



The White House Conference for Trade and Investment in Ireland

Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland

Washington, D.C. • May 24, 25 and 26, 1995



TRADE PROMOTION COORDINATING COMMITTEE

The Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC) is an interagency task force created as a vehicle for more effective and cooperative U.S. Government export promotion efforts. In 1992, Congress passed the Export Enhancement Act which strengthened the TPCC's mandate by providing it status in law. The Act also assigned the group the fundamental responsibility of coordinating all U.S. Government export promotion and finance activities, and developing a government-wide strategic plan for federal trade promotion.

Chaired by Commerce Secretary Ronald H. Brown, the TPCC membership includes the Departments of Commerce, State, Treasury, Defense, Interior, Agriculture, Labor, Transportation, and Energy, as well as the Office of Management and Budget, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, Council of Economic Advisors, Environmental Protection Agency, Small Business Administration, Agency for International Development, Export-Import Bank of the United States, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, U.S. Trade and Development Agency, and the U.S. Information Agency.

The TPCC's strategic plan, first set forth in Toward a National Export Strategy, was announced by President Clinton on September 29, 1993. It set out 65 specific recommendations to create a more efficient, effective, and customer-oriented trade promotion plan designed to dramatically boost U.S. exports and create millions of jobs. On October 5, 1994, Secretary of Commerce Ronald H. Brown released the TPCC's second annual report to Congress. The National Export Strategy describes the progress that the TPCC agencies have made implementing the recommendations from 1993, lays out some future directions, and proposes a framework for the development of a unified budget for federal export promotion activities.

The TPCC is responsible for preparing an annual report to Congress, as well as periodic status reports detailing the progress made in upgrading the U.S. Government trade promotion network. For individuals interested in the recommendations detailed in the TPCC's first report, Toward a National Export Strategy, please contact the TPCC Secretariat.

The 1994 annual report, The National Export Strategy is available from the Government Printing Office at telephone (202) 512-1800.

TPCC Secretariat
Room 3051
International Trade Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, DC 20230

Telephone: (202) 482-5455



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OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ADVISOR TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ECONOMIC INITIATIVES IN IRELAND

The Office of the Special Advisor to the President and the Secretary of State for Economic Initiatives in Ireland was created in January 1995 to support the activities of former Senate Majority leader George Mitchell. President Clinton appointed Senator Mitchell as a part-time, unpaid Special Advisor on December 1, 1994. Senator Mitchell began his work as Special Advisor on January 10 of this year.

The Office of the Special Advisor works closely with offices in the State Department and other U.S. government agencies, in particular the National Security Council and the Department of Commerce, to coordinate implementation of the economic initiatives announced by the White House on November 1, 1994. The Office is eager to meet with those interested in the economic development of Northern Ireland and the six border counties of the Republic of Ireland.

Planning for the White House Conference for Trade and Investment in Ireland has been the principal task of the Office of the Special Advisor. As Senator Mitchell has said, the Conference "is not the end but rather the beginning of a sustained effort to encourage business development." The Office will be engaged in the follow-on activities that emerge from the Conference to sustain American interest and involvement in an effort, in the words President Clinton used when he appointed Senator Mitchell as Special Advisor, "to ensure implementation of all initiatives [and] to explore additional opportunities for helping peace and prosperity grow in Ireland."

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS

FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE

Food Industries Division

Trade and Investment Program. This program encourages and assists private and public sector involvement in the agricultural and agribusiness development in selected regions and countries. Program efforts focus on information collection and dissemination by the Agribusiness Information Center, trade and investment promotion and facilitation through the organization of business, trade, and investment opportunity missions, participation in trade shows, and the provision of workshops, seminars, and technical assistance related to food marketing, grades and standards, quality control, packaging, business planning and other technical issues. The Program maintains contact with thousands of various food and fiber producing and trading firms. Projects in the last few years concentrated primarily on Central European, Latin American, and selected Asian and African countries.

