

Ireland's Foreign Policy Adaptation to Europe: Principled and Pragmatic?

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Abstract

This article examines Ireland's foreign policy adaptation to Europe over the last forty years of EU membership. It looks at the types of policy and institutional changes that have occurred in Ireland's foreign relations over four time periods: the historical-institutional context of Irish foreign policy (1921-73), Ireland's accession and adaptation to Europe (1973-1986), The Single European Act to the Maastricht Treaty and beyond (1986-2008), and the impact of the economic crisis of 2008 on Irish foreign policy, Europe and the international economic system (2008-). In each phase of these developments, the article considers the pressures for adaptation (i.e. Europeanisation), the response of the Irish foreign policy 'establishment' and the impact on foreign policy, including Ireland's outlook on international affairs.

1. Introduction

Ireland's place in the world today is very different to the one that it occupied prior to membership, reflecting its integration as an open economy into the European Union and the global economy (Hederman-O'Brien 1983, Keatinge 1978, Murphy 2003). The article examines Ireland's adaptation to Europe, drawing on the literature on Europeanisation (Featherstone and Radaelli 2003, Graziano and Vink 2007, Rees 2007), to consider how EEC/EU membership impacted on Irish foreign policy, including its principles and stance in international affairs, as well as the organisational arrangements. It considers the adaptational pressures arising out of the obligations of EU membership and the impact these had on the evolution of Irish foreign policy.

The article examines whether the early principles which are said to have underpinned Irish foreign policy are still evident today and represent continuity with the past, or whether the conduct of Ireland's foreign relations in the EU and beyond led to change arising out of Europeanisation. Holmes et al have previously suggested that Irish foreign policy has, for much of the State's history, been underpinned by a core set of principles, which have provided a basis for continuity in the way in which Ireland conducted its foreign relations (Holmes, Rees and Whelan 1993). These principles were most clearly articulated in the *Dáil* in 1956 by Liam Cosgrave (Minister for External Affairs), which included support for the principles of the United Nations, commitment to independence and non-alignment, and preservation of 'Christian civilisation'. The former two tenets of this stance were articulated by Frank Aiken as Minister for External Affairs (1957-69) in the United Nations in the late 1950s.¹ Have these principles, which underpinned the development of Ireland's relations in the 1960s and 1970s, been challenged by Ireland's position within the European Union?

The underlying question that the paper seeks to address is whether such changes provide evidence of a shift in the core underpinnings of Irish foreign policy. Has Irish foreign policy fundamentally changed as a result of participation in the European Union, which has evolved into a more institutionalised and assertive international actor? If so, how and in what ways have Irish foreign relations changed, especially in the contemporary period? In this article it

¹ Note that Frank Aiken had previously been Minister for Defence, 1932-39; Minister for the Coordination of Defensive Measures, 1939-45; and Minister for External Affairs, 1951-54. He was also Minister for Finance 1945-48.

is suggested that the conduct, scope and dimensions of Ireland's relations has indeed changed since EEC accession. In particular, the 1990s and, especially since 2008, the State's foreign relations would appear to have increasingly become focused on economic matters, both within Europe and beyond. Is there a risk that the State has had to compromise and downplay political, security and international justice issues on which it might have taken a more principled stance in the past because of economic considerations? Has this led to an increasing focus on neo-liberal economic approaches in Ireland's foreign policy, whether in Europe or beyond, which may challenge and even limit the pursuit of other foreign policy objectives.

Organisationally this paper examines the types of policy and institutional changes that have occurred in Ireland's foreign relations over four time periods: the historical-institutional context of Irish foreign policy (1921-73), Ireland's accession and adaptation to Europe (1973-1986), The Single European Act to the Maastricht Treaty and beyond (1986-2008), and the impact of the 2008 economic crisis on Irish foreign policy, Europe and the international economic system (2008-). In each phase of these developments, the article considers the pressures for adaptation, the response of the Irish foreign policy establishment and the impact on Irish foreign policy, including its stance on international affairs. The article draws on early research on the Europeanisation of Irish foreign policy, which highlighted how a mix of growing adaptational pressures and domestic factors impacted on the development of Irish foreign policy (Rees 2007, 2009).

2 The Historical-Institutional Context of Irish Foreign Policy, 1921-1973

In looking at the historical-institutional context of Irish foreign policy, it is suggested that the key principles of Irish foreign policy were a product of Ireland's particular historical and institutional development. Ireland's history remains important in understanding the State's place in Europe. The formation of an independent state was achieved only after a long and at times bitter period of contestation with Britain, which led to the signing of the Free State Treaty (1921), followed by civil war (1922-23). In achieving independence, Ireland became a Dominion of the British Commonwealth, leading to further divisions and conflict within the country.

It was not until 1937, with the adoption of a new Constitution, that Ireland became a sovereign, independent and democratic state able to conduct its own foreign affairs. Article 29 of the new constitution provided for the Government to undertake the conduct of the State's international relations. It also outlined some of the key elements that made Irish foreign policy distinctive, including a commitment to international justice and morality, the pacific settlement of international disputes based on international arbitration and judicial determination, and support for international law. In the context of the 1937 Constitution the inclusion of support for such principles in Ireland's foreign relations laid the basis on which Ireland's foreign affairs would be conducted.

