



**'France, Ireland's nearest neighbour in Europe':
Celebrating a unique friendship on the European stage**
Iveagh House, Friday 31st March 2023

Programme

Time	Topic	Speaker / Participants
9-9.15am	Registration and refreshments	
9.15-9.30am	Welcome	Dr Eamon Maher, Director, National Centre for Franco-Irish Studies, TU Dublin
9.30-10am	Official Opening	Joe Hackett, Secretary General, Department of Foreign Affairs
10-10.30am	<u>Plenary 1</u> : 'A Life in French'	Grace Neville, Emeritus Professor of French, University College Cork
10.30-11am	<u>Plenary 2</u> : 'The Minister requests the Pleasure': Early Franco-Irish diplomatic dining in Iveagh House	Dr Elaine Mahon, Assistant Director, National Centre for Franco-Irish Studies, TU Dublin
11-11.15am	Question and Answers	
11-15-11.30am	Refreshments	
11.30-12.45pm	<u>Round Table 1</u> : 'A Unique Friendship' as seen through diplomatic relations, legislation, education and literature' Chair: Mr Martin Doyle (<i>The Irish Times</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former Taoiseach Brian Cowen • Irish Ambassador to France HE Niall Burgess • Former Ambassador to France Rory Montgomery • Executive Editor of the Royal Irish Academy's Documents on Irish Foreign Policy Dr Michael Kennedy • Dr Brian A. Murphy, TU Dublin • Sinéad Mac Aodha (Literature Ireland)
12.45-13.45pm	Lunch	
13.45-14.15pm	<u>Plenary 3</u> Charles de Gaulle and Ireland	Dr Pierre Joannon (MRIA), Honorary Consul General of Ireland in the south of France
14.15-14.45pm	<u>Plenary 4</u> : The making of liberal democracy in the EU: Social evolution in France and Ireland	Catherine Maignant, Emeritus Professor of Irish Studies, University of Lille
14.45-15.05pm	Questions and Answers	
15.05-15.20pm	Refreshments	
15.20-16.50pm	<u>Round Table 2</u> : 'Where to from here?' Sustainability, the environment, tourism and finance Chair: Dr Sarah Nolan, President, Association of Franco-Irish Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French Ambassador to Ireland HE M. Vincent Guérend • Minister for Transport and Minister for Environment, Climate, Communications and Transport Eamon Ryan • Professor Michael Cronin (Trinity College Dublin) • Head of Representation in Ireland (European Commission) Barbara Nolan • Mark Henry, Head of University Communications and Marketing, TU Dublin
16.50-17.20pm	<i>Faire le point</i> – remarks on the day	French Ambassador to Ireland Son Excellence M. Vincent Guérend Irish Ambassador to France HE Niall Burgess
17.20-17.30pm	Concluding comments and thanks	Dr Eamon Maher

Round Table 1

Brian Cowen, from Clara in Co. Offaly, was first elected to Dáil Éireann in 1984 after the sudden death of his father Ber, who was TD for Laois-Offaly. Albert Reynolds appointed him to his initial cabinet position, Minister for Labour, in 1992, after which he served in many ministerial positions, most notably Health and Children (1997-2000), Foreign Affairs (2000-2004), at a time when there were intense negotiations on the Northern Ireland Peace Process and Ireland secured a place on the UN Security Council. Brian was Minister for Finance from 2004-2008. His years as Taoiseach and Leader of Fianna Fáil (2008-2011) were notable for the arrival of the Troika and the subsequent bailout of the banks. Brian was renowned for his quick wit in the Dáil chamber and his intense loyalty to the Fianna Fáil party.

Niall Burgess took up his post as Ambassador to France in 2021. Prior to this, he served for over seven years as the Secretary General of the Department of Foreign Affairs, the highest-ranked diplomatic position in the Department of Foreign Affairs. This period coincided with a the largest every expansion of Ireland's diplomatic network, from 80 to 96 missions.

Ambassador Burgess has spent a large part of his career working on Ireland-UK relations, particularly on Northern Ireland. From 2010 to 2014, he worked as the Director General of the Anglo-Irish division and, prior to this, as Ireland's Consul General in New York. He has also served at Ireland's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva where he was Director for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs and as Head of the Task Force at the Policy Unit of the EU Council Secretariat in Brussels where he worked with EU High Representative Javier Solana from 1997-1999. He is an archaeologist by training.

