

# Literature Review for the Scottish Government's Scottish Connections (Diaspora) Work

This report was prepared for the Scottish Government by ICR Research Ltd.

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# Executive Summary

1. *A Fairer, Greener Scotland: Programme for Government 2021-22*,<sup>1</sup> commits the Scottish Government to expand on its existing work with Scottish diaspora networks across the world. This research contributes to that by building on previous research and existing strategy, to identify, from a practical point of view, “what works” in other countries’ arrangements that can contribute to a new strategy for developing “meaningful connections” with the Scottish diaspora, as part of a wider strategy of global engagement.
2. The countries included in this study (with a few exceptions) are typical of countries globally in that they do not have fully developed policies and strategies for diaspora engagement and even where they do have strategies, they do not embed evaluation in their activities, so it is hard to assess “what works”, even in a qualitative way, without further research.
3. We did, however, compare what countries say publicly, and drew on academic assessments, Parliamentary reports, budget statements and other grey material, to come to an overview of:
  - *Policy drivers*: what inspires countries to engage with their diasporas and their priority target groups.
  - *Means of engagement*: how countries engage.
  - *Who engages*: the key actors in diaspora engagement in each country.
  - *Issues*: facing countries engaged in diaspora engagement, and
  - *Specific initiatives*: which countries attach value to over time as a proxy measure for effectiveness, or which indicate a willingness to try new approaches and innovate.
4. In the countries reviewed, the historical drivers for diaspora engagement were:
  - To address the “brain drain” from poorer or more marginal, but educated, countries to richer countries with more economic opportunities.
  - Preserving cultural identity and ties to the home country in a globalising world.

Our research found that these two historical drivers were still the strongest, with the addition of attempts to influence others through public diplomacy carried out by diasporas.
5. Countries and regions in this study are increasingly interested in developing policies and strategies for diaspora engagement. This is principally driven by concerns about the economic impact of demographic change, and is particularly evident in countries with ageing populations, skills shortages, and good education systems that equip globally mobile younger workers to work overseas.

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<sup>1</sup> [The Scottish Government - A Fairer, Greener Scotland: Programme for Government 2021-22](#)

Policy responses include a range of engagement measures, principally support for overseas business networks, and in some cases support for alumni, as well as steps to encourage and support skilled diaspora members to return home. This emphasis on “return” policies is frequently mentioned in migration literature and is borne out in data sets on emigration policies.<sup>2</sup>

6. The scope for sub-state action on diaspora engagement is invariably impacted by the legal competence the sub-state has within its overall constitutional framework. This competence is defined differently in each case, so it is hard to draw general conclusions.<sup>3</sup>
7. Our sample countries mostly targeted “temporary migrants” defined by the European Union as “*Migration for a specific motivation and / or purpose with the intention that afterwards there will be a return to the country of origin or onward movement*”.<sup>4</sup> While other diaspora segments, such as “heritage” or “affinity” diasporas were targeted by some countries, they were in the minority. Comparator countries’ commonest policy goals were economic, followed by cultural. Surprisingly few countries saw their diasporas as contributors to their public diplomacy or international promotion.
8. There appears to be a consensus internationally that diaspora policy and strategy needs to be addressed through extensive stakeholder engagement and consultation (this is true even in China). This process is not always part of a wider international strategy development process, but where it is, it seems to be more effective at leading to adopted strategies.
9. In all countries in this study, diaspora engagement, when it is understood in the narrow sense of providing services to citizens overseas, is implemented by diplomatic structures (consulates). This is also the case in most countries globally.<sup>5</sup> Embassies and consulates also engage in other aspects of diaspora engagement such as events for sections of the diaspora, business and trade activities, cultural diplomacy, or promotional activities. Diaspora relations take place through a range of institutions including embassies, sub-state international offices, trade delegations, business networks, cultural institutes, civil society and

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<sup>2</sup> See for example:

Dickerson, S. and Ozden, C., 2018. Diaspora engagement and return migration policies. In Handbook of migration and globalisation. Edward Elgar Publishing.

[Emigrant Policies Index \(EMIX\) Dataset](#)

Palop-García, P. and Pedroza, L., 2021. Do Diaspora Engagement Policies Endure? An Update of the Emigrant Policies Index (EMIX) to 2017. Global Policy, 12(3), pp.361-371.

<sup>3</sup> See for example: Koinova, M. and Tsourapas, G. (2018) “[How do countries of origin engage migrants and diasporas? Multiple actors and comparative perspectives](#)”, International Political Science Review, 39(3), pp. 311–321. doi: 10.1177/0192512118755843.

<sup>4</sup> [European Commission glossary: “Temporary migration”](#)

<sup>5</sup> See: Chapter 4, Dovelyn Rannveig Agunias and Kathleen Newland, Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development, A Handbook for Policymakers and Practitioners in Home and Host Countries, International Organisation for Migration and Migration Policy Institute (2011). While the focus is on development, this publication’s findings are also generally relevant.

voluntary bodies. Diaspora engagement activities can also be based in the home country, in the form of dedicated agencies, advocacy organisations that promote diaspora engagement, alumni networks, digital platforms, online networks, and online services such as access to information or ancestry search.<sup>6</sup> Activities other than those directly provided by state institutions may, or may not, receive support from the state.

10. Lack of good data is a general problem. While the countries in this study mostly have rigorous and comprehensive national statistics on migration (Canada, Denmark, the UK) which can partly serve as a proxy measure of the diaspora, none of the countries in the study had easily accessible statistics on their diasporas. As noted by the [Migration Data Portal](#), to do so would pose methodological challenges, given that there is no agreed upon definition of “diaspora”. France stands out in this study as the country with the best statistics on its expatriate population, reflecting the fact that France is unique in our sample in extending full citizenship rights (including voting rights) to its overseas population.
11. Generally, countries that are active in diaspora engagement wish to align their activities with national brands. Several are in the process of developing nation brands through processes of engagement and consultation, but that tends to be a parallel process to that of consultation on their diaspora strategies. Countries face challenges in connecting their nation brands to their national imaginary (how they see themselves, especially their values and symbols), to the perceptions of others (how others see them) and to the associations others make with references to the past which do not play well in the modern world. There is also the question of how accurately nation brands express the reality of the country.
12. The COVID-19 pandemic is accelerating the turn to the digital, globally, in terms of how people live, work, transact and engage. Countries offer a range of digital experiences and opportunities to diasporas – but these are almost never targeted specifically at them unless they address specific sectoral concerns (business networking), sell individual experiences (ancestry and tourism sites), provide services (consulates), or project an image of the country (in relation to global challenges). Very few sites drive engagement. That, where it is the focus of digital engagement, is done through social media (mostly Facebook).
13. Temporary migrants, including students and alumni, are an increasing focus in the countries studied, reflecting increased labour mobility. This is particularly relevant to Canada (Québec), Denmark, Ireland, and New Zealand. [Temporary migration is defined by the European Commission](#) as “...for a specific motivation and / or purpose with the intention that afterwards there will be a return to the

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<sup>6</sup> For definitions of these terms see: [Gartner glossary](#). Online networking is the process of expanding and developing your network of social and business relationships through online communication channels, especially social media platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, see: ["What is Online Networking?" by Greg Bahlmann](#).