Institutional Development: In looking at the early institutional development of foreign affairs, Ireland inherited much of the British model of government and public administration, although with some changes arising out of the 1937 Constitution. It was largely an executive-led political system, dominated by the Taoiseach, especially by the early office holders, including Éamon de Valera (1932-48, 1951-54) who acted as his own Minister for External Relations. Around the various Taoisigh were usually a small group of political leaders and diplomats who were responsible for the conduct of foreign relations. There was limited

involvement from the legislature, except for voting on matters such as the department estimates / finance, statements and debates in the Oireachtas with limited oversight of foreign relations. In the early State, foreign affairs were not considered as overly important area for development, except from the perspective of propaganda aimed at Britain. By implication, the first Department of External Affairs, formed in 1923, was modest affair, which was led by Joseph Walshe, as its first Secretary (1922-46), and then later, Frederick Boland (1946-1950). Following WWII, the department was expanded when it was split into commercial, political, consular and protocol sections (1946) and with an economic section formed in 1948. In 1950 a Cultural and Information section was added and then International Organisations (1952). It was, however, never a large department with only some 400 staff on the eve of EEC accession in 1973.

Policy: Ireland's historical context and early experiences left a very visible imprint on the conduct of Irish foreign policy with successive Irish governments being strong supporters of the right of other states to self-determination and independence, with strong support for international organisations, such as the League of Nations and then the UN. It was also determined to pursue an independent foreign policy stance to that of its near neighbour, Britain. Ireland's early diplomatic bilateral links were limited, often reflecting historical ties, political needs and economic considerations. Aside from these main bilateral links, Ireland's main focus of activity was on the League of Nations (1919-46), the various Imperial Conferences and the Commonwealth until 1948.

Pragmatic considerations dictated the direction and conduct of Irish foreign relations in this period. Ireland's economic relationship with Britain was still very important, impacting directly on the Irish economy, as evidenced by economic warfare and tariff battles between the two states in the 1930s. Ireland both needed to export its agricultural goods, where it was dependent on the British market, as well as establish its presence on the international scene, which were not always complementary activities. The advent of the Second World War placed Ireland in a further difficult situation, with its decision to adopt a policy of military neutrality. This required a delicate balancing act between Britain and Germany with early signs of Ireland's mix of a principled stance in international affairs (military neutrality) and pragmatic adaptation to changing events at the time. This included maintaining working relations with all parties involved in the war, although archival evidence has highlighted the degree to which there was considerable secret Irish intelligence cooperation with the Allies.

In the post-war period Ireland emerged as a largely an agrarian state which struggled to promote growth, initially through a policy of economic autarchy which proved to be economically unsustainable. At this juncture, the Irish economy was marked by a lack of economic growth, inflation, high unemployment and emigration. This was to change in the late 1950s, with the appointment of Dr T K Whittaker (1956), as the new Secretary to the Department of Finance, and the appointment of Sean Lemass as Taoiseach in June 1959.² Lemass had been a long standing member of past Fianna Fáil governments, having been Minister for Industry and Commerce (1932-39, 1951-54 and 1957-59). Lemass was also convinced by the 1950s Ireland's economic policy needed to change and more away from one based on economic autarchy, although not all those in his own party agreed with his increasingly international viewpoint. T K Whittaker similarly sought to promote a more open economy, which focused on trade, promotion of exports and inward investment into Ireland thereby reversing the direction of Irish economic policy.

² Lemass succeeded de Valera, who became President of Ireland in 1959

It would, however, be a mistake to think that Ireland existed in isolation from the rest of the world. The State was actively involved through the Marshall Plan in the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) and the European Recovery Programme (ERP). Ireland applied to join the United Nations in August 1946, although was not formally admitted until late in 1956, as its application was blocked along with others by the Soviet Union (Dorr 2002, 2010: 34). It joined the Council of Europe (1949), as well as a range of other international organisations, such as the International Civil Aviation Organisation (1944), Food and Agricultural Organisation (1946), and the World Health Organisation (1948) (O'Driscoll 2013: 39). Ireland also chose to withdraw from the British Commonwealth, following the adoption of the Republic of Ireland Act (1948). Ireland also decided, under Seán MacBride (Minister for External Affairs, 1948-51), not to join NATO in 1949, given British involvement in the new organisation, and the continuing issue of partition with Northern Ireland under British control. As Ireland sought to modernise in the late 1950s the State joined a further array of economic institutions: IMF (1957), the World Bank (1957) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (1967).

In this period Ireland also played a significant role in the United Nations, which provided an important forum in which the state was able to develop its nascent and distinctive foreign policy. Under Frank Aiken, as Minister for External Affairs (1957-59), Ireland's independent and non-aligned stance in the UN was pursued with vigour during the 1960s (Kennedy and McMahon 2005, Dorr 2010). This period has often been portrayed as the golden age of Irish foreign policy in the UN, with its strong support for the decolonisation and independence, nuclear non-proliferation and early involvement in peacekeeping in the Congo. As Dorr notes in his study of Ireland's early involvement in the UN, Frank Aiken was a very visible figure at the UN General Assembly in the 1960s, who spent considerable time in New York (2010: 1 and 49). Ireland was also committed to being 'a good international citizen' and making the system work (p. 47). The high point of this period was Ireland's term on the UN Security Council in 1962, sharing a two year term with Liberia.

