area merits further attention to ensure transparency and accountability whilst at the same time permitting qualitative judgements to be made.

### **3) The infrastructure connecting diasporas and homelands**

Creating and supporting information flows and portals to foster communication between homelands and their diaspora is becoming an important policy priority.

There are two predominant modes of communication: from the homeland to the diaspora, and vice-versa.

#### *From homeland to diaspora*

Many countries seek to inform the diaspora as to what is happening in their home country through newsletters and websites. For example, the Indian government produces a monthly e-magazine ([www.overseasindian.in](http://www.overseasindian.in)). Likewise the Scottish government produces a quarterly e-magazine, ScotlandNow (<http://www.friendsofscotland.gov.uk/>). In the Irish case, Emigrant News, an independent organisation provides a weekly news summary ([www.emigrant.ie](http://www.emigrant.ie)), along with that supplied through the Emigrant Advice Network ([www.ean.ie](http://www.ean.ie)). Web site portals, both state-sponsored and run by NGOs or private organisations or even individuals, detailing useful information to the diaspora in situ and also about the home country, are seen by many in the diaspora and those seeking to serve the diasporic community as vital infrastructure. Some of these portals are very broad in nature, often having a social networking facility. In addition, many diaspora can also keep in contact with their homeland through broadcast media via satellite and Internet. We know of no state-sponsored channels aimed specifically at the diaspora as a constituent group.

#### *From diaspora to homeland*

Some countries have set up formal arrangements of consultation with its diaspora. For example, Jamaica has established the Jamaican Diaspora Advisory Board. Its members are elected and it meets twice a year to discuss diaspora matters. In addition, a diaspora conference of invited delegates meets every two years, with regional conferences held in interregnum between the biennial Conferences. Similarly, Norway (Norgestinget), Finland (Ulkosuomalaisparlamentti), Sweden (Utlandssvenskarnas parlament), France (Assemblée des Français de l'étranger) and Switzerland (Organisation des Suisses de l'étranger) have recently established expatriate parliaments to consult with their diaspora about domestic and diaspora matters. India has established the Prime Minister's Global Advisory Council of Overseas Indians, and also hosts events to meet with its diaspora twice a year, in India in January and overseas each September.

#### **4) Extending citizenship rights to overseas communities**

The most obvious way that countries service their citizens abroad and their descendants is through embassy and consular services, and through political lobbying of their host countries. In addition, there are two related citizenship rights that states can extend to the diaspora: welfare provision and voting rights.

##### *Welfare provision*

Some countries, such as Ireland and Lithuania, actively seek to provide funding for specialist services and support workers to cater for their diaspora. For example, the Irish Abroad Unit funds 220 welfare officers in the UK to work with vulnerable Irish populations living there. It also endows Irish societies, clubs, sporting, and heritage activities. The Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas supports Irish citizens imprisoned abroad. Both the Lithuanian government through the Department of National Minorities and Lithuanians Living Abroad, and the Chilean government through DICOEX, work with emigrants to ensure they know and receive their local rights and entitlements in the host country.

Welfare strategies are promoted when countries perceive their overseas citizens to be in a particularly vulnerable position. Vulnerable groups would include the elderly, the sick and infirm, undocumented migrants, the poor and unskilled, and prisoners. It is clear that countries which seek to prioritise welfare strategies desperately need data on the extent to which their diasporic populations remain disadvantaged and marginalised, and perhaps even subject to racism and discrimination. Producing such data concerning for example, employment experiences/outcomes, crime and imprisoned population, health inequalities, racism, levels of social, political, economic, and cultural assimilation and integration with the host society, remains an enormous research challenge but it is difficult to see how resources can be more effectively allocated and prioritised, and lobbying and advocacy extended, without it.

##### *Voting rights*

Perhaps the question of voting rights for overseas citizens is the most sensitive example of the difficulties which countries face when extending citizenship beyond national territorial borders. The vast majority of countries around the world have some form of inclusion of diasporic groups in national and/or local elections, although the

degree of voting power and the mechanisms for voting differ. In many countries, all citizens regardless of their geographical location have the right to vote in local and national elections in the homeland. In the case of Australia, very proactive measures are taken to ensure that overseas populations do exercise full voting rights. KEA played an active role in mobilizing the New Zealander diaspora to vote in that country's last general election. However, some countries with very large diaspora communities such as Ireland, the United Kingdom or India, do not allow their citizens living abroad to vote, despite campaigns in favour of granting voting rights to non-resident citizens. Where the diaspora may effect the outcome of an election, in the case for instance of states prone to weak coalition governments, it is difficult to argue against the maxim of no representation without taxation.

Case Example – The provision of welfare to the diaspora

In 2002, as a reflection of the country's new found wealth, Ireland's Task Force on Policies towards Emigration, drawing on a full scale mapping of the Irish diaspora, recommended extending certain welfare rights to overseas populations, especially vulnerable groups (the elderly, the sick, the poor, prisoners) who left Ireland in the 1950s and the 1980s to move to British cities. Cast as recompense for the failure of Irish domestic economic policy in the 1950s and the 1980s and in gratitude for the significant flows of remittance monies which these migrant groups repatriated, a raft of welfare and citizen advice schemes were introduced, including the appointment of overseas welfare officers in British cities. In the past five years, The Irish Abroad Unit, within the Department of Foreign Affairs, has been established to implement this welfare policy. Annually it spends in the region of 17 million euros, employing over 200 welfare officers, mainly in the United Kingdom and to a lesser extent in the United States. It also serves as a source of advice for migrants (whether pre-, during, or post-migration), and plays a role in protecting the welfare rights in countries of destination (not least for instance in the case of the undocumented Irish in the United States). A key challenge for this kind of policy is how best to reach and support vulnerable groups – whether directly or via pre-existing Irish community, voluntary, and cultural organisations.