*country of origin or onward movement*". As noted in [Scotland's National Population Strategy](#), temporary migrants are important as they can meet the skills needs of sectors such as pharmaceuticals, banking, or higher education, or the labour requirements of seasonal industries such as food and drink, and tourism.

14. Countries (with some notable exceptions) do not devote substantial resources to diaspora engagement other than through their consulates. Several countries have started to develop engagement policies with a broad scope, but over time, nearly all have found it necessary to focus more narrowly on specific groups who can be supported meaningfully within scarce resources. It is thus hard to conclude whether Scotland should take a broad or narrow approach. That would depend on what Scotland wants to achieve in its wider international engagement and how it sees itself in the world. Decisions on resources should also follow an assessment of how far its own capacities will go toward reaching its goals, which capacities reside within the targeted diasporas, and which must be created or sought from other actors.
15. Policy must be communicated effectively in order to secure domestic (and diaspora) support for engagement over time. Given the large number of interests and stakeholders, it is important to manage expectations. From the experience of countries such as Australia and New Zealand, there is a risk that governments that respond to pro-diaspora lobbies with a sense of genuine initial excitement find it hard to translate that into overall policy or strategy, or offer other than very limited financial support.
16. At the level of delivery, there are three main levels of "meaningful engagement". These range from formal state-led engagements through diplomatic channels (level 1), through to more informal arrangements (level 3). Scotland, as a significant sub-state actor, today operates at levels 2 and 3. The right level of diaspora engagement within existing competencies is a question which can and should be addressed by Scotland as it considers diaspora engagement in the context of its wider international aims.
17. However, meaningful engagement, at any level, is a two-way process involving discussion and cooperation, rather than one-way information provision. It also implies mutual understanding based on good information. As [research into cultural relations, dialogue and co-operation for the British Council has shown](#), a shared view of contemporary diaspora and home country reality is a prerequisite for effective engagement.

# 1. Introduction

## Aims and objectives

18. We were commissioned by the Scottish Government to conduct an international literature review of diaspora strategies from a sample of countries.
19. The research had two overall aims:
  - To conduct a robust literature review around different diaspora engagement strategies, which;
  - Maps what other countries with successful diaspora strategies have done, and explains why and how these approaches have been successful with reference to their specific situation (cultural norms, location of diaspora, etc.).
20. The objectives of the research were to:
  - Provide a high-level summary of various approaches taken by different state and sub-state actors toward diasporic communities;
  - Provide detailed case studies into different approaches to engaging with the diaspora;
  - Understand how success is measured with regard to different approaches to engaging with diasporic communities;
  - Identify specific elements of a successful diaspora approach;
  - Contextualise the different case studies by taking into account the historical and current context of any engagement strategies;
  - Detail, where possible, the resource implications of the different initiatives;
  - Compare the balance between states'/sub-states' use of a broad range of approaches versus focusing on a limited number of approaches, and the respective impact of having a broad or deep strategy.
21. The Scottish Government's aim was to help develop their Scottish Connections work by providing:

*"...timely, robust information on engagement activities, initiatives and strategies undertaken by various state and sub-state actors with regard to diasporic communities."*
22. The brief was clear that we should take a broad definition of what constitutes a diaspora community. It was also clear as to what was required, namely a literature review which provides:

*"...a clear overview of such strategies, as well as...detailed case studies."*
23. There is no single definition of a diaspora. The definition used here is that of the International Organization for Migration who define diasporas as "migrants or

descendants of migrants, whose identity and sense of belonging have been shaped by their migration experience and background.”<sup>7</sup>

## Policy context

24. The Scottish Government expressed the following aspirations in the [2017 International Framework](#) to:

*“...work with our people, diaspora and partners outside Scotland to share local knowledge and build long-term relationships and networks.”*

25. As noted on page 6, the desire for relationship building is included in *the Scottish Government’s Programme for Government 2021-22*:

*“Welcoming the world also means renewing and reaffirming our auld acquaintance. We will engage with our **Scottish Connections** international community and expand on our work with Scottish diaspora networks across the world.”* (Chapter 6)

26. The wider policy context also needed to be considered. There are new global conditions including a rapidly changing geopolitical context, COVID-19, Brexit, new developments in digital communications technology which permit new modes of engagement, and challenges to traditional values and histories especially the rise of identity politics and the legacy of colonialism.

27. The task was to recognise these changing conditions, build on previous research and existing strategy, and identify, from the practical point of view, “what works” in other countries’ arrangements that can contribute to a new strategy for developing meaningful connections with the Scottish diaspora, as part of the [Programme for Government’s aim](#) that Scotland should be:

*“open, connected and make a positive contribution internationally.”*

## Policy aims

28. The focus of this report is on the policy direction for Scotland’s international engagement set out in the [Programme for Government 2021-22, Chapter 6, Scotland in the World](#). Scotland’s international engagement has the overall aim to:

*“...embrace the opportunities of international connection and cooperation, acting as a good global citizen to champion our values-based approach on the world stage...”*

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<sup>7</sup> [IOM Glossary on Migration, 2019](#)

29. The commitment to “*expand on our work with Scottish diaspora networks across the world*” is situated within the section “*Strengthening our world-class culture offer*”, alongside commitments to develop a Cultural Diplomacy strategy, “*refresh and reinvigorate our successful Brand Scotland activity*” and “*enhance Scotland's international reputation and our position as an attractive place to live, work, study, visit and do business.*”
30. In addition, we recognise that “heritage diasporas” are relevant to this study. Individuals living in diasporas return to their homeland to retrace ancestries and identity. Members of the homeland also travel to the diaspora to gain perspectives on their identity. These are important ways in which diaspora identities are engaged for political, social, educational, linguistic, and economic goals ([Berg, 2018](#)).
31. We also took the view that “meaningful connections” implied two-way engagement based on mutuality and reciprocity. This informed the view that we took of countries’ activities, particularly their communications and digital initiatives.