By 1960s Ireland had embarked on the road to EEC membership. Under Lemass (1959-66) the Fianna Fáil Government increasingly turned its attention to becoming part of EEC, launching its first membership bid in August 1961, which was subsequently blocked by the veto of the British application by President de Gaulle in January 1963. As a result progress towards membership was slow and, at times problematic, partly because of the links with Britain, as well as the political situation in the EEC. Ireland was still dependent on British markets for exports and shared a common currency area. Ireland's bid for EEC membership was also affected by developments in Britain, where British governments since the late 1950s had chosen to become part of a European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and had opposed becoming part of the EEC's common market. The governments of Seán Lemass and, then Jack Lynch (1966-73), were increasingly focused on promoting national economic growth with an emphasis on promoting Irish exports and attracting inward investment. In the lead-up to EEC membership, these governments were increasingly focused on a foreign policy based on developing links with Europe. There was growing elite consensus across many economic and political leaders that this was predominantly in the national interest. In 1967 Jack Lynch re-launched Ireland's EEC membership application, although this was suspended following the vetoing of the British application by the French government. It was not until 1969, following President de Gaulle's departure that the EEC application was reactivated and the initiative led by the new Minister for External Affairs, Patrick Hillery.

3. EEC Accession and Adaptation to Europe, 1973-1986

The debate over EEC membership highlighted a range of fundamental issues that divided supporters and opponents of membership, which have subsequently resurfaced in a variety of forms during referendums over EU treaty reform over the last forty years. On the Yes side were Fianna Fáil, who led the Government, and Fine Gael who were also strongly supportive of EEC membership. They were supported by an array of business and agricultural interests, including the main interest groups in each of these sectors of the economy, as well as by organisations such as the European Movement and other committees established to advocate for membership. In general, supporters promoted what they saw as the economic benefits of EEC membership, including trade and access to markets, as well as the opportunities arising out of the support offered by EEC policies, such as the Common Agricultural Policy. Supporters also suggested that membership would enhance Ireland's standing as an independent sovereign state, as well as promoting its independence from Britain and its dependence on British markets. Opposition was led by the Labour Party and by many of those involved in the trade union movement, who were concerned about the implications of free trade and the common market. There was a fear that the exposure of some areas of the Irish economy and, especially textiles and shoes, which were seen as vulnerable to outside competition, would lead to a market collapse and job losses. Others were concerned that membership would undermine Irish sovereignty and independence. Finally, there was concern that Ireland's membership of the EEC would bring it into a camp, which included NATO members such as Britain and thereby risk Irish neutrality.

At this time it was evident that the Government was aware that membership would have consequences for Irish foreign policy. As with many other policy areas, EEC membership required adaptation of Irish policies to Europe and acceptance of the *acquis communautaire*, bringing both consequences for the economy as well as economic benefits. Early assessments of Ireland's membership tended to highlight the initial economic shocks, especially in some areas of domestic manufacture, where production was adversely affected, although membership also made Ireland more attractive for FDI and stimulated growth. There was, however, a strong sense that Ireland had little choice in joining the EEC and that the benefits would outweigh the losses in the long-term. The benefits included access to EU markets for agricultural products and subsidies under the common agricultural policy, as well as eventually access to the regional and social funds. There was also the threat that if Britain joined and Ireland did not, then Irish goods might face barriers in entering British markets. It was, perhaps, unsurprising that the public voted in large numbers in May 1972 referendum for Irish accession to the EEC commencing on 1 January 1973.

Institutional adaptation: In looking at the impact on Ireland of the State's early involvement in the EEC, it is evident that the adaptational pressures for change on Ireland were more pronounced in areas in which the EEC's policy competences were most developed, such as in the CAP and structural policies, or in areas governed by the treaty commitments to fundamental freedoms such as around free movement of goods, services, labour, and capital. This was less evident in the area of foreign policy, in which the then EEC had no direct policy competence on either a treaty or legal basis, although under the customs union it did have responsibility for the EEC's evolving common commercial policy (e.g. around trade and GATT). By implication the adaptational pressures for change in the area of Irish foreign policy were limited, although significant institutional and organisational change did occur.

The pressures for institutional adaptation reflected the increasing involvement of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Department of Foreign Affairs in EU business. The position of the minister and the department was not uncontested, as the inter-organisational civil service rivalry meant that the Department of Finance retained a significant role around EU affairs, especially around budgetary and financial matters. It was, therefore, quite challenging for the then Minister for Foreign Affairs, Garret FitzGerald (Fine Gael), and his officials, to establish the department as the lead on EU affairs. At the same time the Taoiseach's own department also grew in prominence on EU matters, as did other functional government departments (e.g. Industry and Commerce, Agriculture and Labour) and state agencies. At the executive level, the Taoiseach and the Cabinet increasingly became involved in coordinating Ireland's approach to EU matters. Notably Ireland's Presidency of the EU provided the State with promotional and policy opportunities, starting in 1975, and later in 1979, 1990, 1996, 2004 and 2013.

In seeking to meet the new demands being made on the Irish system of public administration, there was a significant reorganisation and reorientation across a number of government departments. The Department of External Affairs was renamed the Department of Foreign Affairs, grew in size from about 160 officials (74 in Dublin and 85 overseas) to some 400 staff and was restructured with the Political and Economic Divisions principally given responsibility for EU matters (Keatinge 1973: 122). It also sought to build on its growing expertise on EC/EU matters, including through the establishment of the Permanent Representation in Brussels, and the expansion of Ireland's overseas diplomatic representation. This all enhanced the role of the Department of Foreign Affairs, increasing its visibility and importance.

Outside of the executive branch, the Oireachtas's role in foreign affairs also grew during this period, although remained limited. It was given legislative oversight of EU affairs with the establishment of the Joint Committee on Secondary Legislation of the European Communities which was established in 1973. EU matters were also debated in the Oireachtas chambers, as were the Department of Foreign Affairs budget estimates. This focus on legislation limited what the committee could do and it was never conceived of as having a major oversight of Ireland's role in Europe. It was some twenty years before the Oireachtas was given a more effective means of oversight and scrutiny, with the creation of the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs (1993) (now the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade) and the Joint Committee on European Affairs (1995).