## **5) Building diasporic patriotism through supporting social and cultural activities, education and language learning**

A prerequisite for a successful diaspora strategy is a motivated diaspora, willing and minded to contribute to national development. Diasporic patriotism varies in time and space, with the patriotic flame being doused and ignited by a variety of origin and destination specific triggers. But states can play a role in incubating, fostering and building diaspora social and cultural networks. This is often done as part of a wider national cultural strategy. There remains much to learn in terms of how diasporic groups might benefit from and contribute to national cultural strategies. Four instruments were discussed at the workshop: developing new supports from the homeland; supporting local initiatives from the diaspora; conferring honours and awards; promoting short term visits.

### *Provision of supports from the homeland*

Many diaspora groups have established homeland specific social, cultural and sporting clubs and networks, many accompanied with physical infrastructure such as meeting places, and countries often support these groups through direct and in-kind funding (such as supporting cultural visits by artists and performers) as a way of maintaining cultural identity. Countries may also provide specific services relating to cultural identity. For example, India has set up a state-sponsored genealogy service – ‘Tracing the Roots’ – which engages a private company (Indiroots) to construct a family tree for a small fee. The Irish Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs supports the teaching of the Irish language at third-institutions outside of Ireland. Similarly, the Lithuanian government funds Lithuanian schools to teach the Lithuanian language and cultural heritage to the descendants of Lithuanian emigrants. The Ministry of Diaspora in Armenia has recently established a virtual Armenian Studies university, is supporting Armenian students across the world, and has established a Committee on Curriculum for Armenian educators. In addition, it is establishing a diaspora museum highlighting the diversity of the Armenian diaspora and its achievements.

### *Buttressing local groups in the diaspora*

Local diaspora networks for support and community building often follow quite quickly after initial migration and include informal family networks as well as more

formal friendly societies and organisations providing a variety of forms of community banking and insurance. These self-organizing networks provide social ballast and important conduits through which to access work. Over time these networks often scale up to form regional or national organisations that work on behalf of the diaspora in their new home country. In recent years, these organizations have gained a web presence and have been joined by new social networking sites that are centred on national/cultural identities. Some of these social networking sites work at the city or regional scale, but some are now organised at the transnational or global scale, sometimes with city/national chapters, and they also have other functions such as information dissemination and business networking. Examples include Advance Australia, KEA New Zealand, the ScotsIn network, the Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO), Irishabroad.com and EuropeanIrish.com. In general, these kinds of organisation have been run by the diaspora for the diaspora, receiving no or little support from their homeland, although recently some have started to receive financial and other supports for their work. The Irish government has been involved in the funding of GAA events outside of Ireland. KEA New Zealand, a diaspora network initially set up by two individuals and privately funded, is now the recipient of state grants, alongside funds from private sector companies and membership fees.

Case Example – Building broad general but purposeful networks Advance (Australia), KEA (New Zealand).

KEA New Zealand and Advance Australia have different origins, missions, structures and strategies, but we consider them together here as both are quasi-autonomous NGO organisations which seek to build broad global networks of talented and professional people living overseas. They are more broadly conceived than simple business networks and are perhaps best thought of as sophisticated instruments through which a particular constituency within the New Zealander and Australian diasporas might be built up, fortified, mobilised, and primed. KEA New Zealand has 25,000 subscribers in over 174 countries and fourteen international chapters in eight countries. It works to connect the estimated 750,000 New Zealand born people living overseas with home and specifically seeks to connect to talented New Zealanders in order to share knowledge, contacts, and opportunities. It provides a key website and database which

serve as a global portal. Advance meanwhile is headquartered in New York and has over 12,000 members in 63 countries and has chapters in 14 countries. Advance activates and engages overseas Australians to use their expertise, contacts, and positions of influence for Australia. It creates industry specific networks, partners with tourist agencies in promoting tourism to Australia, and facilitates return migration. Whilst seeking to build networks of professionals and talent for business development, both KEA New Zealand and Advance are exemplars of what can be done with large, general, single, globally and sectoral wide networks and how general and fully encompassing networks can be built so as to intermingle social, cultural, and economic networking among a broad church of influential people. Detailed and more specific networking projects can be housed within the broader church and the movement from the general to the specific allows various scales and types of sub-networks to co-exist within a unifying framework

#### *Honours and awards*

Some nations recognise the contribution of individual diaspora members to the homeland and to society in general through awards. For example, India annually presents the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards to up to 20 members of the Indian diaspora who have made significant national and global contributions. Given the high profile awards ceremony and the limited number of awards, the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award has quickly become established as a high status and valued honour. In 2006, KEA New Zealand started the World Class New Zealand Awards to honour New Zealanders making a significant international contribution in different spheres. Awards are divided into the following classes: supreme award; information and communications technology; creative industries; biotechnology; manufacturing; research, science, technology and academia; finance, investment and business services.