## The evidence

32. Countries, including Scotland, have been engaging with diasporas for a long time. There is a substantial amount of academic literature on the Scottish diaspora, on diasporas in general, and on those of other countries. We were therefore able to draw on earlier research, especially work which the Scottish Government itself had carried out in two earlier reports.<sup>8</sup>
33. However, as our research progressed, we found that there was a significant gap in the data on the size, demographics, and geography of diaspora populations. It was a serious concern to us that the statistics used were so incomplete and on occasion contradictory. For example, the estimates of the size of the Scottish diaspora vary enormously, from 40 to 80 million people, in comparison to a “home” population of 5.25 million. Either way, the numbers are huge, relative to the size of the population in Scotland itself.<sup>9</sup>
34. There was also very little information on countries’ current policies and strategies. With the major exceptions of France (which, as already noted, is a special case), and Ireland, policies were very brief and unspecific (Japan), under development and therefore vague (Denmark, Flanders, Québec) or non-existent (New Zealand, USA). This required us to infer what the strategies were from

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<sup>8</sup> [The Scottish Diaspora and Diaspora Strategy: Insights and Lessons from Ireland](#) (2009), and a 2015 internal literature review into Diaspora Strategy/Diaspora Engagement, which looked at information from New Zealand, Australia, Ireland, America, Canada/Quebec, Belgium/Flanders, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Germany, and Poland.

<sup>9</sup> Murray Stewart Leith and Duncan Sim (2016) “[Scotland’s Diaspora Strategy: The View from the current American Diaspora](#)”, *Scottish Affairs*, 25(2): 186–208.

what institutions they have, and what they do, rather than from clearly articulated and published policies and strategies.

35. Most noticeably, there was scant evidence of any evaluation activity that would enable us to assess what worked and what didn't.
36. The authors have therefore used their judgement in this report, based on a review of information from official websites. A systematic and structured comparative analysis was carried out against agreed criteria, chosen because of their relevance to Scottish priorities and aspirations. The authors drew on their experience of similar comparative studies and, where relevant, from academic and other research. This allowed the authors to come to conclusions and make recommendations, but further work needs to be done to look beneath the surface and identify with more clarity and depth what lessons Scotland can and should learn from other countries.

## Our approach

37. Recognising these limitations, three research questions were asked:
  - Who has a successful diaspora strategy and what does it consist of?
  - What themes emerge from the review of the comparator countries?
  - What can be learned from a more detailed assessment of the themes that emerged from the first two questions?
38. These questions were asked in full awareness that diasporas resemble each other in some respects, but differ enormously in their scale, history, culture, and importance to their home country. This led us early on to be wary of two risks:
  - Assuming that where two countries (in this case Scotland and Ireland) have a close relationship and entangled histories, their diasporas and their policy aims will and should resemble each other,<sup>10</sup> and
  - Looking for lessons where the data and evidence were most plentiful or where the comparisons to Scotland seemed at first sight to be most evident.

This could lead us to miss important lessons from countries such as Japan, which are in many ways less obvious but nevertheless valuable.

39. Another issue requiring further consideration was how to compare the approaches of states and sub-states. What is possible is constrained by constitutional competence – sub-states cannot draw on ideas of citizenship or

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<sup>10</sup> This is not necessarily the case – see for example: Michael Anderson, Migrants in Scotland's population histories since 1850, Chapter 11, Scotland's Population - The Registrar General's Annual Review of Demographic Trends on the uniqueness of Scottish emigration patterns (2016): 79-106.

on networks of Embassies and Consulates in the same way that states can. This matters because the single most important official channel for diaspora engagement globally is through these diplomatic structures.<sup>11</sup>

40. Having said that, states and sub-states face many of the same challenges today, and their policies and strategies reflect these, recognising the constraints of their constitutional status, the path dependencies generated by historical approaches and institutions (which apply both to states and sub-states), and their differing imaginaries of who they are.
41. That alignment of circumstances generates opportunities for fresh thinking about diaspora engagement. This report therefore seeks to focus on practical lessons that Scotland can learn from other states and sub-states, which address common challenges. This report has identified many potential areas for further consideration.

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<sup>11</sup> Agunias and Newland (2011).

## 2. Context: Diaspora Strategies

### Worldwide

42. When considering diaspora strategies in general, we drew on the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) report, *Connecting with Emigrants*,<sup>12</sup> which draws on the Database on Immigrants in OECD and non-OECD Countries: DIOC.<sup>13</sup> As noted by the Migration Data Portal, comparative data are often not available elsewhere in the world:

*“Due to the lack of comparable data in many regions in the world, it is difficult to describe global trends of migration flows. Annual, comparable migration flows data are largely limited to countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).”<sup>14</sup>*

43. The OECD data were also useful as they connected data to policy, saying that, in the OECD's view, migrant populations offered opportunities to countries, and that countries of origin were increasingly aware that building links with diasporas should be a priority, but that their contribution depended on the size and characteristics of the diaspora such as skills and age. In the early years of this century, concerned by “brain drains”, OECD countries focused on policies to encourage the return of diasporas. More recently (2015), they recognised that this was not the only way forward. They also recognised that diasporas could act as ambassadors for their home countries.

