



1. combined work, mutual assistance
2. cooperation, partnership

Irish in Britain: Policy Bulletin – July 2019

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Common Travel Area – Memorandum of Understanding

On 8 May, the Irish and UK governments signed a Memorandum of Understanding to guarantee the continuation of the rights enjoyed by both countries' citizens under the Common Travel Area (CTA) after Brexit.

The UK government has issued the following advice: "If you are a British citizen or an Irish citizen, you do not need to take any action to protect your status and rights associated with the CTA. After the UK leaves the EU, you will continue to enjoy these rights, no matter what the terms of the UK's exit. Both the UK and Irish governments have committed to taking all necessary measures to ensure that the agreed CTA rights and privileges are protected in all outcomes."

The memorandum of understanding is not legally binding, leading some to argue that a treaty would be more satisfactory. However, the Irish government has given assurances that the deal has been "copper fastened" by legislation in both countries.

The UK government produced posters for use in centres used by the Irish community in Britain that spell out the rights enshrined in the CTA – you can view them [here](#).

Brexit through the Green

Irish in Britain will be hosting a half-day symposium on Brexit and the Irish community on the afternoon of Saturday 13 July in north London. The event is titled *Brexit through the Green: Interpretation, Identity and Irishness* and a few tickets are still available for purchase via [Eventbrite](#). Speakers include Emma DeSouza, Professor Bernard Ryan, Maurice Wren (CEO of the Refugee Council) and the Traveller Movement's Yvonne MacNamara.

The event offers a platform for an open discussion of the challenges Brexit presents to the community and what it means to be Irish in Britain after Brexit.

APPG Dementia report

Irish in Britain's Cuimhne team have responded to the APPG Dementia's new report *Hidden No More: Dementia and Disability*. They said:



“We welcome the inquiry’s social model of disability approach to dementia and acknowledge that the findings are consistent for the most part with our understanding of the issues faced by people with dementia and their families.

However, although the report recognises the impact of poverty, employment, housing, social care and community inclusion, it seriously fails to do justice to the additional barriers faced by people from minority ethnic and refugee groups including the Irish.”

You can read the full statement [here](#).

Referendum on Irish citizens abroad voting in presidential elections

The Irish Government is currently drafting a bill to hold a referendum on whether to extend the franchise for presidential elections to Irish citizens outside of the Republic of Ireland. It looks likely that the referendum will be held in October. Details of the referendum will be forthcoming over the summer as the proposed Bill is scrutinised by the Oireachtas.

Diaspora policy consultations

Ireland’s Minister of State for the Diaspora and International Development Ciarán Cannon TD is hosting public meetings in early July in London, Leeds, and Manchester to welcome public input into Ireland’s new diaspora policy, expected to be published in 2020.

Further details and dates [here](#).

RTÉ longwave radio extension

In April, RTÉ confirmed that upgrade works will ensure that the transmission of its longwave radio for the Irish diaspora in Britain continues for a minimum of two years. This decision comes five years after RTÉ announced the planned termination of the service. The closure was postponed following a public response from the Irish community in Britain. RTÉ will upgrade its mast at Summerhill, Dublin. The necessary equipment is expected by mid-September 2019, but once remedial work commences, longwave service will have to be suspended for an estimated ten weeks.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade funded research into the issue and the work was carried out by the Social Policy Research Centre at Middlesex University in partnership with Irish in Britain.

Ruairí Cullen
Policy and Public Affairs Officer
policy@irishinbritain.org