



REPORT ON VIRTUAL LAUNCH OF STUDY 'INDIAN DIASPORA IN IRELAND'



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EU-India Cooperation and Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Implemented by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

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Background

The European Union (EU) and India [Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility \(CAMM\)](#) signed in 2016 calls for harnessing the contributions of migrants to destination economies whilst also supporting diaspora networks and integrating migrants.

The EU-funded project entitled '[EU-India Cooperation and Dialogue on Migration and Mobility](#)' facilitates the implementation of the CAMM addressing the four pillars: better organised regular migration and the fostering of well-managed mobility; prevention of irregular migration and trafficking in human beings; maximising the development impact of migration and mobility; and the promotion of international protection. It is implemented by the **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** and **International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)**, in collaboration with a local partner: the India Centre for Migration (ICM).

In keeping with the project and CAMM objectives, ICMPD commissioned a study to contribute towards a better understanding of the current situation of Indians overseas (diaspora) in Europe. Ireland, given its unique placement within Eurozone and an emerging market for higher education was selected. Two other studies on Indians in Germany and Italy have also been commissioned. Each of the studies aims to present a snapshot of Indian contributions to host society focusing on, achievements, highlight the support services available by Indian diaspora associations, underline the community's connectivity to India, and identify potential support mechanisms that may be necessary. Conducted in conjunction with the **Ireland India Business Association (IIBA)**, the '[Indian diaspora in Ireland](#)' study was based on a combination of research methods, including desk research, surveys, interviews and questionnaires and was approved by the EU and Government of India in the fall of 2020.

Virtual launch event

In an effort to disseminate the key findings and recommendations of the study, a virtual launch of the study on 'Indian diaspora in Ireland' was organised on 26th February 2021 from 12 pm to 3 pm CET.

The event was divided into two sessions. The first session was comprised of the presentation of the study, and a subsequent discussion focused on taking stock of the contributions made by members of Indian diaspora in Ireland and highlighting their integration needs and challenges. In the light of ongoing efforts to explore the potential for *Talent Partnerships with*

partner countries, introduced by the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, the second session focused on exploring potential avenues for diaspora members to play a role.

Over 60 participants registered for the event, representing government authorities in India and Ireland, the European Commission, Inter-Governmental Organisations, private sector/business associations, diaspora associations, think tanks, and academic institutions.

Table 1: List of organisations/institutions/associations that were represented in the event.

Government Authorities	
1	Ministry of External Affairs, India
2	Department of Foreign Affairs, Ireland
3	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Ireland
3	Embassy of Ireland, New Delhi
4	Embassy of India, Dublin
5	Embassy of India, Brussels
6	India Center for Migration (affiliated to MEA)
7	Enterprise Ireland(State agency of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment)
International Organisations and EU Bodies	
8	International Center for Migration Policy Development(ICMPD)
9	International Labour Organisation(ILO)
10	International Organisation for Migration(IOM), Ireland
11	Delegation of the European Union to India
12	DG HOME, European Commission
13	DG INTPA, European Commission

Private sector/Business associations

- 14 Ireland India Business Association(IIBA)
- 15 Indian Chamber of International Business
- 16 WIPRO
- 17 KPMG
- 18 Olive Group
- 19 Techstorm Consulting
- 20 DePuy Synthes Ireland
- 21 Power of Sports Organisation
- 22 DHR Communications

Diaspora associations

- 23 Federation of Indian Communities in Ireland (FICI)
- 24 Ireland India Council
- 25 Indian Overseas Congress(IOC), Ireland

Academic Institutions and Think tanks

- 26 University College Dublin(UCD)
- 27 Dublin City University (DCU)
- 28 Trinity College, University of Dublin
- 29 National University of Ireland, Galway (NUI Galway)
- 30 Munster Technological University
- 31 Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
- 32 Amity Institute of Pharmacy
- 33 India Migration Now
- 34 Uni-Italia
- 35 Economic and Social Research Institute(ESRI)
- 36 The Networking Institute, Ireland
- 37 Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS)
- 38 Asia-Pacific Foundation of Canada