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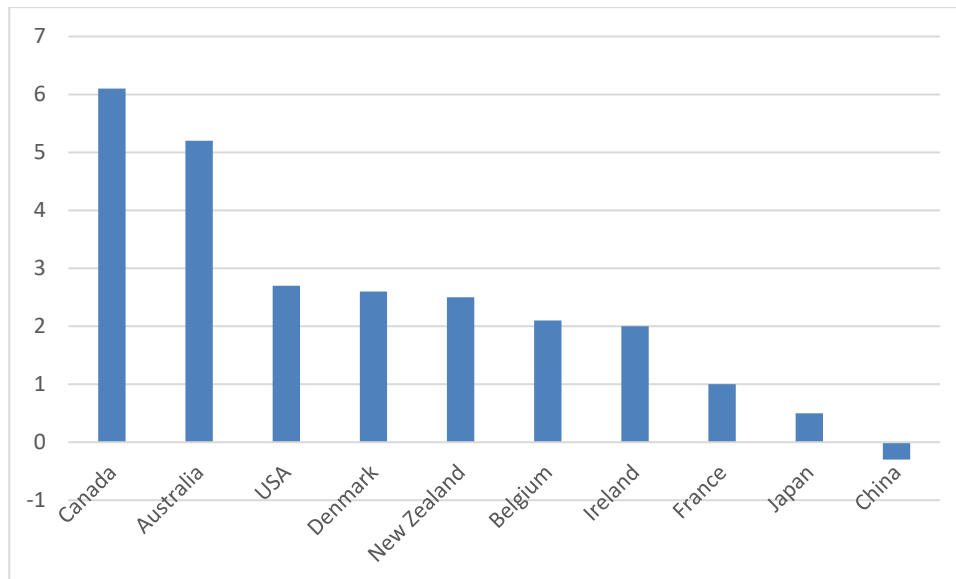
<sup>12</sup> OECD (2015), [Connecting with Emigrants: A Global Profile of Diasporas 2015](#), OECD Publishing, Paris

<sup>13</sup> See: [OECD's database on immigrants in OECD and non-OECD countries](#)

<sup>14</sup> See: ["International migration flows" on Migration Data Portal](#)

44. The OECD uses migration statistics as the most useful measure for diasporas in the absence of better data. While OECD data are useful, there are more up to date databases of migration produced by the United Nations (UN).<sup>15</sup> While we could not identify detailed up to date databases on diaspora populations as such, we found that the concept of net migration was useful as it gives a picture of flows of migrant populations over a period.<sup>16</sup> For the countries in this study the UN's estimates of net migration flows over the period 2020-25 are (see Figure 1):

**Figure 1: Estimated net migration rates per 1,000 population (2020-25)<sup>17</sup>**



<sup>15</sup> See: [United Nations Statistics Division - "International migration"](#) (2019).

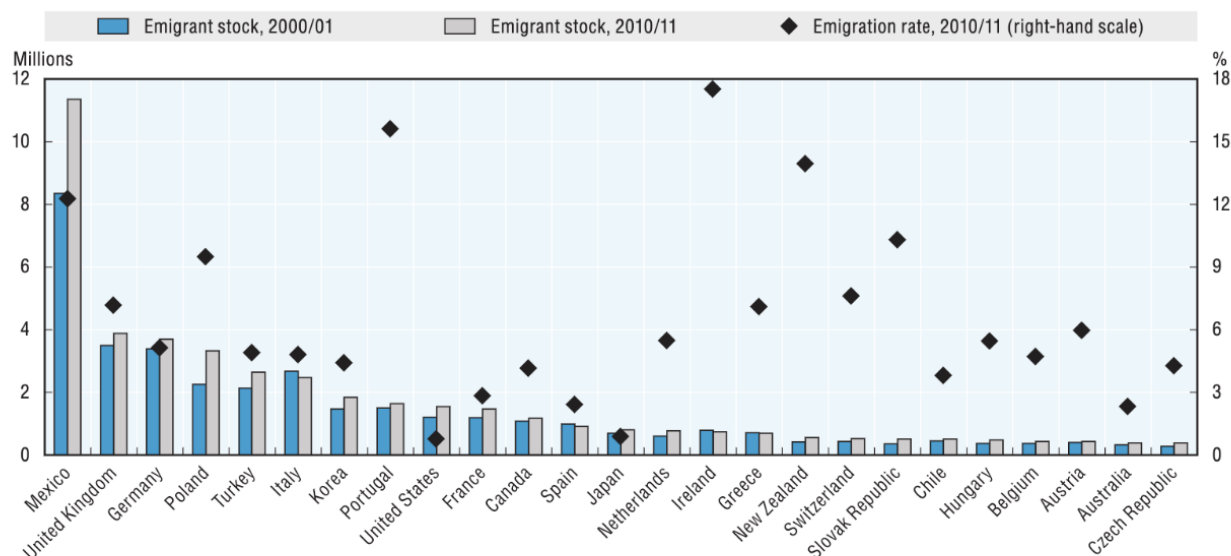
<sup>16</sup> The United Nations defines net migration as the number of immigrants minus the number of emigrants over a period, divided by the person-years lived by the population of the receiving country over that period. It is expressed as net number of migrants per 1,000 population. See: [UN data – "Net migration rate"](#)

<sup>17</sup> Source: [UN data - "Net migration rate"](#)



45. The UN data do not, however, give up-to-date emigration rates. In our sample, Ireland had the highest emigration rate of any OECD country at 17.4%,<sup>18</sup> followed by New Zealand at 13.8% (see Figure 2, below). The countries with the lowest emigration rates were the USA and Japan – both less than 1%. The UK rate was 7%, which was relatively high for an OECD country. The favourite destination countries for emigrants from OECD countries were other OECD countries: the USA, Germany, the UK, Australia, France, and Canada.

**Figure 2: Number of emigrants and emigration rates by main OECD countries of origin (2010-11)**<sup>19</sup>



Note: The population refers to persons aged 15 and above.

Source: Database on Immigrants in OECD and non-OECD Countries (DIOC-E) 2000/01 and 2010/11.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933269347>

46. Emigrants from OECD countries were broadly gender-balanced (though Japan had a high proportion of female emigrants). Emigrants from OECD countries also tended to be older than those from other countries, and 36% were classed as highly skilled. Women tended to be slightly more educated than men. It is worth noting, however, that the skill level of emigrants varies both by country of origin and by destination country for reasons of age profile and duration of stay – international students affect the statistics.<sup>20</sup>
47. The risk of a “brain drain” effect is increased by selective migration and immigration policies. Although this is overall lower for OECD than for non-OECD countries, the UK does have a comparatively high rate of skilled emigration – the

<sup>18</sup> Emigration rate is defined as the share of the native population of a country residing abroad at a specific time. [Definition from OECD in "Emigration rates by country of origin, sex and educational attainment levels" release.](#)

<sup>19</sup> [OECD - Connecting with Emigrants: A Global Profile of Emigrants 2015 \(Chapter 4\)](#)

<sup>20</sup> [OECD - Connecting with Emigrants: A Global Profile of Diasporas 2015](#)

OECD average emigration rate of the highly-skilled is 3.8%, for the UK it is over 10%, and for Ireland it is 20%.<sup>21</sup>