Policy Adaptation: In this early period of membership, there was limited foreign policy cooperation amongst the member states reflecting the lack of any treaty and legal basis for foreign policy action. At this juncture, the EEC member states were largely committed to a process of intergovernmental coordination through a process of known as European Political Cooperation (EPC) (Tonra 2001). The EPC process, which was introduced in 1970, provided a means by which the member governments could coordinate their foreign policies and share information between the various foreign ministries. This loose system of coordination posed little immediate threat to Ireland's foreign policy independence, whilst offering some significant benefits, mainly through the exchange of information, which provided Ireland with access to a much larger diplomatic network than it had previously enjoyed, as well as the opportunity to discuss international issues with other member states (Nuttall 1992). The EPC process sat outside of the Treaty of Rome and lacked any formal position inside the EC until the adoption of the Single European Act (1986), which codified and began to institutionalise the process of cooperation.

As a result there were limited pressures on states such as Ireland to adapt their foreign relations to Europe. There seemed, then, little immediate threat to Ireland's pursuit of an independent stance in international affairs, which was based on its underlying foreign policy principles, as articulated in the Constitution and at the UN in the 1950s. Indeed, EEC membership provided an impetus to Irish foreign policy broadening out the focus of the State's involvement in international affairs. The Fine Gael – Labour coalition, which was elected in 1973, and led by Liam Cosgrave as Taoiseach and Garrett FitzGerald as Minister for Foreign Affairs, was afforded more opportunities to play a role on the international stage. FitzGerald, who had long been a staunch European, took the lead on EU matters playing a significant part inside the EEC. It should also be noted that the Labour Party, originally opposed to EU membership, adopted at this stage a more pro-European approach in government (Holmes 2006).

EEC membership provided an important impetus to the development of Irish foreign policy during this early period of development. The new Irish government, ahead of EEC negotiations with the Lomé states, adopted Ireland's first bilateral aid programme in 1974, which marked a new departure in Irish foreign policy, which had previously focused much of its support to developing states through the UN and its associated programmes and agencies. The adoption of the bilateral aid programme, with its focus largely on sub-Saharan Africa, highlighted Ireland's growing role in international affairs, with its membership of a group of developed and wealthy states, who were also committed to development cooperation and support for poorer developing states. There was also an expansion of Ireland's diplomatic network to include the establishment of embassies in Africa and the Middle East, including later on development cooperation offices in a number of the beneficiary states. All of these developments broadened the knowledge and understanding of Irish political figures and official representatives contemporary international issues. It also provided a basis for Ireland to build and act on its stance as a champion and supporter of developing states, human rights issues and international justice issues. This is evident in Ireland's voting record at the UN General Assembly, where the State has featured over many years as part of a more progressive group of EU states, who have tended to vote together on these types of issues (Rees and Young 2005).

Ireland's first Presidency of the European Council in 1975 provided a test for a new and small member state to host a successful presidency. In the course of the Presidency, Ireland found itself grappling with the major international issues of the day including the formal conclusion of the Lomé Convention (with the ACP developing states), the Euro-Arab Dialogue, and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. All of this placed a considerable strain on a small state apparatus, but also provided it with the opportunity to demonstrate that it could cope with the challenges and issues under discussion. This early engagement won Ireland much respect amongst its European partners, as well as with many of those with whom it was engaged in discussions and negotiations. In particular, Ireland's stance in international affairs and its history of being colonised meant that many of the ACP states were more comfortable in concluding negotiations with Irish representatives than with those from former colonisers such as Britain, France and Belgium (Holmes, Rees, Whelan 1993: 125).

There is little doubt that the 1970s and early 1980s saw a maturing and growth in Ireland's foreign relations as the State engaged with the international issues of the day and had access to a variety of European decision-making fora and diplomatic networks stretching around the

globe. There was, however, little challenge to the fundamental tenets and principles of Irish foreign policy, which remained in place during this period. Ireland did not, of course, always agree with its European partners. A particular flash point occurred over the Falklands war in 1982, when the then Fianna Fáil government of Charles Haughey, opposed British action in the Falklands. At that time Ireland served as one of the non-permanent members of the UN Security Council, and backed a UN Security Council resolution 502 in April 1982 calling for Argentina to withdraw its military forces. Ireland did join other EEC states in supporting an arms embargo on Argentina, but refused to go any further in supporting the British government of Margaret Thatcher through the implementation of trade sanctions and other measures. However, the sinking by the British military force of the Argentinean warship, the *Belgrano*, in early May outside of the exclusion zone led the Irish government to change direction. Irish representatives called on the UN Security Council to adopt a resolution calling for a complete ceasefire. This was viewed in Britain as a betrayal by the Irish government and significantly soured Anglo-Irish relations.

4. The Single European Act, the Maastricht Treaty and Beyond, 1986-2008

The challenge to Irish foreign policy adapt to Europe grew in the period from the Single European Act to the Maastricht Treaty. This reflected a period which was marked by various attempts to move the European Community forward towards closer cooperation and even European Union (or Federalism). This had begun as early as 1975, when the Belgian Prime Minister, Leo Tindemans, produced a report on European Union which envisaged a Europe that would present a united front to the world, including the development of a common foreign policy and defence cooperation. By the early 1980s the issues of security and defence cooperation were being discussed by EC leaders, as they were considering further EC institutional and policy reforms. Nevertheless, in this early period there were still limited adaptational pressures from Europe on national foreign policies until the Single European Act in 1986 (Tonra 2006).