Opening Remarks

Speakers

- › Mr Benoit Sauveroche, First Counsellor - Migration and Home Affairs, Delegation of the European Union to India
- › Mr Raj Kumar, Under-Secretary (OIA-1), Ministry of External Affairs of India
- › Ms Sedef Dearing, ICMPD Regional Coordinator for South and Central Asia

Keynote Address

- › H. E. Mr Brendan Ward, Ambassador of Ireland to India

Session Moderator

- › Mr Naozad Hodiwala, Country Coordinator for India, ICMPD

The three-hour virtual consultation - moderated by ICMPD - began with a series of opening remarks from representatives of government authorities from India and Ireland, as well as the EU Delegation in New Delhi. Several themes were highlighted including the evolution of India-Ireland migration corridor, the pioneering practices of both countries in diaspora engagement and the potential role of various stakeholders, including diaspora, in facilitating labour migration, supporting integration, and building transnational networks.

- › The evolution of India-Ireland migration corridor was presented highlighting the experience of Ireland from traditionally being a country of outward migration sending colonial administrators, educators and missionaries - in the 19th and early 20th century - to India to currently being a migrant receiving destination attracting thousands of Indian migrants and students each year.
- › Speakers noted that this general trend has been beneficial for Ireland and Irish people. With this development, Ireland has also ensured access to support for the migrant networks and engaged in various integration measures and strategies. Recent examples include the access to support and financial assistance offered by the government to foreign students during the current pandemic context. Other initiatives targeting foreign students include a special visa scheme to stay and work in Ireland for up to two years (depending on the degree conferred) after completing their studies, allowing them to initiate their careers internationally or to return to their home country and make use of their international experience.
- › Similarly, India being a regional pioneer in diaspora engagement highlighted some notable initiatives to engage its diaspora, and ensure their safety. This includes the [MADAD Portal](#), e-Migrate project, the Indian Community Welfare Fund, Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendras (resource centres), Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (insurance scheme), Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana (Skills Development for Youth Over-

seas), the Know India Programme (KIP), and scholarships for diaspora children¹. Additionally, most recently, in the context of the global pandemic, the Government of India engaged in the world's largest repatriation exercise-Vande Bharat mission to ensure the safe return of its citizens and created the Indian Skilled Workers Arrival Database for Employment Support (SWADES) to ensure returnees with opportunities for post-return employment, and to create a database of qualified citizens. Moreover, as part of the recent [Atmanirbhar Bharat project](#), the Government has emphasized the role of diaspora in creating a self-reliant India and has announced various new production-linked investment opportunities to encourage diaspora contribution in MSME/road/infrastructure development.

- › Both country officials, and the EU representative, noted that this report is very timely and would better equip policy practitioners to better understand the contributions of Indians in education, business, and health sectors within the EU; better engage with diaspora members in the private sector; and to better support the diaspora community with tailor made integration measures.
- › Speakers also underlined the relevance of this virtual discussions at an opportune time as India explores future channels for its skilled work force and as EU, and its Member States, are also looking to develop further Action Plans for non-EU nationals, as well as explore the potential role diaspora may play in the successful social cohesion and economic dynamism of host (and origin) countries. For example, as much as contributing to Irish economy and labour market, Indian diaspora in Ireland can also play a key role in helping India achieve its Atmanirbhar ambitions for self-reliance drawing FDI and MSME's to their home communities. They also reiterated that engaging diaspora in the facilitation of talent partnerships between India and EU economies might offer insights on how to scale such initiatives, facilitate skills recognition, and ensure programs that are responsive to sectoral needs.

1. More Information on the diaspora engagement initiatives of government of India can be accessed at www.mea.gov.in/diaspora-engagement.htm

Indian diaspora in Ireland Study. Key findings and recommendations

Authors

- › Ms NilaKanthi Ford, Chief Executive Satamana and former Chair of the IIBA
- › Ms Thelma Harris, Diaspora Engagement Specialist and Account Manager, DHR Communications

To begin the first session, authors presented the key findings and recommendations from the study. The six main themes that the study focused on include:

- › Contribution and achievements of Indians in Ireland.
- › The Attractiveness of Ireland to Indian immigrants.
- › Opportunities offered to and challenges faced by Indians in Ireland.
- › Identification and mapping of the roles of Indian associations.