48. The issue of migration is important for Scotland. Historically, as noted in Scotland's first national population strategy, Scotland experienced negative net migration for decades, with more people leaving Scotland than arriving.<sup>22</sup> That legacy means that Scotland today is more reliant on migration than other parts of the UK. Over the past 20 years, however, Scotland's migration flows have changed, with inward migration from overseas rising significantly in the 2000s. Scotland's population growth in the latest year, however, was 0.05% (2,700 people), the slowest since mid-2003.<sup>23</sup> According to the [National Records of Scotland](#) (NRS), population growth slowed due to more deaths and lower levels of net migration.<sup>24</sup> However 7,900 more people moved to Scotland from overseas than left. More recent statistics published by the NRS on Migration between Scotland and Overseas published in 2021, showed that despite this net gain, there was a sharp increase in the numbers of (mainly younger Scots aged between 16 and 34) going overseas in 2019-20 to the highest total level for 20 years.<sup>25</sup>
49. Emigration is likely to continue. According to [Gallup](#), people's desire to migrate permanently to another country increased between 2015 and 2017. Fifteen percent of the world's adults (more than 750 million people) said they would like to move to another country if they had the opportunity, up from 14% between 2013 and 2016, and 13% between 2010 and 2012, but still lower than the 16% between 2007 and 2009. The rate is higher among the highly-skilled and the young. Loss of skilled young people negatively affects economic growth and accelerates the ageing of the population – critical for some countries.

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<sup>21</sup> As above.

<sup>22</sup> See: [The Scottish Government - A Scotland for the future: opportunities and challenges of Scotland's changing population \(2021\)](#)

<sup>23</sup> See: [National Records of Scotland - Mid-2020 Population Estimates, Scotland](#)

<sup>24</sup> See: [National Records of Scotland - Scotland's population growth slowest since 2003](#)

<sup>25</sup> See: [National Records of Scotland - Migration between Scotland and Overseas](#)

50. The OECD’s focus on emigration rates was reflected in the policies in our sample countries who mostly targeted expatriates – people who had gone to work or live overseas. This was the case with Australia, Belgium (Flanders), Canada (Québec), China, Denmark, France, Ireland, Japan, and New Zealand. Given the lack of clear national policies or strategies, this was not always stated explicitly, but it can clearly be inferred from the missions and activities of the non-diplomatic institutions, agencies, and civil society bodies supported by governments. While other diaspora segments were targeted by some countries, they were in the minority. Table 1 (below) summarises the diaspora segments targeted by comparators in the study. Please note that the USA and Canada are not shaded as neither country has a strategy which clearly targets one diaspora segment:

**Table 1: Segment of the diaspora targeted<sup>26</sup>**

<b>Target segments</b>	Expats (1st generation)	Expats (2nd generation)	Heritage diaspora	Reverse diaspora	Affinity diaspora
Australia					
Canada					
China					
Denmark					
Flanders					
France					
Ireland					
Japan					
New Zealand					
Québec					
USA					

<sup>26</sup> Source: Authors’ own analysis based on review of missions and activities of the non-diplomatic institutions, agencies, and civil society bodies supported by governments

51. This concern with the contemporary, as opposed to the heritage or affinity diasporas, was also reflected in the policy goals of comparator countries, where the most common policy goals were economic, followed by cultural. Surprisingly few countries saw their diasporas as contributors to their public diplomacy or international promotion. Table 2 (below) summarises the policy goals we could identify from official websites and the literature:

**Table 2: Surveyed countries' policy goals<sup>27</sup>**

Policy goals	Investment	Business networks	Return of expatriates	Knowledge exchange	Culture	Education	Tourism	Citizenship	Nation branding	Soft Power
Australia										
Canada										
China										
Denmark										
Flanders										
France										
Ireland										
Japan										
New Zealand										
Québec										
USA										

52. Table 2 also confirms that while a small number of comparators addressed most of the policy goals of diaspora engagement, most tended to focus their efforts on a specific diaspora group or sector.

53. Institutional arrangements also varied, reflecting the ebb and flow of policy interest and resource commitment. Table 3 (next page) summarises the

<sup>27</sup> Source: Authors' own analysis based on review of official websites and papers

principal channels through which the countries surveyed engaged with their diasporas:

**Table 3: Institutions through which diasporas are engaged**

Institutions	Government Minister	Policy and strategy	Dedicated resources	Government agency	International offices	Civil society partners	Membership organisations	Alumni support
Australia								
Canada								
China								
Denmark								
Flanders								
France								
Ireland								
Japan								
New Zealand								
Québec								
USA								

Key		Embassies and Consulates
		Sub-state or arm's length bodies

54. Having summarised the comparator countries, the following country reviews assess them in more detail across the dimensions of:

- Diaspora target segments
- Policy goals
- Brand architecture (including values)
- Institutions and resources

### 3. Comparator Countries

#### Australia

##### Overview

55. There are no official statistics on the scale of the Australian diaspora but it is estimated be in the region of 1 million people living and working overseas, with 2.5 million non-Australian-born alumni of Australian universities living overseas.<sup>28</sup>
56. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics,<sup>29</sup> net overseas migration from Australia has been steadily increasing since 1971 though numbers have recently been reduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The majority of people who leave are migrants on temporary visas. Migrant departures on temporary visas increased by 16% between 2019 and 2020, and the largest single group leaving are students. The largest percentage of Australian emigrants (48%) are based in Europe, and the next largest percentage (24%) are in Asia. The Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement enables Australians and New Zealanders to migrate between Australia and New Zealand. Education levels of Australian expatriates are high: 44% of Australian expatriates in other OECD countries had a high level of education.<sup>30</sup>
57. The diaspora has attracted some recent policy interest ([2017 Foreign Policy White Paper](#)). However, the topic attracted more serious interest in the early 2000s, at a time when overseas departures were at a level more than twice the level of today.<sup>31</sup> [The Committee for Economic Development of Australia \(CEDA\) 2003 research report, Australia's Diaspora: Its Size, Nature and Policy Implications](#), concluded that Australia was in a global competition to attract skilled people, so recommended that Australia should do more to attract skilled expatriates back to Australia, and to make the most of the stock of skilled Australians overseas.
58. In 2005 the Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee produced a report: [They still call Australia home: Inquiry into Australian expatriates](#). The Committee found that Australian expatriates presented many potential benefits and opportunities for Australian policymakers, and suggested that the Australian

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<sup>28</sup> See: [PWC - Out of sight, out of mind? Australia's diaspora as a pathway to innovation](#) (2018)

<sup>29</sup> See: [Australian Bureau of Statistics - Net overseas migration](#)

<sup>30</sup> The OECD defines 3 levels of education, the highest being tertiary level – the level referred to here.