The Trade and Investment Program has had some experience in working with the business community of Ireland. Following a mandate of the 1985 Farm Bill--to develop and increase linkages and joint ventures between American and Irish companies-- two business opportunity missions were organized to the Republic of Ireland in 1989 and 1991. These missions were small, participants had highly specialized interests. The missions had mixed results. Some technical assistance in the wood/forest management area, and sales of U.S. food ingredients and Irish dairy and products followed. Follow up missions were not developed due to the relatively low level of interest by the Irish hosts, and staff resource limitations in USDA. Unless additional funds are allocated, no business matching mission is being planned for Ireland in 1995/1996.

Research and Scientific Exchanges Division

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry of the Republic of Ireland have been working together since 1986 to foster cooperation in the field of agriculture and agribusiness. The core of the program is building on the strong people-to-people ties between the

agricultural communities in Ireland and the United States. The program emphasizes agricultural science and technology and agribusiness development.

The U.S.-Ireland Agricultural Cooperation Program was authorized in Section 1420 of the 1985 Farm Bill, which was written by Edward Madigan, then a Member of Congress and later Secretary of Agriculture. The program has grown and broadened considerably since its modest beginnings in 1986. It enjoys strong support from both the U.S. and Irish agricultural communities. From the outset, the program has been based on the concept that its activities should be of mutual benefit and interest to both nations. USDA receives \$225,000 annually in appropriated funds to implement the program. Those funds support five major ongoing activities, four of which are cost-shared with participating scientists or their institutions.

- Scientific and Technical Exchanges

Each year since 1986, U.S. and Irish scientists have participated in short-term (1-6 week) exchange visits to collect and exchange information or to conduct experiments with counterparts. These scientists, who are selected from university and Government laboratories, are awarded travel grants based on the scientific strength of their proposals.

Some of the most successful visits by U.S. specialists have helped improved pasture management, control of animal diseases, reproduction of livestock, or the collection unique plant germplasm for U.S. breeding programs. Since 1986 approximately 80 U.S. teams have visited Ireland and 60 Irish teams have visited the United States on short-term exchange visits.

- Collaborative Research

If a scientific or technical problem is especially important to U.S. and Irish agriculture, USDA and Ireland may provide catalytic funding for longer term, collaborative research projects. These projects often evolve out of short-term exchange visits. They pair U.S. and Irish researchers to work together on a highly structured research plan up to three years.

Five such projects are currently being funded: improving milk products through milk bioprocessing research, combatting paratuberculosis, better understanding of ammonium uptake by plants, fish diseases vaccines, and assessing beef carcass quality.

- Special Workshops

Occasionally, USDA and Ireland cosponsor workshops on issues of high scientific interest to both nations. The first workshop, which took place in September 1992, studied applications of biotechnology to solving disease problems in fish and

shellfish aquaculture. A second workshop in March 1994, addressed an integrated approach to assuring the microbiological safety of meat and poultry (HACCP). A third, planned for December 1995, will examine the state of technology in the United States and the European Union in the production of liquid bio-fuels and electricity from biomass.

- The Agribusiness Associates Internship Program

In September 1991, USDA began an Agribusiness Associates Internship Program designed to develop long-term linkages through people-to-people ties and to promote U.S. competitiveness abroad. This program allows exceptional U.S. graduate students interested in careers in agribusiness to spend a term working in an Irish agribusiness firm. The program provides the student with first-hand experience in international business, and knowledge of Ireland as a gateway to export opportunities in the European Union. To date, students have been placed in firms like the Limmerick Food Centre, Golden Vale, and Avonmore Foods.

- Agribusiness Opportunity Missions

As discussed earlier, USDA, through the Trade and Investment Program, has organized agribusiness opportunity missions to help U.S. businesses to form linkages with Irish firms. During these missions, U.S. business leaders, who pay their own travel expenses, meet with prospective partners and learn about the Irish business environment. Agribusiness opportunity missions are organized depending on interest in the U.S. and Irish business communities.