#### *Promoting short term visits and bonding*

Given the importance of tourism as a global industry it is no surprise that all countries have active programmes of tourism marketing. In many cases, these marketing campaigns target members of the diaspora to encourage them to return home to visit family members or to simply take a holiday. In general, this targeting of the diaspora

is part of a broader marketing strategy. Homecoming 2009 – a flagship campaign seeking to encourage tourist visits and perhaps a longer term relationship between Scotland and its diaspora – is slightly different. This year long programme of events is designed not only to generate ‘bodies in beds’ but also to try and translate these short term visits into longer term business, social, and cultural ties, and perhaps relocation. A different type of scheme is The Aisling Return to Ireland Project which provides annual supported holidays to Ireland for long-term, vulnerable Irish in Britain who cannot afford to visit the homeland. The Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has recently made systematic efforts to facilitate diaspora travel to Armenia and make it more attractive by easing visa requirements, creating special interest tours (pilgrimages) and support upgrade in tourism infrastructure.

#### Case Example – Building the Lithuanian diaspora

The Department of National Minorities and Lithuanians Living Abroad (DNMLLA) takes a very proactive role in safeguarding and promoting the identity of the Lithuanian community overseas. Its target markets are Lithuanians living in ‘Lithuanian’ Poland, Belarus, and Kaliningrad Oblast, exiles from World War II and the Soviet Union and their descendants in former USSR countries, the classical Lithuanian diaspora in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, etc, and finally the post-accession migrants now living in Britain, Ireland, Norway, and Spain. Through the strategies of a) long term state relations with Lithuanians living abroad (2008-2020), and b) the inter-institutional program for cooperation with Lithuanian communities abroad for the years 2008-2012, it is seeking to preserve and build patriotism towards Lithuania, Lithuanian education, language, and culture, and the image of Lithuania overseas. In so doing, it aims to promote awareness of and protect the welfare rights of Lithuanian citizens in destination countries (ensuring for instance that they secure access to the services they are entitled to). What makes this approach so interesting is the fact the Department is simultaneously responsible for overseeing foreign-born minorities in Lithuania as well as Lithuanian citizens overseas. Coupling the two in this way provides for expertise and an elevated degree of sensitivity which might otherwise have been lacking.

#### **6) The development of remittances and philanthropy**

One of the main reasons why home states wish to connect with their diaspora is economic. At one level, as we discuss below, this is about creating markets for exports and seeking inward investment by diaspora owned businesses. At another, more basic, level it concerns the flow of hard capital into a country whether that be remittances from migrant workers or philanthropy funds donated by diaspora members to specific home-based charities and projects.

### *Remittances*

Remittances are often a small, but sometimes important component of a country's economy. According to the Inter-American Development Bank over US\$300 billion was sent back to homelands by migrant workers in 2006. Some nations then have looked to implement specific policies with regard to remittances to streamline the process and make it less costly. For example, in 2006, India launched the Remittance Gateway that enables people of Indian origin to send money instantaneously to 14,500 locations across India for far less cost than commercial money wire companies. In rare cases, remittances can become a highly significant component of the economy, although usually because of very large donations from a very small number of benefactors. For example, in the late 1990s remittances and private transfers accounted for about 30% of Armenia's GDP (18% of GDP in 2008).

### *Philanthropy*

In addition to remittances, philanthropy from the diaspora to the homeland can be a very important source of income for states. Philanthropic foundations are mostly established by diaspora members, either individually or collectively. They might work with state organisations, but how they choose to allocate and spend their funds is at their discretion. A particularly successful philanthropic enterprise established and run by a diaspora for the benefit of the home country has been the Ireland Funds which consists of a large, global network of donors, which funds peace and reconciliation, arts and culture, education and community development throughout the island of Ireland. Similarly, the Hayastan Foundation has been very important for raising and consolidating diaspora funding for humanitarian relief effort in Armenia and was critical in the early years of independence when the Armenian economy was weak. Some philanthropic foundations such as the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) and the Indian Development Foundation are established by states themselves. IFI was

established by the Irish and British governments in 1986 as an independent organisation to promote economic and social development and reconciliation between nationalists and unionists throughout Ireland. The Indian Development Foundation operates as a not for profit trust focusing on issues of health, education and rural development. Other kinds of philanthropy do not focus on financial donations but rather the in-kind donation of time and services. For example the Indian government has entered into a memorandum of understanding with the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin with respect to professional help regarding rural health projects.

#### Case Example – The Ireland Funds

The Ireland Funds represents one of the world's largest philanthropic diaspora based organisations. The Ireland Funds has an earlier origin than most diasporic philanthropic initiatives with one strand of it initially founded in 1963 as The American Irish Foundation, which then joined with the Ireland Funds in 1987 (which itself was established in 1976). The Ireland Funds operates in key centres of the Irish diaspora, in 11 countries and over 30 cities. Since 1976 it has raised and dispensed over US\$300 million. It secures money from the Irish diaspora through key social and networking events and more generally by prospecting for funds from wealthy donors. The Ireland Funds possesses unique expertise on how to build and sustain fund sourcing and supports qualified courses providing instruction on best practice. Its philosophy is to tie key donors to specific projects which they have a keen personal and professional interest in. Its funding mantra is to mine a mile deep and an inch wide (deep relationships with few donors) rather than an inch deep and a mile wide (a broad canvas of small giving). To date, funds have been spent on worthy causes back in Ireland – not least in conflict resolution in Northern Ireland and the alleviation of disadvantage. But with the ongoing peace process allied with the rise of the Celtic Tiger and general prosperity, the rationale is increasingly broadening to include the funding of projects outside of Ireland. In particular, recent campaigns have focused upon the Forgotten Irish – those who migrated to England and especially London in the 1950s and who now find themselves marginalised and vulnerable – and more international projects such as the Niall Mellon community house building project in

## **7) Business networks**

Business networks play a critical role in the emerging knowledge economy. Diaspora knowledge networks are overseas networks that mobilise the skills, expertise, contacts, knowledge, business acumen, and financial and political resources of diasporians as a collective resource to benefit the local and global diaspora as well as the homeland.

