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State Commission on Migration Issues

**ENIGMMA High-Profile Diaspora Engagement Programme**  
**Study visit to Dublin, Ireland**  
**18 – 22 April 2016**

**Introduction**

The ENIGMMA study visit to Dublin, Ireland, on diaspora engagement took place in April 2016. The Georgian delegates from the SCMI Secretariat, State Minister’s Office for Diaspora Issues, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs, Ministry of Education and Science and Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development had the opportunity to meet with Irish officials from various ministries, NGOs, associations and research institutions working on diaspora engagement projects. The main topics discussed during the study visit dealt with diaspora engagement, business investment, providing employment and mentorship opportunities to Irish abroad or recent returnees, creating evidence-based diaspora policies, establishing and maintaining diaspora networks and philanthropy.



**Meetings**

The study visit delegates had the opportunity to meet Kingsley Aikins from Diaspora Matters who spoke about the origins and the history of diaspora engagement in Ireland and why it has become more important in recent years. Kingsley also focused on how to establish and nurture networks and



how to engage in diaspora philanthropy. The key to diaspora networks is to do proper research on the different diaspora, to cultivate relationships and build trust and positive relationships, create connections through culture, to solicit in the right way and to create stewardship.

The delegates were introduced to Connect Ireland, an organisation which tries to convert the power of diaspora for job creation and economic activity. Connect Ireland wants to attract foreign companies that are expanding internationally to Ireland through ordinary people. The Irish Government financially rewards those that attract new, sustainable jobs into the country. The organisation engages recent emigrants, the wider diaspora and high achievers.

The delegates also attended a lecture on migration and development at Trinity College Dublin given by Dr. Moriarty who focused her talk on diaspora consciousness, cultural reproduction and reconstruction of place and locality. She mainly highlighted that diasporas can be defined by dispersion in space, orientation to the homeland and boundary maintenance. Prof. Liam Kennedy from the University College Dublin focused in his lecture on diaspora, research and policy. He pointed out

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the importance of culture and trust as the glue of the diaspora. Diaspora networks should be seen as nodes and not hubs.

The delegates were also introduced to the Crosscare Migrant Project, Enterprise Ireland, Ireland XO Reaching Out and the Cork Foundation. The Crosscare Migrant Project is an information and advocacy organisation based in Dublin for 75 years which works with people who are either leaving or coming back to Ireland, mainly vulnerable people. Enterprise Ireland is an Irish state economic development agency focused on helping Irish-owned business deliver new export sales. The aim is to accelerate the development of Irish enterprises capable of achieving strong positions in global markets. The organisation also encourages Irish entrepreneurs to return to Ireland. Ireland XO Reaching Out is a genealogy project. The goal is to connect people of Irish descent to their ancestral roots in Ireland, namely to their place of origin. The organisation strongly relies on the involvement on volunteers in each parish in Ireland who provide information to anyone who is looking for their ancestors. The Cork Foundation is a unique social enterprise fund, fuelled by donations from Cork people at home and abroad who want to support social entrepreneurs and businesses that need funding to bring about positive social change in their local towns and villages.

The study visit was completed with a meet and greet of active Georgian and Lithuanian diaspora members at the Georgian Embassy in Dublin, hosted by the Georgian Ambassador to Ireland.

The study visit was received positively by all participants. The ENIGMMA project would like to thank all Irish institutions for the fruitful meetings.

## Useful Links

[Diaspora Matters](#)  
[Irish Diaspora Policy](#)  
[Irish Genealogy](#)  
[Connect Ireland](#)

[Crosscare Migrant Project](#)  
[Irish Network Dublin](#)  
[Presidential Award](#)  
[NamSor](#)