› Assessment of the economic, social, political and/or cultural connections.

› Identification of potential support measures for the Indian community in Ireland.

Further, the presentation focused on the three key areas where the Indian diaspora have had considerable engagement in Ireland- Education, Health and Business.

EDUCATION

The attractiveness of Ireland as a higher education destination among Indian students has exponentially increased in the past few years. A major factor contributing to this increase is the two-year stay back provision provided to students who migrate for higher studies to Ireland. 80% of the Indian students came to Ireland to do a postgraduate programme and some of the most popular courses among Indians were computing, data analytics, business administration and finance.

Education in Ireland is Ireland's national brand for attracting overseas students to Irish shores. It falls under the authority of the Minister for Education and Skills, while the Irish state

agency known as Enterprise Ireland is responsible for the promotion of Irish Higher Education Institutions overseas. They offer various scholarships for foreign students² and regularly organise annual Higher Education Institutes (HEI) missions to take part in student fairs in India.

Education as an export is important to Ireland. However, authors underlined that despite the growing attractiveness of education sector in Ireland, students moving to Ireland face challenges that include social exclusion, access to housing and health care services.

HEALTH

Another key sector with a high presence of Indian diaspora is the health care sector. In 2017, 42.33% of the doctors in Ireland were foreign trained and the main source countries include India, Pakistan, South Africa and Sudan. Similarly, Indian nurses constitute a large number of nurses who are issued with work visas each year. Around 6,000 Indian origin nurses are currently registered in Ireland, which makes up to 9 per cent of the total number of nurses registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Board.

There are active recruitment campaigns held in the sector and the authors noted with optimism that the regulated professions (Health and Social care) Amendment bill 2019 is expected to increase the advent of more Indian professionals in the health sector.

2. More information on student scholarships can be found at <https://eurireland.ie/2021/02/08/government-of-ireland-international-education-scholarships-2021/#:~:text=Under%20the%20initiative%2060%20scholarships,to%20all%20fields%20of%20study>.

BUSINESS

A large number of Indian companies are present in Ireland. Authors highlighted that there has been an increased interest among the Indian companies to operate in Ireland particularly after Brexit (especially given the unique position of Ireland as the Eurozone's only English speaking market). The ICT sector is showing significant growth in Ireland and this is reflected in the number of Indian companies investing in Ireland and Irish companies outsourcing their support services to India. Companies such as HCL, Infosys, Wipro, Tata Consultancy Services

(TCS), and Tech Mahindra are all actively engaged in Ireland. More recently, there have also been several Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and start-ups by Indians operating in Ireland.

To facilitate the growth of the business sector, the visa office at the Embassy of Ireland in New Delhi has a [Business Express Programme](#) to assist companies wishing to transfer staff or to help Irish companies seeking to employ skilled Indian staff.

INTEGRATION CHALLENGES

In addition to highlighting the successes of Indian diaspora in Ireland, the study tried to also understand the various integration challenges that the community face in Ireland. Most of the study respondents noted Ireland to be an inclusive country that offers a positive environment for people who are capable of self-integration into Irish community life. However, although authors underlined that there were respondents who ranked Ireland highly as an inclusive country, some do feel integration into community life in Ireland remains a challenge.

According to the authors, the challenges most frequently faced by the study respondents were related to employment, culture, and developing a sense of belonging. Specifically, one's 'Indianness' was noted to be a disadvantage when find-

ing employment. Key stakeholders who could play an important role in addressing these integration challenges are:

- › Employers
- › The Irish state
- › The Indian community in Ireland

The authors also underlined that the various social and cultural activities carried out by Indian diaspora associations/groups in Ireland has been an effective way of embracing community life in Ireland, and the Indian-Irish community.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION-BASED FINDINGS

To that end, some of the key recommendations that the study offered were:

1. *Be aware of, and attentive to, the complexity and heterogeneity of Indian diaspora.* The authors reiterated that it is particularly important to understand the varied characteristics and objectives of various diaspora organisations and build strategies that do not assume that they all have the same aims or engage with various partners for the same reasons.
2. *Identify low hanging fruit and provide support to the initiatives already supporting the community.* Authors noted that improvements in diaspora engagement do not necessarily need to take the form of new initiatives and projects emphasizing that many of the activities currently available would benefit from funding support, professionalisation and strategic development.
3. *Develop a better understanding of migration dynamics.* The need for better routine data on Indian diaspora migration is critical and is key to capturing an accurate

understanding of the dynamics of emigration and return/non-return in the Irish context.