Following Aine O'Neill's (2009) work, it is useful distinguishing four kinds of diaspora knowledge network: global, specialist, professional and transnational.

*Global knowledge networks* are transnational networks linking global regions with the homeland, including trade missions, business forums, mentoring, advice and access to decision makers.

*Specialist knowledge networks* are sector specific (for instance biotechnology, ICT, law) and generate dense and specific ties to the homeland to aid the expansion of respective sectors, for instance through providing knowledge, mentoring, expertise and finance (venture capital).

*Professional knowledge networks* are networks of professional and highly skilled expatriates located in cosmopolitan cities. The focus is upon both social and business networking and the exchange of contacts, skills, advice and ideas.

*Transnational business networks* aim to foster economic ties between the place in which the diaspora resides and the homeland. Here the diaspora plays the role of a broker of relationships to a particular country. The network resources produced include knowledge of markets, cultural knowledge and access to transnational opportunities

A critical part of Scotland's Global Connections Strategy has been the creation of GlobalScot, an elite, global business network. GlobalScot targets high achieving members of the Scottish diaspora (almost 50% of the 840 GlobalScot members operate at company Chairman, CEO or President level) who are specially selected and invited to join. GlobalScot is not limited to one sector or area of the world and seeks to involve a broad range of talent and expertise. The scheme works by partnering

GlobalScot members with Scottish companies, with the former providing mentoring, advice, contacts and so on to the latter, which will help them expand their business globally. A recent development has been the Saltire Foundation that enables citizens to undertake placements in GlobalScot companies as a way of kick-starting or advancing their business careers.

Like GlobalScot, ChileGlobal is an elite, global business network of successful overseas Chileans. Again it is not limited geographically or by sector, although the vast majority of its members are located in North and Latin America, and many of its members are experts in information and communication technologies, finances and services, and business management. In particular it has mentoring programmes in biotechnology and information and communication technologies, and since 2007 has run an internship programme. A more recent development has been ChileGlobal Angels who are individuals targeted to help build an investment fund for innovative high growth potential companies.

KEA's mission is to 'connect New Zealand with its large global talent community' and to 'contribute to the growth, development, and future prosperity of New Zealand by sharing knowledge, contacts and opportunities' with its diaspora. It presently employs four fulltime regional managers to conduct its operations in different parts of the world. In 2007, KEA New Zealand launched 'World Class New Zealand' that aims to identify world class role models with key business and enterprise skills and to facilitate contact between these role models and New Zealand businesses and to build new international networks and partnerships. In addition, it seeks to access and share knowledge with these individuals through World Class New Zealand Summits – essentially high level think tank meetings – held in different countries around the world and designed to contribute to domestic and diaspora policy development.

Ireland has taken a rather different approach, seeking to create and maintain a wider base of participation in less targeted and focused networks. Examples would include the Asia Pacific Business forum which links 11 Irish business groups in Asia Pacific and the Gulf to facilitate an exchange of ideas and resources and to leverage reputation and connections, whilst the Irish Chamber of Commerce USA is a transnational economic network with 13 chapters across the United States. Further



examples would include the Irish Technology Leadership Group in Silicon Valley (an elite network of Irish corporate leaders who support the Irish ICT sector through the soliciting of Irish business ideas in a Dragon's Den format), Biolink (a network of biotechnical professionals spread across the USA), and Techlink UK (a network of Irish scientists based in London looking to commercialise laboratory breakthroughs). In the Irish case, additional examples include the Irish Network New York, the Irish Network San Francisco, and the Irish Professional Network of London.

Advance Australia has created a number of industry specific, but geographically dispersed networks in academic/research, media arts/entertainment, financial services, life sciences, and technology. Advance seeks to enable Australians abroad to be informed 'ambassadors-at-large' who open doors and opportunities for Australia and Australians across the globe. It also provides a job portal for those seeking to move back to Australia. Advance (Australia) constitutes professional knowledge networks, both having a significant online presence as well as organising face-to-face events in key cities where there are significant numbers of overseas Australians.

Armentech (Armenian High Tech Council of America) seeks to use its collective expertise to promote and support the creation and development of technology-based businesses in Armenia through inward investment and venture capital, building linkages, expanding outsourcing, improving the image of Armenian IT firms, and providing training.

These networks are most often supported by specialist state services that focus on the development and globalisation of indigenous firms, inward investment, and domestic exports and marketing. Examples include Fundación Chile, Scottish Networks International, Enterprise Ireland and the Armenian Development Agency. These organisations also provide direct advice to the diaspora thinking about investing in the homeland or who are interested in developing business to business partnerships. For example the Indian government runs the Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre – a one stop shop for investment advisory services and business to business partnerships. Similarly, the Armenian Development Agency runs a one-stop shop agency for foreign investors. In addition, the Armenian Ministry of Industry has been preparing a set of public-private projects centred on key transport infrastructure to attract

diaspora funding, financial expertise, and project management skills. Enterprise Ireland provides a range of services to business networks including financial support, secretariat and secretarial support, access to government and VIPs, project management, technology, connections to other networks, and promotion and marketing advice and support.