Rory Montgomery was an official of the Department of Foreign Affairs from 1983 to 2019, serving as Permanent Representative to the European Union, Ambassador to France, and Second Secretary General at the Departments of the Taoiseach and Foreign Affairs. He is now Chair of the Press Council of Ireland, an honorary professor at the Mitchell Institute, Queen's University, Belfast, and a member of the *Conseil de la Fondation Irlandaise*, Paris. He is an *Officier de la Légion d'Honneur* and a member of the Royal Irish Academy.

Dr Michael Kennedy is the Executive Editor of the Royal Irish Academy's *Documents on Irish Foreign Policy* (DIFP) series. In addition to editing thirteen volumes of DIFP (running from 1919-1969) he has published widely for almost 30 years on Irish diplomatic, political and military history. His most recent books include *The Emergency: A visual history of the Irish Defence Forces, 1939-1945* (with Comdt Daniel Ayiotis and Dr John Gibney) (2019); *Ireland: A voice amongst the nations* (with Dr John Gibney and Dr Kate O'Malley) (2019) and *Ireland, the United Nations and the Congo* (with Comdt Art Magennis) (2014). Michael also appears on radio and television and talks regularly to a wide variety of audiences on aspects of modern Irish history. Recently Michael was involved in the centenary commemoration of the negotiation of the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty and he is currently working on projects concerning the 2023 centenary of Ireland's admission to the League of Nations in 1923.

Dr Brian Murphy - PhD [NUI], PGDip (University Teaching and Learning) - is a lecturer in the School of Hospitality Management and Tourism, City Campus, Technological University Dublin. Brian earned his doctorate in Modern Irish History from the School of History and Archives, University College Dublin. Brian's monograph *Forgotten Patriot: Douglas Hyde and the Foundation of the Irish Presidency* was published in 2016 by the Collins Press. He previously co-edited *Brian Lenihan: In Calm and Crisis*, the 2014 best-selling book on the public career of the former Minister for Finance. Brian's latest book, *From Whence I Came: The Kennedy Legacy, Ireland and America*, co-edited with Professor Donnacha Ó Beacháin, was published in 2021 by the Irish Academic Press. Brian is a director of the Kennedy Summer School, New Ross.

Sinéad Mac Aodha is the Executive Director of Literature Ireland, the organisation which promotes the literature of Ireland abroad, primarily through translation. Recent projects in Literature Ireland include editing an anthology of short stories from Ireland for publication in Egypt and an anthology of poetry for publication in Georgia. Sinéad moderates Literature Ireland's podcast series, *Talking Translations*, which presents work by Irish writers and their translators in their own voices.

She served as the Director of the Centre Culturel Irlandais from 2016–2017. She is currently a member of the steering committee for the Franco-Irish Literature Festival and of the management committee of Dublin UNESCO City of Literature. She recently served as the Irish expert on the European Union OMC Working Group on Translation and Multilingualism. Sinéad sits on the jury for the Rooney Prize. In 2016, she was made a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Government for her contribution to Franco-Irish cultural relations.



Round Table 2

Vincent Guérend has been French Ambassador to Ireland since September 2020. His previous posts focused on European Affairs and Asia. He spent twelve years in the EU institutions (European Commission and European External Action Service, EEAS, the latter as EU Ambassador to Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam) and then fulfilled several roles in the French diplomatic service. He was the first deputy secretary general for Franco-German cooperation in 2003-2004 following the creation of joint Franco-German cabinet meetings in 2003. He started his professional career in the French Ministry for foreign affairs in the EU Department, working on the internal market and the eurozone (1997-1999). He had special responsibility for the 2000-2006 financial framework and for the negotiation of the Nice Treaty during the French Presidency of the EU council (2000).

Vincent is an alumnus of the ENA (Ecole Nationale d'Administration). He holds an MBA (Diplom-Kaufmann) from the wissenschaftliche Hochschule für Unternehmensführung Otto-Beisheim Hochschule Koblenz and is a graduate of the Institut d'Etudes politiques de Paris and of the Ecole de Management de Lyon.