<sup>31</sup> See: [Australian Bureau of Statistics - Net overseas migration, arrivals, departures and net, major groupings and visas](#)

Government needed to make greater efforts to connect with, and engage, the expatriate community. The report saw the diaspora as an underutilised resource which could be used to promote Australia and its social, economic, and cultural interests and act as ambassadors for the nation – which they saw as disadvantaged by geographic remoteness and small population. The Committee made 16 recommendations, including:

- A web portal for the diaspora to provide information and services for expatriate Australians and facilitate engagement and information exchange in the expatriate community.
- The establishment of a policy unit within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to facilitate the coordination of policies relating to Australian expatriates.
- Improve the statistical information collected in relation to Australian expatriates.

59. Today, the [DFAT website](#) only returns information on diaspora policies or strategies as part of Australia’s soft power. Currently, even the overall soft power strategy is in suspension due to the pandemic. [Making the most of PD \(Public Diplomacy\) events, visits and people-to-people links](#) (2011), does have a short section on the diaspora, but there is no information on strategy. It cites the work of [Advance](#), which is a professional network with a membership of more than 20,000 in 80 countries. It is also a web portal for global Australians (in business) with a clear mission:

- Support international career paths and provide a bridge for skills and knowledge acquired overseas to be leveraged for Australia’s benefit.
- Recognise and celebrate the achievements of global Australians who are at the forefront of their respective fields, to inspire future generations and encourage a global outlook.

60. Despite its narrow business focus, [Advance is today doing research into the Australian diaspora](#). It also carries out [an annual survey of “Global Australians”](#).

## Diaspora target segments

61. There are two priorities for Australia:

- *Alumni*: DFAT is responsible for the Australia Global Alumni Engagement Strategy (2016-20).
- *Business*: The “Advance community” includes members and social media followers, who are at any point along their international journey from when they go overseas, live, and work overseas, and return to Australia.

## Policy goals

62. The Soft Power section of the [2017 Foreign Policy White Paper](#) clearly sets out the rationale and direction of Australia's diaspora engagement.

*"Alumni and expatriates*

*More than 2.5 million international students have studied in Australia in the past 50 years. This is a significant asset for Australia. These former international students, together with Australians who have studied overseas, make up Australia's global alumni community.*

*Our strategy to build a global alumni community promotes Australia and advances our national interests. The Government is working in partnership with Australian universities to keep alumni connected to Australia and to each other through online communities and learning opportunities.*

*We also have an estimated one million Australians living overseas. We will continue to leverage the knowledge, networks, and expertise of our expatriates through chambers of commerce and organisations such as Advance."*

63. Expatriates also contribute to development:

*"The Government will maintain its 60-year commitment to funding Australian volunteers to share their expertise in our region. This year we will support more than 1,000 Australian volunteers to work with local organisations and governments in partner countries to promote social and economic development."*

64. Although earlier policy thinking included social and cultural goals, the focus has been narrowed. While there are signs that following years of relative neglect diaspora policy may be attracting more interest, this is within a wider context, however, in which Australia's review of its soft power was closed down, according to DFAT due to the onset of the pandemic, the response to which will require:

*"...a focused, deliberate effort integrating all tools of statecraft, including Australia's considerable soft power."*

65. DFAT does feature, however, the [Australia Global Alumni Engagement Strategy \(2016-20\)](#). [The engagement strategy, which has its own website](#), has a clear benefits statement, a strategy and objectives to:
- Strengthen Australia's diplomatic access and influence.
  - Grow trade, investment, and business linkages.
  - Promote Australia's capabilities and credentials in education, science, research, and innovation.
  - Showcase Australia as a contemporary, innovative, open society.



66. [The strategy includes a publication of its outcomes](#) which reports that:
- Alumni create people-to-people links and reinforce professional linkages between institutions, organisations, businesses, and governments.
  - Alumni hold influential positions in Australia and around the world and are a valuable soft power asset.
  - Alumni improve perceptions of Australia by sharing positive views of Australia, its people and society.
  - Alumni make positive contributions towards development initiatives.
  - Alumni engage in business-related alumni activities, join local chambers of commerce, and participate in youth exchange programs and international youth forums, often creating new opportunities for Australian businesses.
  - Alumni promote Australia's education, science, research, and innovation.

## Brand architecture

67. Australian industry and stakeholders asked for a more coordinated approach to how Australia is presented globally, and as a response to these submissions, [the Government committed to developing a stronger nation brand](#) on the release of the *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper*. [Austrade](#) is developing Australia's Nation Brand on behalf of all Australians and all government departments with a Nation Brand Advisory Council and a Brand Expert Working Group. The brand architecture is still under development.

## Institutions and resources

68. [Advance](#) is the main organisation that engages with global Australians. It has two main areas of activity:
- Support for Australians who pursue international careers, and the leverage of skills and knowledge obtained internationally for Australia's benefit, and
  - Recognising and celebrating the achievements of Global Australians to inspire young people and encourage a global outlook.
69. Advance supports people:
- Before they go overseas through events, job listings and mentoring opportunities for people to learn from others with international experience.
  - When they are overseas through a range of networking resources, a network of "Advance Ambassadors", a monthly newsletter on events in Australia, and by sharing the stories of other global Australians through a programme of roundtables, interviews, podcasts, and digital postcards,<sup>32</sup> to share how others are navigating the challenges of living overseas and enable people to connect with Australians in their region.

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<sup>32</sup> [Advance – Website including digital postcards](#)

- Returning to Australia through help with job search and networking.
70. The Advance Awards, now in their 10th year, are central to everything they do. They identify high-achieving Australians overseas and introduce them to Australian audiences.
  71. Advance’s focus is on skills, and it aims to enable skills and knowledge acquired overseas to be leveraged for the nation's benefit.
  72. The Commonwealth Government is Advance’s major government partner. Advance is partially funded by the Australian Federal Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT) and the Department of Industry (DISER), in recognition of the soft power and global industry insights delivered by the diaspora.<sup>33</sup> There is, however, no identifiable funding line in the DFAT budget.
  73. The Australian government invites local and state governments to partner through a package tailored to their specific programmes. Advance is also supported by founding patrons, philanthropic donors, and corporate sponsors.<sup>34</sup> It has six main private sector partners. University of Sydney Business School, University of Queensland and is a lean organisation with four management staff and three interns.