Case Example – Business networks : the cases of GlobalScot and ChileGlobal

GlobalScot is an international network of circa 840 senior influential, well connected and experienced Scots (or those with Scottish leanings) who, through invitation, offer freely their time and expertise in the service of contributing to Scotland's economic growth. The network has been established by and is managed by Scottish Enterprise. Global Scot has become something of a model exemplar in this field and widely cited by the World Bank. It has been copied and redeployed in Chile (ChileGlobal), and South Africa (Global South Africa). GlobalScot provides an insight into how diaspora strategies are being put into circulation and drawn down in different national settings, with the World Bank in this instance being a critical broker. What makes GlobalScot particularly interesting is that it has passed through phase one and is now in a period of transition to phase two. Attention is being given to creating and/or better realising demand from user business in Scotland, emerging and making better use of Global Scots, rethinking the membership base, measuring impacts and safeguarding quality assurance. If GlobalScot is a leader in this field already it will be important for countries who wish to copy the model to keep abreast of its mutations and developments. To some degree GlobalScot has piloted large scale business networking and is uniquely placed to comment on the pros and cons of particular approaches. It is also at the forefront of devising and testing metrics through which impacts might be assessed and how transparency and accountability can be best developed in the context of diaspora business networks.

ChileGlobal is a classic example of form of business network which learns from best practice and tries to rework into another context. As such it provides something of a test bed for the global circulation and transfer of diaspora policies. As noted, through the vector of the World Bank, ChileGlobal has come to view GlobalScot as a parent

model. ChileGlobal has 130 members in a wide range of business sectors spread across the USA/Canada (principally), Latin America to a lesser extent, and to a small degree Europe. It supports the placement of student interns, mentoring programmes (including a plan to role out a business Angel model), and business development through lubricating contacts, knowledge transfer, and investment. The initiative has been rolled out in four phases, and the care with which it has been piloted and incrementally constructed is worthy of reflection. Similar challenges to GlobalScot exist including how to maintain an active fresh membership list, how to become self sustaining in the longer term, how to champion particular projects, how to add value to all stakeholders, and how to evaluate impacts and success. If the ultimate goal of comparative research and discussion is policy transfer then the reworking of the Scottish model by ChileGlobal represents a leading example of how this process might unfold and what challenges arise when creating a hybrid form in a different cultural and institutional environment..

### **8) The promotion of return migration**

While it is widely recognised that a country's diaspora can make a valuable contribution to the homeland by staying in situ – connecting the homeland into vital political and business networks and establishing transnational linkages that can help grow the domestic economy – excessive brain drain and skills shortages often create the need for return migration. In fact return migration was a central feature of first generation diaspora strategies back in the 1960s and it is curious that it has been displaced so much by a new interest in harnessing talent from destination sources. In part this has been because it has proven so difficult to lure migrants back home. It would seem timely to pose the question of the virtue of moving the pendulum away from the return option? Have states gone too far and has the return option been too hastily relegated in importance?

Programmes designed to encourage brain incubation or circulation are an important part of some countries' engagement with their diaspora, especially those that are transitional economies, seeking to move up the development ladder. For example, Jamaica implemented a Charter for Long-Term Returning Residents in 1993, aiming to reduce the costs (importation of belongings) and bureaucracy for returnees, and establishing the Returning Resident Facilitation Unit. The unit was later upgraded in

1998 to a department and a Minister for Diaspora Affairs appointed in 2002.

Lithuania, as part of its programme to preserve Lithuanian identity amongst migrants, also recognises the need to support the teaching of Lithuanian language and to create Lithuanian schools abroad to enable migrants with children to return home and for the children to quickly integrate into the domestic school system. At present, they fund over 200 weekend schools worldwide.

Ireland and Scotland have both set up relocation services. The Irish Abroad Unit (within the Department of Foreign Affairs) provides a range of administrative and legal information to potential returnees. Both this Department and the Department of Social and Family Affairs fund organisations in the voluntary sector that provide advice and services to the Irish abroad, including those who are considering relocation to Ireland, such as Emigrant Advice. This organisation provides information through its 'Returning to Ireland' service on the statutory services and entitlements available to those 'coming home'. In addition, the Safe Home Programme (funded by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government) was established to help the elderly and the most vulnerable within the Irish community abroad to settle back in Ireland. Scotland's Fresh Talent Initiative includes a Relocation Advisory Service through which those who want to relocate can secure information and advice using the dedicated web portal ([www.scotlandistheplace.com](http://www.scotlandistheplace.com)) and phone line. Information is also provided through the organising committee of the flagship Homecoming Scotland 2009 event. These services do not solely target diasporians though: they aim to inform and assist both newcomers (hence the existence of a translation service) and returning Scots.

In addition, some members of a diaspora may have fled through forced political exile and changes in the political climate mean that they are able to return home. The Lithuanian government has a programme to support the return of political prisoners and their families to Lithuania which includes compensation costs for moving, payment of settlement benefits, language courses and other supports. The Irish Department of the Environment, Local Government and Heritage provides funding to voluntary housing bodies to make up to 25% of accommodation available to elderly returning emigrants who satisfy eligibility criteria and are on the waiting list of the Safe Home Programme.