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U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) was created in 1953 as an independent agency of the federal government to aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small business concerns, to preserve free competitive enterprise, and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of our nation. Small business is critical to our economic prosperity, to building America's future, and to helping the United States compete in today's global marketplace.

The SBA has several programs available that could be copied by the Irish Government and implemented to help the Irish economy.

Programs and Contacts:

- o Business Information Centers (BIC) provide the latest in high-tech telecommunications systems. Contact Monica Harrison, (202) 205-6665.
- o Women's Prequalification Loan Program provides women business owners a pre-authorization loan guaranty. Contact Elizabeth Myers, (202) 205-6673.
- o LowDoc: Is a one page application for loans under \$100,000, which relies on the applicants' character and credit history. Contact Mike Dowd, (202) 205-6570.
- o 7(a) authorizes the SBA to guarantee loans to small businesses when financing is unavailable through normal banking channels. Contact John Cox, (202) 205-6490.
- o SBIC: Private venture capital firms licensed by SBA to make equity investments and long term loans to small businesses with U.S. government guaranteed debt or participating securities. Contact Robert Stillman, (202) 205-6510.

- o SBDC: A cooperative effort of the private sector, the educational community, and federal, state and local governments who offer one-stop guidance, technical assistance and general information. Contact Johnnie Albertson, (202) 205-6766.

Arthur DeCoursey
Director, Intergovernmental Affairs
Small Business Administration
Tel: (202) 205-6935
Fax: (202) 205-6832



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THE EXPORT-IMPORT BANK OF THE UNITED STATES

The Export-Import Bank of the United States (Ex-Im Bank) is an independent U.S. Government agency that helps finance the overseas sales of U.S. goods and services. During its 60 years, Ex-Im Bank has supported more than \$290 billion in U.S. exports.

What is Ex-Im Bank's Mission?

Ex-Im Bank's mission is to create jobs through exports. It guarantees both working capital loans for U.S. exporters and the repayment of loans by foreign purchasers of U.S. goods and services. Ex-Im also provides credit insurance that protects U.S. exporters against the risks of non-payment by foreign buyers for political or commercial reasons. The Bank does not compete with commercial lenders, but assumes the risks they cannot accept. It always must have a reasonable assurance of repayment.

What can Ex-Im Bank provide?

Ex-Im Bank helps provide a level playing field for U.S. exporters by countering the export credit subsidies of other governments. It also provides financing to creditworthy foreign buyers when private financing is unavailable. To qualify for Ex-Im Bank support, the product or service must have at least 50 percent U.S. content and must not adversely affect the U.S. economy.

Ex-Im Bank supports the sales of U.S. exports worldwide. In recent years, its focus has shifted to the developing nations whose economies are growing at twice the rate of the industrial nations.

The Bank will finance the export of any type of goods or services, including commodities, as long as they are not militarily-related. Two of its major goals are to increase the export of environmental goods and services which are in strong demand among the developing nations, and to expand the number of U.S. small businesses using Ex-Im programs.

While Ex-Im Bank is not a foreign aid or development agency, its programs sometimes help U.S. exporters participate in development projects. Ex-Im Bank has co-financed projects with the U.S. Agency for international Development (USAID), the World Bank, and regional development banks, such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

What Programs Does Ex-Im Bank Offer?

- o **Working Capital Guarantees** cover 90 percent of the principal and interest on commercial loans to creditworthy small and medium-sized companies that need funds to produce or market U.S. goods or services for export. Exporters may apply for a Preliminary Commitment (PC) -- a letter from Ex-Im Bank outlining the terms and conditions under which it will provide a guarantee -- which can be used to obtain the best financing terms from a private lender. The lender also may apply directly for a final authorization. Guarantees may be for a single transaction or a revolving line of credit. Applications for guarantees under \$833,334 are processed by the Small Business Administration (SBA). There are no upper limits on Ex-Im Bank's guarantees. Guaranteed loans generally have maturities of 12 months and are renewable.