In Ireland there had always been awareness among political leader since the 1970s that the EEC might develop into a more significant international actor. In this period Garrett FitzGerald had warned that Ireland was joining a political community which was likely to have a long term impact on Irish neutrality. This presented the Irish foreign policy elite with a potential problem, as by the 1980s the idea of Irish neutrality had become firmly embedded in the public imagination as a tangible and key tenet of Irish foreign policy (see Doherty 2002). The issue manifested itself most visibly in Ireland over the challenge brought by Raymond Crotty to the Single European Act in 1986, which seemed to pose this very challenge to Ireland's independence in foreign policy-making. At that time the Government was advised that it could simply amend the Rome Treaty by means of an amendment passed via the Oireachtas. Crotty challenged the government in the High Court claiming that Title III of the Act affected Irish sovereignty in international relations arguing that this could only be approved by means of a referendum (Brown 1999: 162-3). Crotty lost the initial case in the High Court, but appealed to the Supreme Court, which ruled in his favour noting that the freedom to formulate foreign policy had been curtailed and that the government could not do so without the assent of the people. In the referendum that followed, the issues of security and neutrality were hotly debated by the supporters and opponents of further treaty reform. However, what probably swayed the public in favour of the Single European Act, were the proposals to reform the internal market and package of structural fund measures, which were of direct benefit to Ireland. The outcome was 69.9% in favour, 30.1% opposed, with a low turnout of 44.1% of the vote (Coakley, Holmes and Rees 1993).

In looking at treaty change since the Single European Act, it is evident that the EU has developed into a significant international actor, with its own institutions, policies and instruments. The adaptational pressures on national foreign policies have grown, although successive Irish governments have sought to limit the impact of such requirements on Irish foreign policy. Table 1 briefly summarises the key changes and the Irish response.

Table 1: The Implications of EU Treaty Change

Treaty Change	Implications for Irish Foreign Policy
Single European Act (1987)	<p>European Political Cooperation was to lead to further codification of EPC processes and more formal coordination, although there was no legal base for EC action.</p> <p>The initial Crotty challenge to the Single European Acts suggests the sensitivities evident in this area for Ireland.</p>
Maastricht Treaty (1992)	<p>Increasing foreign and security policy cooperation and the development of defence cooperation raised concerns in Ireland.</p> <p>The EU agreed a caveat that these new CFSP provisions would not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain member states.</p>
Amsterdam Treaty (1998)	<p>The treaty established the new High Representative for CFSP and incorporated the Petersberg Tasks into the EU.</p> <p>This raised Irish concerns about the ambitions of the Union to lead on CFSP and military matters. Outside of treaty change the establishment of European Rapid Reaction Force and new military decision-making structures: the EU Military Staff and EU Military Committee plus European Defence Agency also raised further concerns about the militarisation of the Union.</p>
Treaty of Nice I and II (2001, 2002)	<p>Limited changes to CFSP but the EU's growing role in security and military matters raised concerns in Ireland, where these developments were seen as a threat to neutrality.</p> <p>These concerns in Ireland contributed to the defeat of the treaty in 2001. In order to address these concerns ahead of a new referendum the Government sought to rule out Ireland's future participation in any EU defence policy.</p>
Lisbon Treaty I (2008) / Lisbon Treaty II (2009)	<p>Treaty proposed to merge the three pillars: European Communities, CFSP and Justice & Home Affairs into one legal personality. It placed all foreign policy responsibilities in the hands of the High Representative and sought to establish the single External Action Service.</p> <p>It also provided a new framework for military cooperation, called Permanent Structured Cooperation, which would allow a group of member states to intensify their military cooperation. The Treaty also included clauses on mutual aid and assistance, as well as a</p>

	<p>solidarity clause in case any state was attacked or suffered a natural disaster.</p> <p>The first Irish referendum in June failed, with analysis highlighting low levels of knowledge and public concerns over particular policies, including the supposed threat of conscription. Following this defeat, the Government sought legal guarantees from the EU Council meeting, including a Declaration on Defence matters in exchange for holding a further referendum in 2009. Ireland's national declaration reaffirmed the triple lock mechanism in relation to the deployment of military personnel overseas. It also confirmed that Ireland's policy of neutrality would not be prejudiced by EU CFSP nor that the State would join the European Defence Agency.</p>
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By implication, the European Union had developed and taken on an increasing role and responsibility to conduct international relations on behalf of its member states during this period. However, the EU is not an independent international actor in its own right, with much of the power still being retained by the member states, who can act independently, although in so doing they are obliged to keep other member states informed of their actions. It is also a Union increasingly made up of a diverse mix of 28 member states, with larger states such as Britain, France, Germany, Spain and Poland, often coordinating their actions and more likely to lead in international affairs.