Moreover, the study also offered insights on specific actions-based findings that includes:

- › The need for an induction pack for new Indian migrants arriving to the country with information regarding administrative procedures, housing and rental information, on opening a bank account and about social and cultural life in Ireland.
- › The need to develop a guide on employment of non-EU nationals for Irish employers and prospective employees, with an emphasis on work permits, e.g. 'Stamp 1G'
- › To facilitate more collaboration between diaspora associations, in order to ensure aligned support for the Indian diaspora and greater awareness in Ireland of the Indian community.

Discussion points

Panellists

- › Ms Emer Davis, Head of Immigration and Visa Section, Embassy of Ireland to India (formerly member of Horizon working group on Migration, Immigration and Integration at Department of Justice and Equality)
- › Ms Eimear O'Brien, Assistant Principal Officer for Inclusion, Equality and Gender Equality Policy at the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
- › Mr Terrence Dick, Second Secretary, Indian Embassy to Ireland
- › Indian diaspora organisation representatives in attendance

Session Moderator

- › Mr Naozad Hodiwala, Country Coordinator for India, ICMPD

The panel discussion after the presentation mainly focused on the different integration measures implemented by the Irish authorities. Panellists from Irish authorities highlighted the [Migrant Integration Strategy](#) put in place and the progress made under the strategy. They also underlined the [community integration fund](#) available, which could be accessed by diaspora organisations to promote integration in their local communities. This fund is intended to support communities across Ireland to play a greater role in promoting integration by providing practical support to facilitate social inclusion among the migrant population. However, it was noted that no Indian diaspora association applied for this fund in the year 2019-20, which highlights the need for it to be better promoted among the Indian diaspora groups.

Other positive developments that have helped further integration of Indians include:

- › Allowing Turbans and the hijab to be worn by Sikh and Muslim members of the Gardai (Irish police), portraying the ethnic diversity in the police rank and government
- › Non-requirement of obtaining additional employment permit for spouse of Critical Skills Employment Permit (CSEP) holders
- › Non-requirement for obtaining re-entry visa for IRP/GNIB cardholders to travel to Ireland.

Additionally, some of the key takeaways from the discussion were:

- › The need to update the study and for it to be made a living document available for the policymakers and community member to access information.
- › The need to enhance communication involving local/national authorities to better channel and promote information on existing initiatives - regarding the various integration measures available – targeting non-EU migrant communities.

Talent Mobility Partnerships and the role of diasporas

- › Mr Marco Funk, International Relations Officer, European Commission, DG HOME
- › Mr Conor Long, Irish Abroad Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs
- › Mr Andrea Salvini & Mr. Georg Bolits on Facilitating the admission and growth of EU-based start-ups in India and Indian Start-Ups in the EU – Study
- › Mr Michael McDonnell, UCD Careers & Placement Manager for UCD Smurfit School of Business

Session Moderator

- › Mr Naozad Hodiwala, Country Coordinator for India, ICMPD

'Talent Partnerships' is one of European Commission's key proposals in the recently announced New Pact on Migration and Asylum. It aims to provide a comprehensive policy framework as well as funding support for mutually beneficial cooperation with partner countries in order to attract talented students, researchers and workers to the EU. According to the Pact, *"the Partnerships would combine direct support for mobility schemes for work or training with capacity building in areas such as labour market or skills intelligence, vocational education and training, integration of returning migrants, and diaspora mobilisation."* Along with EU's new pact, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) discussions have also stressed on the need to involve diaspora as key actors in the implementation of migration and integration policies.