The name “Advance” is taken from the national anthem *Advance Australia Fair* (written by Scottish-born composer, Peter Dodds McCormick). It replaced "God Save the Queen" as the official national anthem in 1984, following a plebiscite to choose the national song in 1977. The song has been criticised (in Australia) for being boring,<sup>35</sup> racist,<sup>36</sup> and for promoting a colonial vision, ignoring indigenous people.<sup>37</sup> It remains controversial and it is worth noting that “Advance Australia” is also the name of a Conservative lobby group.

## Evaluation

74. There was no evidence of any evaluation of Australia’s current diaspora engagement from which lessons could be drawn. As noted, the Australian Senate has taken an interest but that was many years ago. The recent [Soft Power review](#) launched in 2018 would have been an opportunity to consider diaspora engagement, but it was discontinued in 2020 following the onset of COVID-19.

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<sup>33</sup> [Advance - Connecting Australians Globally](#)

<sup>34</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>35</sup> [ABC News – “Why does everyone think ‘Advance Australia Fair’ is flawed?”](#)

<sup>36</sup> [Warwick McFayden, “Advance Australia Fair is an anthem that is racist at so many levels” in the Sydney Morning Herald](#), 16 September 2018.

<sup>37</sup> [Creative Spirits – “National Anthem: Advanced, Aboriginal & Fair?”](#)

75. Jonathan Cheng found,<sup>38</sup> in a 2016 report for the government-commissioned [Securing Australia's Future](#) project focusing on Australia's engagement with Asia, that it was still a lively debate whether governments can cost-effectively leverage diasporas to their advantage, and whether (and how) diaspora engagement policies and programmes can be evaluated. He noted that there was a lack of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of diaspora related programmes and initiatives. As a result, it was difficult to measure the impact of diaspora engagement policies and to evaluate which policies were the most useful.
76. Despite the absence of good data and evidence, he nevertheless argued that: *"Diasporas play a key role in trade, investment, and skills and knowledge transfer"* and that policy intervention on diaspora engagement was more likely to succeed if it focused on removing obstacles and creating opportunities rather than trying to manage diaspora resources directly.

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<sup>38</sup> Cheng, J. (2016). Engaging Diasporas: The case of Australia and other key countries. Report for Securing Australia's Future project 11 'Australia's Diaspora Advantage: Realising the potential for building transnational business networks with Asia' on behalf of the [Australian Council of Learned Academies](#), Melbourne Australia.

## Belgium (Flanders)

### Overview

77. France and the USA were the main destinations of Flemish emigrants in the recent past: approximately one million Americans claim Flemish roots and the same number in France.<sup>39</sup> To the authors' knowledge, nothing is done at the federal level to support the Belgian diaspora beyond consular services. Flanders and Wallonia have two associations which do provide support: Flemish in the World (VIW) and Union Francophone des Belges à l'Etranger (UFBE).
78. According to the "*in foro interno, in foro externo*" principle,<sup>40</sup> Flanders can develop a foreign policy in all areas where it has internal powers, such as education, the environment, infrastructure, culture and social affairs. Flanders enjoys full treaty making powers in these areas.

### Policy goals

79. Flanders implements an autonomous foreign policy that:
- Works to profile Flanders abroad in an individual and targeted manner.
  - Focuses on international enterprise and targeted economic and public diplomacy.
  - Has an effective and more direct voice in the EU.
  - Adopts an active and focused policy regarding its neighbouring countries and a multilateral approach, and
  - Strives for development cooperation.<sup>41</sup>

### Brand architecture

80. In its *Vision 2050*, the Government of Flanders outlines the region it aspires to be in 2050: "...a social, open, resilient, and international Flanders which creates prosperity and well-being in a smart, innovative, and sustainable way, and where everyone counts."<sup>42</sup> As an open society and economy, the future of Flanders is tied to development in the rest of the world, so the Government of Flanders wishes to see Flanders more connected with other countries than ever before.

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<sup>39</sup> See: ["Flemish people" \(2007 Schools Wikipedia selection\)](#)

<sup>40</sup> Literally translates as: "in the internal market, in the external". The '*foro interno, foro externo*' principle stipulates that the Belgian federated entities are responsible for the international aspects of their competences. See: [Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office - Coordination with Belgium](#)

<sup>41</sup> See: [Foreign Policy goals cited on the Delegation of Flanders in Southern Africa website](#)

<sup>42</sup> See: [Vlaanderen - Vision 2050: A long-term strategy for Flanders](#)

## Institutions and resources

81. Flemish in the World (VIW)<sup>43</sup> provides advice and support for Flemish people who want to live abroad or who are already living abroad. It is funded mainly by a membership fee (€60 per person per year). It is also supported by annual grants from the Flemish Government and private sector. It has representatives in major cities abroad who organise clubs and networking events and provide advice to people who want to work abroad and to members of the diaspora who wish to return to Flanders. VIW had a grant from the Flanders Government of €264,000 in 2019-20.
82. Flanders Investment and Trade (FIT) offers tailored advice, guidance, and financial support to Flemish export companies.<sup>44</sup> Companies can call on “*our networks of contacts both at home and abroad*”. The sector focus is on Digital Tech, Health Tech, and Climate Tech. There is a FIT officer in every Belgian embassy (90 offices in total) and five offices in Flanders. FIT is an external independent agency funded by the Flemish Government. FIT’s operating budget is €45 million. FIT has 325 personnel (150 in Flanders, 175 abroad).

## Evaluation

83. There was no evidence of any evaluation of Flanders’ current diaspora engagement from which lessons could be drawn. This is consistent with the general situation in Europe. As Taylor et al note in a 2014 report for DG HOME, while evaluations are essential for informing future development of diaspora engagement initiatives, in general there appears to be a relative paucity of available evaluations of diaspora engagement initiatives.<sup>45</sup> The few evaluations that exist focus mainly on initiatives with development purposes.

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<sup>43</sup> See: [Vlamingen in de Wereld - Wonen, werken en studeren in het buitenland](#)

<sup>44</sup> See: [Flanders Investment and Trade](#)

<sup>45</sup> Taylor, J., Rubin, J., Giulietti, C., Giacomantonio, C., Tsang, F., Constant, A., Mbaye, L. and Naghsh Nejad, M., 2014. Mapping Diasporas in the European Union and the United States. IZA.