Institutional Adaptation: The growing role of the EU role in international affairs has impacted on the making and conduct of Irish foreign policy. Inside this increasingly sophisticated system of EU governance, Ireland's ability to act in international affairs has been both enhanced and constrained. On one level, Irish political leaders and officials are at the very heart of everything that goes on in the European Union, with Irish officials engaged on a daily basis with officials across the EU institutions, as well as with their counterparts in other national capitals on major issues of the day. This means Ireland has a seat at the table where many of the EU's major foreign policy discussions take place and actions are agreed and therefore it is in a position to shape policy outcomes. It is, of course, one of 28 states, so its ability to influence outcomes is in part determined by its ability to work with other states to get outcomes that are considered in line with the Ireland's national interest and foreign policy outlook. As a small State, there are many issues on which Ireland does not become involved in developing detailed responses, where Irish interests are not considered instrumentally important and where available resources limit what Ireland can do. There is also a reality in the European Union, where large (key) states often coordinate their positions outside of the formal institutional mechanisms, and agree what path they will follow sometimes with little regard to the views of other member states.

In Ireland the government and the civil service has had to adapt to working collaboratively with EU institutions, as well as with other EU member states. At the executive level, this is most evident in the way in which EU matters are coordinated through the Cabinet system. As previously noted, the key players in this system have been the Taoiseach and the Ministers for Finance and Foreign Affairs, as well as the junior ministers in these departments, including the Department of the Taoiseach. In the realm of foreign affairs, other significant players have been the Departments of Trade and Enterprise, Defence and functional departments, such as the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. In all these

instances, ministers find themselves often involved in EU fora in which international matters are being discussed, including trade, aid, development, security and political matters. Similarly, the growth of military structures within the EU has meant that Irish Defence Force personnel are now involved in such structures, including through secondment and as representatives of Ireland. This opens up new possibilities for military cooperation, including training, participation in simulation and field exercises and as part of EU's battle group formations. In Ireland, the Defence Forces have participated in both the EU institutional structures and in the military dimension, including through EU missions such as in Chad, the Central African Republic and Bosnia – Herzegovina.

Aside from the executive, the Irish Oireachtas has also become far more involved in discussing and debating EU foreign policy matters, including joint actions, as well as considering Ireland's position on and response to international events. In some instances these discussions have featured in Dáil debates, especially in terms of major EU treaty reforms or the EU's responses to particular crises. In other instances, such matters have been debated and discussed through the committee system, including in the Joint Committees on European Affairs and / or Foreign Affairs. These fora provide both a means by which government ministers and civil servants can brief members on EU matters, as well as potentially a way of holding governments to account. The effectiveness of this system in exercising scrutiny has been questionable, although it has ensured some input from members of the Oireachtas and more informed debate on EU matters. It is perhaps regrettable that a two committee system was retained, as possibly this has led to an artificial segmentation of EU and international matters.

Policy adaptation: The increasing pressures arising from the EU's growing policy competence and role in foreign affairs has had a significant impact on Irish foreign policy, providing opportunities for Irish representatives to participate in shaping EU foreign policy matters, as well as contribute more widely in international affairs. Irish representatives have found themselves at the very centre of international affairs when holding the EU presidency, acting on behalf of a very powerful international actor, which the European Union has increasingly become over the last forty years. This presents opportunities for small states like Ireland to punch above their weight and place issues that are central concern to Ireland on the EU's agenda. For example, during the 2004 Irish Presidency the Government sought to prioritise African issues on the EU's agenda, playing to its own concerns to support states in need of assistance. In contrast, there are times when Irish political representatives and officials have found themselves involved in discussions, such as those within the various WTO meetings, where EU positions and Irish interests are not always compatible.

In looking at the impact of the EU on Irish foreign policy, there is evidence that involvement in the European Union has led to changes in Ireland's outlook and stance in international affairs. The area that has attracted the most public controversy has been Ireland's stated policy on neutrality, which in the 1990s came under repeated scrutiny during the various EU treaty referenda. Those opposed to Ireland's involvement in the EU highlighted the EU's growing role in foreign and security policy, suggesting this was a threat to Irish neutrality and that the EU was becoming increasingly militarised (e.g. Peace and Neutrality Alliance). Supporters of further integration and the EU's growing role in foreign affairs dismissed such claims as alarmist and inaccurate, suggesting that Ireland retained its independence and right to make its own foreign policy decisions. It was, however, evident that the Irish public continued to value Ireland's policy of neutrality. As a result various governments found themselves having to ensure that Ireland preserved its stated policy of neutrality, seeking to

ensure that EU agreements around security and defence cooperation were not binding on Ireland. Examples of this included the Seville Declarations (2002), which included the proviso that the EU's CFSP would not prejudice Ireland's traditional policy of military neutrality, as well as a constitutional amendment providing a means of ruling out Ireland's participation in common defence in the European Union. Notably, the Lisbon Treaty (2009) included the National Declaration by Ireland (Appendix II - Annex I) which preserved this status quo.

There is some evidence to suggest that there has been a change in emphasis and focus in the direction of Irish foreign policy reflecting Ireland's place inside the EU. In looking back at the 1960s, under the then leadership of Frank Aiken, it was evident that Ireland adopted a strongly independent stance on international matters evidence in the UN. In contrast, Ireland's membership of a western block of extremely wealthy nations, who coordinate and agree their actions together in pursuit of commonly adopted policies, suggests that Ireland's outlook is increasingly shaped by its involvement in the European Union (i.e. adaptational pressures and Europeanisation). Examples of this include the requirement for EU coordination and joint action among member states in areas as diverse as WTO negotiating rounds and the UN sponsored climate talks. In such negotiations Ireland's position is as likely to be determined by a mix of national economic self-interest, as much as by the State's underlying foreign policy principles, as well as by European pressures to agree a common EU position. Similarly, it may be argued that Irish participation in EU military structures and decision-making, battle group formations and, outside of the EU, in the NATO inspired Partnership for Peace (PFP) all compromise Ireland's policy of neutrality. In some respects, domestic sensitivities around security matters, including strong public attachment to the idea of neutrality, have acted as brake on developments in this arena, reflected in the triple lock mechanism whereby approval for participation in peacekeeping missions and the like require Cabinet and Oireachtas approval, as well as the existence of a UN mandate for military action. Nevertheless, there has been considerable change in even this most sensitive of areas with Irish troops participating in EU battle groups (e.g. the Nordic and German led Battlegroups), EU military planning and training exercises, as well as specific EU military operations (Rees 1986-2011, various).