We note the attention now being given to better understanding the circumstances which bring talented diasporians back home. Traditionally, two forces have been given greatest weight. Firstly, economic opportunity vis-à-vis salary, occupational status, promotional prospects, possibility of further social and spatial upward mobility, and level of responsibility, has been pre-eminent. In addition, family and lifecycle factors have proven important, including a desire to return to look after, spend time with and care for an elderly parent or relative, and a desire to bring children up in the home education system surrounded by family. Recently, Richard Florida's thesis about the locational preferences of the so called 'creative class' has proven very influential, in which lifestyle and cultural factors have been given added weight. Florida's thinking has been picked up in policy circles in Australia, New Zealand, Scotland, and Ireland. However, there is now emerging a host of critical assessments of the extent to which any global drive to procure talent, including return diasporians, bare out Florida's thesis. Indeed, we would contend that the factors which determine return migration remain a much needed research lacunae.

### **9) Affinity diaspora**

Many countries that are enacting diaspora programmes because they have significant diaspora overseas are also the recipients of other nations' diasporas. For example, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand and Scotland have experienced significant immigration in recent years, much of it orchestrated and encouraged by the state through immigration schemes. These populations are clearly a target for a homeland's diaspora, but they also represent a potential affinity diaspora for Australia, Ireland, New Zealand and Scotland. As far as we are aware, only one of the countries represented at the workshop has a programme designed to explicitly create an affinity diaspora. Scottish Networks International runs a scheme which seeks to partner postgraduate students with Scottish companies for work placements. By developing a relationship with the company it is hoped that if and when the student leaves Scotland they will help their partner company and other Scottish companies do business wherever they settle. In effect they will continue to play for 'Team Scotland' regardless of where they are resident in the world. Other countries tend to seek goodwill amongst other populations in two ways. First, by creating and fostering country to country business networks that seek to build mutual cooperation and

dependencies. For example, the Ireland Turkey Business Association (ITBA) creates links between Turkish business people in Ireland and Irish businesses and also helps Irish businesses seeking to do business in Turkey. Second, by undertaking international development work that aims to help a nation and its peoples whilst at the same time create visibility and new markets and opportunities for a country's enterprises.

#### **10) Researching the diaspora and providing a research and evidence base for diaspora strategy**

How a country interacts with its diaspora is often underpinned by research and consultative exercises. Most often this is conducted on an ad hoc basis, through in-house or contracted research. In some cases, countries have established dedicated research units to study the diaspora. For example, The Jamaican Diaspora Foundation and its operational arm, the Jamaican Diaspora Institute, were established in 2008. A key responsibility of the Foundation is to conduct research on diaspora related matters and to create pertinent databases. In Scotland and Ireland, universities have established research centres to study the diaspora, both with strong cultural and historical foci – in Scotland, The Scottish Centre for Diaspora Studies at Edinburgh University; in Ireland, the Global Irish Institute at University College Dublin.

## **SECTION 2 - EMERGING THEMES**

As noted above, as diaspora strategy grows to occupy an important place in national public policy and debate, a series of conferences, workshops, and research programmes are being devised. Whilst there is always merit in revisiting similar debate and themes there is a danger that workshops will simply pile up one research finding upon another without taking stock of emerging questions and novel and new challenges. In this section we detail some of the challenges which we believe merit further inspection.

### *Recognising varieties of diasporas/talents*

There still exist various definitions of who belongs to a particular diaspora. Instead of resolving this by forcing populations into a nominally and contrived social category,

more attention could be given to the differentiated nature of diaspora populations by age, sex, generation, place of origin, place of destination, date of departure, occupational status, education level, and so on. It is a truism that each country has many diasporas, not just a single diaspora. But as yet few have thought through the ramifications of this in the formulation of particular diaspora strategies in any serious way. If diaspora strategies are to connect with diaspora groups it might be useful for them to better understand the audiences they are speaking to and their needs, wants, and aspirations. Each country might benefit from producing its own typology of diaspora groupings, and a cross comparison of these categorisations would in itself be revealing.

#### *The practical and political importance of incorporating 'affinity' diasporas*

It is important to be aware of emerging criticisms of diaspora policies. Chief amongst these is the claim that they have the potential to ferment a racialisation of national economic policy, pitting one nation/race/tribe/ethnic group against another in a competitive global economy. In so doing they might therefore lead to the exclusion of very able and enthusiastic populations who feel that they do not belong necessarily to the imagined community of the nation – even in states which promote forms of civic nationalism over racial nationalisms. Affinity diasporas need to be given far more attention in diaspora strategy, especially in those states where migrants move in large numbers into and out of on a regular basis. It could be that affinity diasporas furnish home countries with opportunities – for instance in Eastern Europe, China, the United States and the rebuilding of Iraq and Afghanistan – which simply would not be provided for by domestic diasporas.

#### *New forms of mobility and diaspora strategies*

Transformations in the ways in which people move around the world and communicate with home populations and indeed with other diasporic communities threaten to render some of the assumptions built into diaspora strategies somewhat obsolete. There is a clear gradation from permanent migrant to business traveller, and in between, various categories of (often skilled) transient migrants that now dominate international circulation. More specifically, there exist much more complex patterns of movement today, involving complex mobilities with complex sequences and complex geographies. Diaspora strategies need to move beyond seeing diasporic

groups as principally (semi) permanent overseas groups and need to consider how mobility is configured today and how such configurations beget different kinds of policy options.