- o **Export Credit Insurance** policies protect against both the political and commercial risks of a foreign buyer defaulting on payment. Policies may be obtained for single or repetitive export sales and for leases. They generally cover 100 percent of the principal for political risks and 90-95 percent for commercial risks, as well as a specified amount of interest. Short-term policies are used to support the sale of consumer goods, raw materials and spare parts on terms of up to 180 days, and bulk agricultural commodities, consumer durables, and capital goods on terms of up to 360 days.

Capital goods may be insured for up to 5 years, depending upon the contract value, under the medium-term policy.

Ex-Im Bank's credit insurance allows exporters to finance receivables more easily by assigning the proceeds of the policy to their lender.

- o **Loans and Guarantees**

Guarantees of commercial loans to foreign buyers of U.S. goods or services cover 100 percent of principal and interest against both political and commercial risks of nonpayment. Medium-term guarantees cover the sale of capital items such as trucks and construction equipment, scientific apparatus, food processing machinery, medical equipment, or project-related services--including architectural, industrial design, and engineering services. Long-term guarantees with repayment terms of over 7 years or

export value of greater than \$10 million, are available for major projects, large capital goods and/or project-related services. Ex-Im Bank's Credit Guarantee Facilities also can be used to extend medium-term credit to buyers of U.S. capital goods and services through banks in certain foreign markets.

Loans extended directly by Ex-Im Bank, provide foreign buyers with competitive, fixed-rate financing for their purchases from the United States. Ex-Im Bank's loans and guarantees cover 85 percent of the contract price (100 percent of the financed portion). The foreign buyer is required to make a 15 percent cash payment. The fee charged by Ex-Im Bank is based on the risk assessment of the foreign buyer or guarantor, the buyer's country, and term of the credit. Ex-Im Bank's fees are competitive with those charged by the export credit agencies of other countries.

Exporters can obtain an Ex-Im Bank Letter of Interest (LI) to assist in negotiations with a potential foreign buyer. The LI indicates the Bank's willingness to consider a financing offer if a sale is completed. An LI can be issued within seven days of a request for financing and remains in effect for six months.

- o **Project Finance** is a type of financing where repayment is based on the cash flow from the project rather than a sovereign guarantee of the debt. Demand for such financing in developing countries has soared in recent years, stemming from foreign governments' emphasis on privatization, need to reduce sovereign debt obligations, and projections of unprecedented economic growth in emerging markets.

Ex-Im Bank's newly formed Project Finance Division offers, where appropriate, the maximum financing support allowed within the international arrangement, to include:

- * Financing of interest accrued during construction related to the Ex-Im Bank financing facilities
- * Financing of host country local costs of up to 15% of the U.S. contract value
- * Maximum repayment term allowed under the international guidelines

There are no minimum or maximum size limitations on these projects. The Bank makes available any combination of either direct loans or guarantees for commercial bank loans with political risk only or comprehensive coverage. There are no predetermined equity requirements. Exposure fees will vary depending on the risk assessment of the project. Ex-Im Bank will give a preliminary indication of support, called a Preliminary Project Letter (PPL), 45 days from the date evaluation begins by an outside consultant.

EX-IM BANK's POLICY FOR IRELAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Financing assistance for U.S. exports to the public and private sectors in Ireland and Northern Ireland is available, without restriction, under all Ex-Im Bank loan, guarantee, and insurance programs.

Where to Apply for Ex-Im Bank Programs

Ex-Im Bank's programs are easily accessible. Any responsible party--the foreign buyer, the U.S. exporter, a lending institution, or a firm representing either the buyer or the exporter--can apply directly to Ex-Im Bank for an LI. Potential borrowers may also obtain assistance in applying for financing at any Ex-Im Bank office or one of the U.S. Export Assistance Centers (USEAC) listed below. USEACs are one-stop centers for the services of the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Ex-Im Bank, the U.S. Small Business Administration, and other export-related federal and state agencies.