5. Irish Foreign Policy and the Economic Crisis, 2008-

The evidence over nearly forty years has highlighted Ireland's need to adapt to Europe, whether in response to European pressures and / or sometimes arising out of domestic political priorities and economic necessities. It had responded in part to adaptational pressure to change, reflecting the EU's growing involvement in international affairs, but it had also taken advantage of the opportunities that EU membership provided to Ireland. Inside Europe the advantage that Ireland has had is that its political leaders, officials and other representatives have operated in a highly organised and coordinated manner, which has enabled them to maximise Ireland's advantages as an EU member state (Laffan 2001). This may constitute a form of 'learning' that exemplifies the ability of Irish representatives and officials to identify and pursue Irish interests in EU fora adapting to ever changing contexts. Thus, the international economic crisis that occurred in 2008, alongside Ireland's own economic meltdown, posed a particular challenge for Irish representatives in Europe. The challenge was how to promote economic recovery and recover Ireland's political and economic reputation in Europe, which has been diminished following the Troika's bailout. The crisis also posed a further challenge to the focus and emphasis of Irish foreign policy,

given the priority in this period has been very much on domestic economic and political priorities and in responding to EU economic requirements (adaptational pressures).

Institutional adaptation: In Ireland the economic crisis led eventually to the downfall of the Fianna Fáil/Green government led by Brian Cowen and its replacement by new elected Coalition Government of Enda Kenny (Fine Gael) and Eamon Gilmore (Labour) in February 2011. The new government in responding to domestic pressures and Europe sought to quickly change the direction of public policy in Ireland's in response to Ireland changing economic circumstances. In so doing, the Government used Ireland's foreign policy apparatus and its place inside the European Union to support its domestic economic and political priorities. The changing priorities of Irish foreign policy led to significant institutional changes in Dublin. This included bringing foreign affairs and trade matters together under one government department, which was renamed the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2011), with the Minister for State for Development renamed as the Minister of State for Trade and Development. As of June 2011, a number of civil servants were brought together from the EU and international affairs division in the Department of An Taoiseach and from the EU affairs section in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to form a new unit in the Department of An Taoiseach. The aim was to ensure strong coordination and strategic direction to Ireland's engagement with the EU. There were also further attempts to improve the role of the Oireachtas on the transposition and implementation of EU legislation, especially in relation to those measures that were considered to be problematic to Irish business. There were also changes in the Oireachtas committee system with the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs renamed as the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trade, and with a much greater focus being placed on economic matters.

The focus on supporting Irish economic development was also reflected in the restructuring within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the creation of the Promoting Ireland Abroad Division. There was also some reduction in Ireland's diplomatic network with physical closure of embassies in the Holy See, Iran and a representative office in Timor-Leste (2011). Furthermore, an Export Trade Council was established in September 2011, with the aim of supporting Ireland's export-led economic recovery. This latter body included all major departments and agencies, as well as IBEC and the Irish Exporters' Association. Other initiative aimed at promoting Ireland included the establishment of the Global Economic Forum, which met in 2009, 2011 and 2013 with the intention of mobilising significant investors and people in support of Irish economic development.

It is worth noting that as these changes occurred there were also changes in other parts of the civil service which impacted on the conduct of foreign relations. In particular EU affairs were matters that were increasingly discussed within the Department of An Taoiseach and the Department of Finance, which also took on the major responsibility for handling Ireland's relations with the Troika around the bailout and the monitoring of Ireland's economic progress. All of these changes suggest that the priorities of Irish foreign relations were significantly reordered and that conduct of foreign policy was and is increasingly focused on attaining economic objectives. This development in itself is not necessarily a new one, as Irish foreign policy has for the last forty years been focused on maximising Ireland's economic benefits from Europe, although the focus on liberal market solutions is a new departure, which is even evident in areas such as bilateral aid (and trade).

Policy adaptation: In reorganising some aspect of how Irish foreign policy was managed and placing a far great emphasis on economic matters, the government was rationally seeking to use Ireland’s place in Europe and its international connections to promote Irish economic development. The direct pressure to adapt and change came from within the government, although arguably Ireland’s indebtedness to Europe, and the surveillance of the Troika, left Ireland with limited options if it wished to exit the bailout and restore its economic credibility. The new direction taken in foreign affairs was evident in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade’s *Statement of Strategy, 2011-14*, which has sought to prioritise the promotion of Irish economic interests in Europe and internationally as the first amongst the five strategic goals within the plan:

- Promote Ireland’s economic interests in Europe and internationally
- Deliver on Ireland’s global development commitments, focusing on poverty and hunger
- Advance reconciliation and co-operation on this island
- Contribute to international peace, security and human rights
- Provide consular and passport services for Irish citizens and engage with Irish communities abroad

This was further developed in the strategy document with the high level performance indicators including:

- Positive feedback on the contribution of the Department to promoting Ireland’s economic and trading interests in Europe and internationally
- Positive feedback on the contribution of the Department to enhancing our economic reputation in Europe and internationally
- Enhanced engagement with partners in Europe on matters of mutual interest