Eamon Ryan is leader of the Green Party and has been the Minister for Transport and the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications since June 2020, when the Greens went into Government with Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael. He was first elected to Dáil Éireann in 2002 and was re-elected in 2007 when the Green Party formed a coalition government with Fianna Fáil and the Progressive Democrats, Ryan being appointed Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

Prior to his career in politics, Ryan set up a cycling tourism company, Irish Cycling Safaris, in the late 1980s and in 1996 he won the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year award.

In recent years he has worked for a European climate organisation and chaired the digital policy group in the Institute of International and European Affairs.

Michael Cronin is 1776 Professor of French in Trinity College Dublin and Senior Researcher in the Trinity Centre for Literary and Cultural Translation. Among his recently published titles are *Eco-Translation: Translation and Ecology in the Age of the Anthropocene* (Routledge, 2017), *Irish and Ecology: An Ghaeilge agus an Éiceolaíocht* (FÁS, 2019) and *Eco-Travel: Journeying in the Age of the Anthropocene* (Cambridge University Press, 2022). He is a Member of the Royal Irish Academy, the Academia Europaea, an Officier in the Ordre des Palmes Académiques and a Fellow of Trinity College Dublin. He is a former Irish Language Literature Advisor to the Arts Council of Ireland and former Chairperson of Poetry Ireland.

Barbara Nolan is Head of the European Commission Representation in Ireland since 16 May 2021. She previously served in this position from 2010-2016. Prior to this, she was in charge of Fundamental Rights Policy in the Justice and Consumers Directorate General, European Commission.

Barbara has spent most of her career at the Commission in Brussels, where she has held a number of management positions, including the coordination of Erasmus+ programmes, the reform and modernisation of Higher Education, Anti-Discrimination Policy, Communications and Media. She was the European Commission's Spokesperson for Employment, Social Affairs and Health matters as well as for Justice and Home Affairs from 1993 to 1999.

Barbara is a graduate of University College Dublin and the College of Europe, Bruges, Belgium.

Mark Henry has recently taken up the role as Head of University Communications & Marketing at Technological University Dublin. He previously served as the Director of Central Marketing and Sustainability at Tourism Ireland, the all-island body responsible for promoting overseas tourism to the island of Ireland. Mark had Director-level responsibility for providing strategic direction and leadership in sustainability matters and for raising the profile for the sustainability agenda internally and externally. He authored the organisation's Sustainability Action Plans, chaired Tourism Ireland's internal Sustainability Taskforce, and was a member of the Sustainable Tourism Working Group of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. He is the author of the best-selling book *In Fact: An Optimist's Guide to Ireland at 100*.



Chairs

Dr Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire is a senior lecturer at Technological University Dublin, chef, culinary historian, broadcaster and ballad singer. Co-founder and chair of the Dublin Gastronomy Symposium, he also chairs the Masters in Gastronomy and Food Studies in TU Dublin. He co-edited *'Tickling the Palate': Gastronomy in Irish Literature and Culture* (Peter Lang: 2014), 'The Food Issue' of *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* (2018), and in 2021, guest edited a special issue of *Folk Life* on Irish food ways. Máirtín also co-edits the *European Journal of Food Drink and Society*. In both 2021 and 2022, he was awarded the Research Ally Prize by the Irish Research Council.

Martin Doyle is Books Editor of *The Irish Times*, which he joined in 2007. His career in journalism began in London, where he spent nine years at *The Irish Post*, finishing up as Editor, then five years at *The Times*. He edited *A History of The Irish Post* (2000) to mark its 30th anniversary. His first book, *Dirty Linen: The Troubles in My Parish*, will be published by Merrion Press in October 2023. He also has contributed chapters to *The Routledge Handbook on the Northern Irish Conflict and Peace Process* (forthcoming) and *The 32: An Anthology of Irish Working-class Voices* (Unbound, 2021). He has an MA in French and German from the University of St Andrews and taught for a year in Bourgoin-Jallieu, Isère. He is on the board of Literature Ireland, which funds and promotes Irish literature in translation.