*The scaling of diaspora strategies: supra-national, national, sub-national*

Diaspora strategy is most often conceived as being properly located at the level of the nation state. But diaspora strategies are scaled in more complex ways in at least two main ways. Firstly, different tiers of state are actively involved in formulating diaspora strategy. This might involve local, regional, national, and supra-national levels of government. Within Ireland for instance, County Donegal has its own diaspora strategy of sorts (the Derry Donegal Project) and the Derry diaspora was behind a new investment in a local shopping mall motivated by local patriotic as much as business factors, which nests within Ireland's diaspora strategy, which in turn nests within Europe's rekindled interest in systematising connections with Europeans overseas. Whether different scales are better or worse, more or less suitable, for different functions of diaspora policy making and execution needs consideration. Secondly, even if set at the national level only, diaspora strategies have different effects on different parts of their respective countries – as a reflection of the different locations of origin of migrant groups and the different business and other opportunities different areas present. Diaspora strategy has the potential to play a role in consolidating uneven development within countries. Paradoxically, given that it is often peripheral and weaker regions that shed populations, it also has the potential to promote balanced regional growth.

*Economic downturn and diaspora strategies*

It is now impossible to ignore the impact of the credit crunch on diaspora strategies and the potential contributions diaspora strategies might make to national programmes of recovery. In the first instance, the global economic recession has limited the capacity of diasporians to route FDI and venture capital; it has increased the risks of diasporians not securing access to welfare entitlements overseas and has made it more difficult for home countries to expand welfare budgets; it has increased return migrants at the same time as producing new migrants streams; it has reduced philanthropic giving; and it has resulted in immediate priorities taking precedence over less commercial but patriotically-minded activity. In the second case,



programmes for national recovery which are seeking to increase national competitiveness in tougher global economic conditions may now find that competitive assets such as pools of talent overseas become more critical brokers of success.

## **CONCLUSION : KEY QUESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE WAY FORWARD**

Diaspora strategies are emerging as an important new policy instruments for nation-states that have experienced significant out-migration, often over several generations. They provide a means for states to develop and maintain significant relationships with their citizens and their descendants for the mutual benefit of both state and diaspora. Whilst not the first event to explore the phenomenon of diaspora strategies, the workshop in NUI Maynooth:

- Brought together a number of countries and agencies active in the field, many of whom had not met or communicated with each other previously;
- Explored the full diversity of different policies and programmes being enacted, rather than concentrating on business and economic activities;
- Set those policies and programmes within a broader academic framework that sought to contextualise their development and implementation.

The workshop highlighted that:

- There is a wide range of different policies and programmes being developed and implemented across countries dependent on aspiration, context and circumstance;
- Those countries attending, and many other countries, would benefit from on-going dialogue about the design and implementation of diaspora strategies;
- There is a need for further systematic research on diaspora strategy policies and programmes.

We conclude firstly by drawing upon the workshop discussions to spell out 17 critical sets of questions which all countries might find useful to pose and answer for

themselves as they move towards designing, preparing, implementing, monitoring, and refining their diaspora strategy. It seems to us that these 17 questions capture some of the key areas which policy makers need to wrestle with if they are to learn from others and track their way through the thicket of suggestions which vary from best practice, potential cul-de-sacs, effective strategies, expensive strategies, utopian aspirations, and practical actions. We then spell out some recommendations for ways forward.

### **Critical Questions**

**1) Which populations constitute a nation's diaspora and should be included as part of a targeted diaspora strategy?** Should all home born overseas populations be included? Should migrant patriotism towards the homeland be a determinant thereby restricting the diasporic population? Should second, third and later generations be included? Should business travel, short term secondments and new forms of mobility be included? How can the concept of an affinity diaspora be mobilised without a diaspora strategy becoming so wide that they lose their focus?

**2) What is the basic philosophy underpinning how a country engages with its diaspora?** What is the big idea, and need there be one central and core motif? What social, economic, and demographic conditions are underpinning, often unconsciously, the basic philosophical outlook of diaspora policy makers? What ought the basic philosophy be?

**3) How are diasporas organised and how does their underlying structure and logic predispose them to engage in different ways with the home nation?** How well do home nations know their diaspora and how is historical and current research on diasporas being compiled and amassed?

**4) How well do governments know their 'emigrant state'?** What structures, programmes and technologies of delivery are best suited to the establishment of new relations with a diaspora? How might any country's emigrant state be mapped? What additional institution building and state apparatus will be required to move to the

desired emigrant state for that particular country? What is the appropriate role of government in diaspora engagements – absent, custodian, midwife, husband, demiurge?

**5) What constitutes a successful diaspora programme and what are the most appropriate means to measure and assess programmes?** Who sets targets and who conducts evaluations? What are the best methods of policy impact analyses to ensure efficiency, transparency, and accountability? Are institutions, programmes, and policy systems set up so as to be able to absorb evaluation with a view to improve practice?

**6) Is it necessary to have a balance between diaspora policy areas?** How do different policy areas intersect with one another (for instance welfare and business strategies, philanthropy and welfare strategies, philanthropy and business strategies)? If so, which mix is best suited in any particular country? Can a country's expect the diaspora to perform a business role for it without first building diaspora socially and culturally?