In this context, speakers and participants noted that diaspora could potentially play a pivotal role in making talent partnerships successful and the discussion in the session helped brainstorm the future of mobility schemes between Ireland and India.

Some of the key takeaways from this discussion were:

- › In terms of improving the mobility pathways between countries, diaspora could play an important role in creating enabling environment and institutional capacities in both countries of origin and host countries. Some of the possible support measures that diaspora could be engaged in are:
 - Providing pre-departure/post-arrival assistance³ to ensure a softer landing for newly arriving migrant workers. Additionally, diaspora may support future new comers with skill recognition and offering insights in to the labour market sectors where non-EU nationals may seek employment/entrepreneurial opportunities, having gone through the process themselves.

- Providing bottom up feedback into labour market information systems, and facilitating feedback from migrant workers concerning the efficacy of labour mobility/integration policies and programmes, and potential violations of their rights or employment contracts.
- Facilitating partnerships with TVET institutions, private sector, national/local authorities and international organisation. Diaspora organisations can bring fluidity and connectedness between partners in labour mobility programmes by making links from the private sector to civil society, helping different stakeholders to engage and build trust.

- › Moving away from the traditional 'employee' notion of migrants, entrepreneurs aiming to establish or expand a start-up in the EU could benefit from pre-decision and pre-arrival support services (mobility related procedures, market entry requirements and how to overcome related obstacles) and sociocultural advice in different EU Member States, for which diaspora could play a determining role. Speakers also noted the need to expand start up visa pathways, harmonize definitions to more effectively profile, and target potential successful entrepreneurs and to support them with information on visa pathways, capital requirement, and offer start up protection. In this regard, diaspora groups and associations could facilitate short business travels, networking events and provide information regarding various incubator and accelerator programmes to support migrant entrepreneurs.
- › The importance of building partnerships with various higher education institutions and private sector actors to build alumni network and business networks was particularly emphasized to enhance the role of diaspora in talent partnerships. Various good practices and lessons learnt from the education sector may have the potential to be replicated in the context of diaspora supporting tal-

3. For example, representative from the private sector (Olive Group) mentioned about the different induction and onboarding [services available](#) on their platform for new employees.

ent mobility partnerships between Ireland and India. For example, the support offered by UCD alumni 1/to new graduates in search of employment opportunities, and 2/ inter-cultural competency training provided to foreign students, may be models worth replicating by diaspora groups and associations.

› Additionally, envisioning that the talent partnerships would foster circular migration, some of the successful Irish initiatives targeting diaspora and return migrants were mentioned and highlighted (described in the box below).

Emigrant Support Program: The Irish government's Emigrant Support Programme (ESP) is a policy instrument that provides financial support to organisations engaged in the delivery of frontline advisory services and community care to Irish emigrants, particularly the more vulnerable and marginalised members of the diaspora, such as the elderly.

Back for Business is an initiative to foster and support entrepreneurial activity among returned emigrants or those returning to live in Ireland. The development programme is aimed at assisting them to start and develop a business. It addresses the challenges that all early stage entrepreneurs face, with a particular focus on the additional barriers and challenges faced by those who have been out of the country for some time.

Concluding Remarks

The virtual exchange highlighted several key observations on the evolution of the India-Ireland migration corridor, contributions of Indian diaspora in Ireland- especially in the health, education and ICT sector and about various integration measures available in Ireland. Moreover, various recommendations and action-based findings that could feed into the integration efforts of Ireland were presented, including the necessity of an induction pack for newly arriving migrants, guide on employment of non-EU nationals for Irish employers and prospective employees and the need for further support and professionalization of diaspora initiatives. In the second half of the virtual

discussion, the role of diaspora members in fostering talent partnerships was explored offering concrete examples of ways in which they could be involved. The involvement of diaspora to enhance mobility pathways and to build partnerships and institutional capacities in both country of origin and country of destination could be key to the success of talent partnerships. The discussions need to continue among all actors and the above points will help both the Irish and Indian authorities improve mobility and migration as well as integration efforts of non-EU nationals.



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