Dr Eamon Maher is Director of the National Centre for Franco-Irish Studies in TU Dublin and the founding member and President (2005-2020) of AFIS (Association of Franco-Irish Studies). His main research interests are the centuries-old links between France and Ireland, particularly in relation to expressions of Catholic identity in fiction, existentialism and cultural theory. Eamon is General editor of two book series with Peter Lang Oxford, *Reimagining Ireland* (119 books in print) and *Studies in Franco-Irish Relations* (19 books in print). He has edited and co-edited 25 books and published 4 monographs. He is currently working on a book on the Catholic Novel as well as writing a monograph in English on the French priest-writer Jean Sullivan (1913-1980), on whom he has published extensively.

Dr Sarah Nolan is President of AFIS (Association of Franco-Irish Studies) and a lecturer in Urban, American, and Contemporary Anglophone and Irish Literature at the Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT, Dun Laoghaire), Dublin. She was awarded a research fellowship at the National Centre for Franco-Irish Studies in TU Dublin, where she completed a doctoral thesis which analysed interconnections between the works of several city poets including Charles Baudelaire, Fernando Pessoa, T.S. Eliot and contemporary Irish poet Peter Sirr. A particular focus was on the role of woman or other within the city space. Sarah has published a number of chapters on these and other poets, including Paula Meehan and Doireann Ní Ghríofa, and has co-edited a collection, *Sounding the Margins*, in the *Studies in Franco-Irish Relations* series.



Plenaries

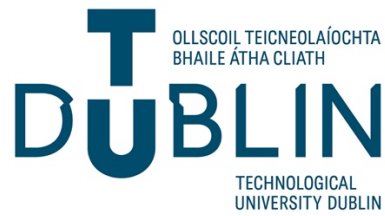
Grace Neville is a graduate (French and Irish) of UCC and of the universities of Caen and Lille. She is professor emeritus of French at UCC where she was also VP for Teaching and Learning. Since 2011, she has been a member of numerous French state committees working on the transformation of higher education in France. These include committees at the French Ministry for Higher Education, the French National Research Agency and the universities of Grenoble-Alpes, Aix-Marseille, Rennes, Cergy Paris as well as Sorbonne Université where she chairs the Strategic Orientation Committee. She is a Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, an Officier des Palmes Académiques, vice-chair of the Irish branch of the Légion d'Honneur, President of AMOPA Irlande, VP of the Alliance Française de Cork and an evaluator for the European Commission. Her research focuses on Franco-Irish links from the medieval to the modern period.

Elaine Mahon is Assistant Director of the National Centre for Franco-Irish Studies and Editor of the Journal of Franco-Irish Studies. She lectures in gastronomy and food studies at the School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology at TU Dublin. She is on the organising committee of the Dublin Gastronomy Symposium and is a trustee of the Oxford Food Symposium. A bilingual French/English speaker, her PhD focused on diplomatic dining, diplomatic protocol and state entertainment by Irish Ministers for External Affairs between 1922 and 1963. She has published and spoken widely on dining in international relations. Her main research interests are Irish food history, French gastronomy, diplomacy and material culture. She is currently preparing a monograph entitled 'The Minister requests the pleasure: Irish diplomatic dining, 1922-1963' for publication by Peter Lang, as well as 'Setting the Irish State Table: Material Culture in Irish Diplomacy' for publication by EUT+ Academic Press.

Pierre Joannon, Doctor of Law, historian, and one of the foremost specialists in France on the subject of Ireland. He is the author of many highly regarded books, including *Histoire de l'Irlande et des Irlandais* and of the only biographies in French of Michael Collins and John Hume. Founder of the French scholarly journal *Études Irlandaises* and of the Ireland Fund of France, he has been Honorary Consul General of Ireland in the South of France since 1973. Awarded Honorary Doctorates by the National University of Ireland and the University of Ulster, he received one of the first annual Presidential Distinguished Service Awards for the Irish Abroad for his commitment to strengthening Franco-Irish relations. He is also a member of the Royal Irish Academy.

Catherine Mignant is professor emeritus of Irish studies at the university of Lille. She was president of the French Association of Irish studies (SOFEIR) and of the European Federation of Associations and Centres of Irish Studies (EFACIS) for a number of years. After writing a PhD on early medieval Irish Christianity, she now specializes in contemporary Irish religious history. Her research interests include the response of the Catholic Church to secularization, interreligious dialogue, Celtic Christianity and the religious aspects of globalization. She has published widely in all these areas.





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