**7) Through which infrastructure should home countries open channels of communication with diasporic groups?** How effective are central web portals? What ought to go on these portals? How can they be promoted, financed, and sustained? What opportunities might free to air satellite channels provide? What kind of newsletters/print/electronic media do diasporians want and how can they be made to reach the widest population? How might diasporic councils, round table forums, global meetings, and conferences be organised so as to solicit the views of diasporians and to explore opportunities? How much consultation needs to go into the formulation of a diaspora strategy itself and how can this be accomplished?

**8) What kinds of citizenship rights do home countries wish to extend to their diasporic populations and why?** To what extent should a home country have a responsibility for vulnerable overseas groups? How well do they know who and where the vulnerable are? Should home countries be lobbying to ensure welfare entitlements are provided and accessed in regions of destination or should they themselves be providing direct support? In providing welfare relief, what are the

advantages and disadvantages of working with pre-existing diasporic and other welfare groups and how far should new systems and infrastructure of welfare provision be included? What are the obligations and challenges which surround extending the voting franchise to overseas groups and should there ever be any representation without taxation?

**9) How can the mindedness of the diaspora be cultivated by home countries?**

Which diasporas, and groupings in the diaspora, are in greatest need of being re-energised and their mindedness built up? How can diaspora strategies be best articulated with national cultural strategies? Which kinds of honours system are most appropriate to reward diasporic champions and ambassadors? How can short term visits be promoted and best capitalised on to rekindle enthusiasm, pride, and interest in the old country?

**10) How can philanthropy be best developed in the diaspora?** Where is scope for philanthropy greatest? What models of best practice exist and can these be reworked into other countries' diasporas? How should donors be approached, by whom, and in respect to what projects? Should countries consider sending policy makers and would be philanthropic organisers to emerging internationally recognised courses on the art and science of philanthropy?

**11) How can countries engage with their diasporas so as to lubricate the globalisation of their indigenous companies and maximise the attraction of FDI, through knowledge transfer, business contacts, venture capital, mentoring, and technology transfer and licensing?** How can business networks be established, be made to be sustainable, and create a user demand from indigenous sectors? How can business networks be made to be mutually beneficial to both the diaspora and to the home country? Who should set up, run, monitor, and evaluate networks and what different outcomes arise from different actor groups?

**12) Why has return migration been relegated so much as a policy option and is perhaps now being overlooked?** What brings migrants home? How much repatriation is down to economic, family and lifecycle, and culture and lifestyle factors? Therein, who should be responsible for prospecting for global talent and

what policies and pitches should be adopted? How can a country make it as easy as possible for talented migrants to return home? What kinds of one stop shops work best?

**13) Who should be part of a nation's affinity diaspora?** How can such diaspora be grown so as to have an elevated commitment to the home nation? How important are educational institutions, alumni networks and intern schemes and how can they be made to be more effective? Which global regions and markets are most strategically valuable and therefore should specific affinity groups be recruited with greater vigour? How can affinity diasporas be more effectively drawn into a national diaspora strategy and can two countries bring their diaspora strategies into alignment for mutual benefit?

**14) How should we approach the scalar constitution of diaspora strategies, so as to maximise development opportunities in different parts of a country?** How can overlapping diaspora strategies at urban, regional, national, and supranational level be brought into harmony with each other so that they reinforce one another?

**15) How can diaspora strategies be more suitably tailored and what kinds of typologies or market segments are appropriate?** How can we segment diasporas and might models from market research be employed and recycled in this context?

**16) How can policy transfer be effected and how can we move beyond hosting a series of workshops which slide over each other and move to systematic development of cumulative knowledge?**

**17) What kind of research might productively underpin the development of diaspora policy within each country?** From which part of the state (or private and voluntary sectors) is research being commissioned, how is it being circulated, and how is it being acted on? Importantly, this research would benefit enormously from being comparative in nature, evaluating and contrasting programmes developed by different countries whilst remaining sensitive to the varying geographies and histories of patterns and types of diaspora formation. But what are we doing when we do

comparative work and which comparisons might work best? How can comparative research lead into policy transfer or improvement?

### **Recommendations for moving forward**

It is our recommendation that:

- Participants continue to communicate with each other and to swap information concerning their policies and programmes;
- A programme of subsequent events be organised, perhaps focusing on particular aspects of diaspora strategy policy such as overseas supports, philanthropy, returnee policy, and business networks;
- New countries be invited to participate in subsequent events to widen the base of experiences and knowledge;
- Individual countries sponsor programmes of research that will help to develop evidence-informed policy that can maximise the utility and value of their diaspora policies and programmes.

With respect to the latter, it is clear that whilst there has been some important initial research (see for example the collection edited by Kuznetsov 2006) there has been relatively little systematic research conducted by either academic researchers or states with respect to the formulation, implementation and evaluation of diaspora strategies. Given the potential benefits to both diasporas and homelands, we feel it is imperative that a programme of research be undertaken examining how states produce and implement policies, their respective success at fostering positive relationships between states and their diaspora, and their implications and outcomes. This research needs to be multifaceted in nature, examining the social, cultural, political, as well as economic aspects of diaspora strategies. We look forward to making a contribution to providing policy makers with ideas, evidence, and policy analyses.

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