Baltimore USEAC

Telephone: (410) 962-9539, Fax: (410) 962-4529

Miami USEAC

Telephone: (305) 526-7425, Fax: (305) 526-7435

Chicago USEAC

Telephone: (312) 353-8040, Fax: (312) 353-8120

Long Beach, CA USEAC

Telephone: (310)980-4550, Fax: (310) 980-4561

Further information about Ex-Im Bank programs may be obtained from U.S. embassies or consulates and state governments participating in the Ex-Im Bank City/State Program, or by contacting:

Export-Import Bank of the United States

811 Vermont Avenue, N.W.

Washington, DC 10571

Telex: (TRT) 197681 EXIM UT

U.S. Toll Free Number: 1-800-565-EXIM* (*auto-attendant)

Worldwide Number: (202) 565-3946*

Main Fax Number: (202) 565-3380

Electronic Bulletin Board: (202) 565-3835

Business Development Group: (202) 565-3900

Domestic Business Development: FAX (202) 565-3932

International Business Development: FAX (202) 565-3931

Seminar Information: 1-800 or (202)565-EXIM (565-3946)*

TDD: (202) 565-3377

Regional Offices:

New York, NY: (212) 466-2950, fax (212) 466-2959

Miami, FL: (305) 526-7425, fax (305) 526-7435

Chicago, IL: (312) 353-8081, fax (312) 353-8098

Houston, TX: (713) 589-8182, fax (713) 589-8184

Los Angeles (El Segundo), CA: (310) 322-1152, fax (310) 322-2041



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OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION

OPIC encourages U.S. businesses to invest in developing countries and emerging market economies, creating U.S. jobs, exports, and promoting economic growth at home and abroad. With programs available in some 140 countries, OPIC fosters American global competitiveness by offering project financing, investment insurance and other investor services. OPIC programs became available in Northern Ireland and "affected areas" of Ireland under the Anglo-Irish Agreement Support Act of 1986. OPIC considers an investment's impact on the U.S. economy, the environment and rights of workers in the host country.

In fiscal year 1993, OPIC supported 79 projects representing U.S. investment of some \$3.7 billion worldwide. This included commitments for finance projects totaling \$415 million, and insurance sales volume of \$2.8 billion. More than \$1.6 billion in new U.S. exports resulted from these projects.

Finance Programs - Medium- to long-term financing for sound overseas investment projects is made available through loan guaranties and direct loans. Financing generally ranges from \$2 million to \$200 million and is available to U.S. companies and their eligible affiliates. OPIC's financing commitment may range from 50 percent of total project costs for new ventures and up to 75 percent for expansion of existing successful operations, with final maturities of 5-12 years or more. Additionally, OPIC is supporting a family of privately managed direct investment funds in various regions and business sectors, including Russia, Poland, Africa, Asia-Pacific, Israel and the Environmental sector.

Investment Insurance - OPIC offers a number of programs to insure U.S. investments in emerging markets and developing countries against the risks of (1) **currency inconvertibility** - the inability to convert profits, debt service and other investment remittances from local currency into U.S. dollars; (2) **expropriation** - loss of an investment due to expropriation, nationalization, or confiscation by a foreign government; and (3) **political violence** - loss of assets or income due to war, revolution, insurrection or civil strife. Coverage is available for new investments and for investments to expand or modernize existing operations.

Equity, debt, loan guaranties, leases and most other forms of long term investment can be insured. Special programs are also available for contractors and exporters and oil and gas projects.