At a practical level, the priorities in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade were firmly placed on supporting Ireland’s economic recovery. There was a strong focus on promoting Irish business and exports overseas and attracting FDI to Ireland. This was evident in the growing importance placed on high level trade missions overseas, focusing particularly on market opportunities in Europe as well as further afield in India, China and Mexico amongst others. In many instances, these overseas trade delegations involved the Taoiseach, the President and key ministers, as well as Irish officials, business and educational leaders. Ireland also sought to use not only its extensive diplomatic network, but also IDA and Enterprise Ireland Offices overseas to support and promote Irish trade and inward investment. Ireland was well represented overseas through both Enterprise Ireland and the Industrial Development Authority, as the following tables indicate.³

Table 2: Industrial Development Authority: Offices Overseas

Americas	Boston, New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Northern California, Southern California, Brazil	7
Europe	France, Germany, Russia, UK	4

³ Ireland has always had a network of organisations seeking to promote trade overseas. C  ras Tr  cht  lla Teoranta (CTT) which had this role in the 1980s was merged with the Irish Goods Council in 1991 to form the Irish Trade Board. The Board had some 22 office overseas in Europe, USA and Asia as of 1993.

Asia Pacific	China (Beijin, Shanghai, Shenzhen), Singapore, India, Australia, Japan, Korea	8
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Table 3: Enterprise Ireland International Offices

Americas	Brazil, Canada, USA, Mexico	4
Europe	Belgium, Bulgaria*, Czech Republic, Denmark*, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Russia and CIS, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, Austria*, Finland*, Greece*, Luxembourg*, Norway*, Portugal*, Romania*, Slovakia*, Slovenia*, Switzerland*, Turkey	13
Middle East and Africa	Saudi Arabia, South Africa, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain*. Egypt*, Israel*, Kuwait*, Libya*, Oman*, Qatar*, Nigeria*	11
Asia Pacific	Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Indonesia*, New Zealand*, Taiwan*, Thailand*, Vietnam*	13

*Non-resident – representation serviced from another state

Source: <http://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/Export-Assistance/International-Office-Network-Services-and-Contacts/>

The focus on developing business opportunities provides further evidence that the State was intent on pursuing a strategy aimed at encouraging Irish exports and promoting Ireland as a location for FDI. The focus on large multinationals in key business sectors reflected more general economic policy in Ireland, which aimed to achieve increasing economic growth through providing a stable environment for businesses, with attractive low corporate tax rates and competitive labour costs. In this context, Irish embassies, overseas offices and trade missions all offered a means of contributing to the government’s economic programme for recovery and were considered as key assets in promoting Ireland Inc.

6. Conclusion

In examining the impact of Europeanisation on Ireland’s foreign policy over the last forty years of EU membership, it is evident that there are times when the original guiding principles underpinning Irish foreign policy have been challenged by Ireland’s participation in the EU and by the pressures to adapt to Europe. The recent example of the 2008 economic crisis seems to highlight these dilemmas in Ireland’s foreign policy and the crisis may have even further accelerated domestic and European pressures for Ireland to adapt and align its foreign policy with its fellow member states. It is evident from the requirements of the EU-ECB-IMF bailout that Ireland’s autonomy has been curtailed during this most recent period and this has been a source of domestic concern in Ireland. Nevertheless, outside of Europe, Ireland seems to have managed to maintain its strong reputation for having a principled stance and approach to international matters, which is apparent in the manner in which it has been held in high regard in the UN and other international forums, such as the UN Human Rights Council. In looking at the original principles articulated both in the 1937 Constitution and in the UN, Ireland remains committed to international justice and morality, as well as to the pacific settlement of disputes and is a strong supporter of international law. This is

evident in its role in the UN and associated bodies, as well as in other regional organisations, such as the EU, OSCE and Council of Europe. However, Ireland's independence (and non-alignment), has been challenged by EU membership, as evident from the above discussion. Ireland is a member of a polity (regional organisation) which has sought to develop its own distinctive role in international affairs, which includes forming common foreign policy positions and undertaking actions on behalf of its member states, including at the diplomatic, economic and military levels.

There is, then, much continuity in the conduct of Irish foreign policy, both prior to and following accession to the EU. There is ample evidence that Ireland has benefitted as an international actor from becoming a member of the European Union, with its standing and position in international affairs enhanced over the last forty years of membership. It is also evident that change has also been a constant feature of Irish foreign policy reflecting the exigencies of the EU, domestic pressures and the demands of globalisation. Ireland is a small state, highly interdependent and one that is sensitive to changes in the international economic system. Indeed, the changes brought about following the international economic crisis in 2008, signify how quickly external shocks impacted on the Irish economy, including on MNC based in Ireland. The vulnerability of Ireland to such external economic shocks has highlighted the fragile underpinnings of the Irish economy, including its banking sector, the construction industry, and even public personal indebtedness. The weakness of the economy, as well as the underlying clientelist nature of the political system, raises questions about the impact of Europeanisation on Ireland. In previous work, Rees, Quinn and Connaughton (2010) have questioned the degree to which Ireland has adapted to Europe and learnt from the experiences of European programmes and policies. At times the adaptation to Europe has been highly symbolic and domestic pressures have often been the source of change and / or the constraint on such change. Ireland seems to have managed so far to strike a balance in its adaptation to Europe, maintaining its distinctive principled approach in foreign policy to international affairs, whilst pragmatically adapting to Europe's growing role in international relations.

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