Overseas Private Investment Corporation
Information Officer

1100 New York Avenue, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20527

Tel. (202) 336-8799

FAX (202) 408-5155

Printed material is available via fax (202) 336-8700



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U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Study on Business Opportunities for U.S. Firms in the Transportation and Environment Sectors in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of the Republic of Ireland

The U.S. Trade and Development Agency (TDA), an independent agency of the U.S. federal government, provides grants that assist in the planning stage of infrastructure and industrial projects in middle-income and developing countries. Through the funding of feasibility studies, orientation visits, training grants, and various forms of technical assistance, TDA facilitates partnerships between American companies and foreign entities.

TDA recently sponsored a technical delegation to Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland in support of the White House Conference for Trade and Investment in Ireland. The delegation met with more than 100 public sector officials and business leaders to identify 20-35 projects valued at more than \$300 million with potential for U.S. exports.

Consisting of specialists in finance and trade from the Washington, D.C.-based consulting firm of Louis Berger International Inc., the team identified a variety of promising business opportunities in the transportation sector. They include railways, urban transport (bus and other), shipping, aviation/airports, ports and facilities, and roads/haulage. Key business opportunities identified in the environmental services field include: water supply and water sewerage treatment, landfill/solid waste management, environmental consulting services, and "environmentally-friendly" products.

Between 200 and 35 projects or program areas have been identified by the technical team as opportunities for U.S. companies to invest, joint venture, or sell products and/or services. These opportunities range from large private-public partnerships in water treatment plants (worth more than \$15 million) to smaller consulting type services (less than \$50,000) for environmental audits and transportation design.

The potential range of business opportunities by type of activity is:

<u>Business Activity</u>	<u>Number of Potential Projects</u>
o Consulting Services/Products	10 - 15
o Private-Public Partnerships (e.g., BOO, BOT)	5 - 10
o Private Company Partnerships/Joint Ventures	5 - 10

Various forms of financing are available from both U.S. (e.g. Export-Import Bank) and European sources (e.g. Bank of Ireland and European Union). In the case of the latter, there are a number of restrictions on the terms of the loans and the willingness to contract with wholly-owned U.S. interests. For example, the Bank of Ireland and other banks in the region will provide 7 year loans to U.S. firms and joint ventures at concessionary rates of 4 to 5 percent. These would not, however, be suitable for private-public infrastructure projects that would typically last for 20-30 years.

The European Union also provides funding for large public investments (such as road construction) in which U.S. firms can bid their engineering design and supervision services. This funding is available to U.S. firms. The chances of winning bids is greatly increased by having an Irish (or another European firm) as the lead contractor.

The U.S. Trade and Development Agency is preparing a publication for the White House Conference outlining business opportunities, key contacts, and organizations in the region. This publication also will identify export and investment opportunities including project profiles, financing options, and sector specific information (such as regulations, laws, and business incentives.)

U.S. Trade and Development Agency
Room 309, SA-16
Washington, DC 20523-1602
Tel: (703) 875-4357
FAX: (703) 875-4009



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U.S. INFORMATION AGENCY

USIA Economics/Business Programs in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties

All programs supported by the United States Information Agency (USIA) in Northern Ireland and the border counties of the Republic of Ireland are jointly coordinated by the overseas branch of USIA, the United States Information Service (USIS) London and USIS Dublin, with strong emphasis on cross-community ties and fostering long-term mutual understanding.

Office of International Visitors:

U.S. Embassy London, U.S. Embassy Dublin, and U.S. Consulate General Belfast officials invite established or potential leaders in the field of business and economics to travel to the United States to participate in individual programs, single country projects, and multi-regional projects. Programs allow participants to confer with professional counterparts in the U.S. and gain a deeper understanding of U.S. culture and values. Examples of business-related programming include the recent program of Lord Mayor Smythe of Belfast and Lord Mayor Gromley of Dublin, who travelled together to the United States to encourage joint U.S.-Irish business ventures in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

USIA's Office of Voluntary Visitor programs works closely with private sector organizations to plan programs for foreign visitors to the United States in the areas of government, economics, and community development. The first Voluntary Visitor project for border counties community workers arrived in the U.S. in October, 1994. Planned by USIS Dublin and US Consulate General Belfast, paid for by the International Fund for Ireland, and programmed by USIA's Office of Voluntary Visitors, this project has brought over 30 grantees to the U.S. in five groups for two-week professional tours. Topics include a wide range of community development issues, for example: domestic violence, youth counseling, early childhood education, substance abuse, and working with the disabled.

Contacts for more information about these programs are:
USIS Dublin Public Affairs Officer Lynn Cassel, U.S. Embassy Dublin
USIS London Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer William Armbruster,
U.S. Embassy London

Office of Citizen Exchanges:

Grants are awarded annually by competition to U.S. institutions to conduct exchange programs in a variety of fields between organizations with common program interests. Citizen Exchange programs bring groups of individuals from Ireland and the U.K. to the U.S. for short-term programs, followed by a return component of U.S. citizens travelling to Ireland for complementary visits.

The Office of Citizen Exchanges is currently deliberating proposals which were submitted from a number of non-profit organizations for exchange programs addressing the issues of conflict/dispute resolution in Northern Ireland. RFP for projects in Conflict Resolution was issued in January 1995. A decision on funding for these proposals is expected in late April, 1995.

For more information about USIA's Citizen Exchange programs, contact *the European Division (202) 619-5319.*

Academic Exchange Programs:

Since the Fulbright Commission was founded in 1950 in the United Kingdom, over thirty-five students from Northern Ireland have been funded for study in the United States. Fields of study range from science to engineering and the arts. More recent programs have addressed business and management topics.

Potential candidates for Fulbright Academic Exchange programs can apply either through the Irish Fulbright Commission or the U.K. Fulbright Commission. Fulbright professors are placed at Northern Irish universities as well as universities in the Republic of Ireland.

The Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program arranges for up to five American teachers to exchange places with Northern Irish teachers each year.

Cultural Programs:

USIS London and USIS Dublin have begun expanding exchanges with the U.S. in cultural areas through small grants given to community arts organizations to promote exchange between artists and performers from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland with their American counterparts. For example, USIS London is working with the Ulster Folk Park to fund an American participant for the Belfast Folk Festival in August 1995.

The Ulster Folk Museum has participated in the Museum Partnership program, which facilitates exchange of Irish staffs with U.S. museums. Additionally, the arts organization Atlantic Bridges has worked closely with USIS Dublin and USIS London to foster cultural exchanges.

Worldnet Television:

USIA installed a TVRO satellite dish at the Consulate General in Belfast several years ago and has maintained an active program of interactive dialogues on a variety of subjects, including community theater and education. Worldnet, USIA's television network, acquires and produces many programs which explain and encourage business, trade and investment. Worldnet also produces and broadcasts interactive "Dialogue" programs which provide a forum for regional journalists and business people to discuss pressing issues with political and business leaders in the United States. Secretary of Commerce Ronald H. Brown participated in such an interactive dialogue in December 1994, in preparation for his attendance at the Belfast Investment Conference.



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NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY

The National Endowment for Democracy is a Congressionally-funded organization which provides grants to institutions for the support of programs which foster the development of political parties and the democratic political process overseas. NED works with a number of non-profit program agencies, representing organizations from across the U.S. political spectrum.

In Northern Ireland, the NED is funding a program by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI). Under this program, NDI held a successful party training program in September 1994. A series of 10-12 focus groups are planned for June 1995 to demonstrate how survey research can be used by political parties. Parties invited to take part in the focus group training program are SDLP, UUP, DUP, Alliance, Sinn Fein, UDP, and PUP. NDI anticipates a second multiparty training seminar in September 1995.

NED will provide support funding for the Project for Justice in Times of Transition Conference in Belfast in June 1995 (produced by the Foundation for a Civil Society).