## Canada (Federal Government)

### Overview

84. According to [Statistics Canada](#), although immigrants outnumber emigrants on an annual basis, the Canadian diaspora was estimated in 2018 to reach 2.8 million,<sup>46</sup> which represents just over 7% of the Canadian population – a relatively high proportion for an OECD country. Some demographic groups, such as recent immigrants, young adults, and more highly educated individuals, are especially likely to emigrate. Emigration selectivity is one of the reasons this phenomenon is an important demographic and socioeconomic issue for Canada.
85. While the Canadian diaspora is substantial, it is not a foreign policy priority for [Global Affairs Canada](#) (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Prior to January 2021, [the Prime Minister charged the Hon. Jim Carr, then Minister of International Trade Diversification, in his mandate letter](#) to: “Support the...export mobilization of our small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This should include an *examination of current programming and ensuring that Canada is maximizing the comparative advantage it holds with its vibrant diversity and diaspora communities*” (author’s emphasis). In January this year, however, that department was [replaced by the Ministry of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, led by Mary Ng, who had no mention of diaspora in her mandate letter](#). Canada had a general election in Canada on 20 September 2021, but at the time of writing it is too early to say whether that will impact on Canada’s approach to its diaspora.
86. Today, diaspora engagement appears to be led from outside government, through the Global Canada Initiative, which is based on two core beliefs:
- It is in Canada’s strategic interest to increase its global impact (Canada has a “Global Engagement Gap” – according to reports from 2015 and 2017 Canada lags far behind other G7 countries in its level of global engagement).<sup>47</sup>
  - Canada’s impact will be enhanced if key Canadian institutions and individuals work together in a coordinated and complementary manner.
87. The reasons for Canada having a perceived “engagement gap” are set out in a [report from Open Canada](#):
- Canada’s global engagement as a share of GDP fell from 2.4% of GDP in 1990 to 1.2% in 2014. Cuts to global engagement since 1990 were three

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<sup>46</sup> See: [Statistics Canada - Measuring Emigration in Canada: Review of Available Data Sources and Methods](#)

<sup>47</sup> What is meant by global engagement in this context is set out here: [Global Canada - Global Canadian Leaders Gathering \(2017\)](#)

times as deep as those to overall federal government programme spending.

- Canada's global engagement today is the lowest in the G7 (alongside Japan), the lowest among medium-sized open economies and, according to OECD and NATO statistics, the lowest in modern Canadian history.

88. The Global Canada Initiative aims to address this gap and support Canadian global leadership by providing positive answers to three key questions which are relevant to this report:<sup>48</sup>

- Can we create an exciting community of “Global Canadians”—Canadians in leadership positions at home and abroad who are passionate about Canada's global role?
- Can we craft an up-to-date narrative on Canada's global engagement? What are the reasons for global engagement today? These may include Canada's “close demographic links around the world”. Global Canada is undertaking a “strategic diagnostic of Canada's global engagement” which will look at the role that all stakeholders can play, particularly in collaboration with each other.
- If all stakeholders work together, are there issues on which Canada can truly have a world-scale impact? The issue which is seen as relevant today is maternal, newborn and child health. Other ideas have been suggested and Global Canada plans to identify a limited number of issues in which there is strong Canadian multistakeholder interest and the potential to have a global impact.

### **Diaspora target segments**

89. There is no current strategy which clearly prioritises any one diaspora group. However, what focus there is, is on business.

### **Policy goals**

90. As noted above, this is currently unclear, and remains so after the general election.

### **Brand architecture**

91. Canada does not have a national brand as such. However, Canada took the top spot overall in the [2021 Best Countries Report](#), ranking first in quality of life, social purpose, having a good job market, and caring about human rights. Canada was also seen as committed to social justice, not corrupt, and respecting property rights.

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<sup>48</sup> [Global Canada - "About Global Canada"](#)

## Institutions and resources

92. The [Global Canada Initiative](#) is not government-led. It is a not-for-profit, multistakeholder organisation that does not seek funding from government and prides itself on being non-partisan. It aims to “...*catalyse an increased global leadership by all stakeholders, enhancing Canada’s global impact and reputation.*” It wants to do this by complementing, not competing with, existing institutions. A key measure of success will be its ability to “*enhance the global performance and reputation of existing Canadian institutions*”. It aspires to act as a public-policy “smart-grid” linking together the intellectual and implementation power that already exists in the country.

## Evaluation

93. There was no evidence of any formal evaluation of Canada’s current outward diaspora engagement from which lessons could be drawn either from the Canadian Government itself or from external commentators.



## Canada (Québec)

### Overview

94. Despite the full data on migration published by Statistics Canada, there are no readily available statistics on the diaspora of Québec, but their annual provincial migration data indicate that people from Québec are less likely to emigrate than people from Ontario or British Columbia (two out of three Canadian emigrants came from these two provinces).<sup>49</sup> What can be said is that most members of the diaspora are in the USA (across the nearby border) but that is often temporary, and the numbers of temporary emigrants are balanced by the number of returning emigrants. Emigration is seen to be an important issue, because of the obligations that the Canadian government has towards its nationals who are living abroad and in respect to retaining immigrants that have recently been admitted to the country.

### Diaspora target segments

95. The clearest indication of priority areas for action relating to the diaspora are those which are taken forward at the sub-regional level (Québec City Region) and relate to business.

### Policy goals

96. Québec's International Policy is the responsibility of the Ministry of International Relations et la Francophonie, (MRIF). The policy contains no diaspora strategy, nor does the Strategic Plan of the Québec Ministry of the Economy and Innovation (MEI).<sup>50</sup>
97. MRIF's policy does recognise, however, that international action is no longer limited to the activities of government members, departments, and agencies, or to its network of offices abroad. More and more actors from the political, economic, voluntary, cultural, academic, and scientific sectors now operate in multiple global networks where they play an influential role. The policy is currently under development.
98. The policy review emphasises sharing strategic information, discussing concerns, successes, and challenges, and developing common and complementary objectives in a manner which strengthens the cohesion and effectiveness of Québec's international initiatives. Consequently, the MRIF

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<sup>49</sup> [Government of Canada – Statistics Canada: Migration data](#)

<sup>50</sup> [Québec's International Policy – Québec on the World Stage: Involved, Engaged, Thriving](#)

intends to implement a consultation mechanism targeting cities, regions and civil society actors that are active on the world stage.

99. The policy also has a limited number of inclusive policy aims, with objectives relating to international mobility, value chains, digital technology, Arctic and northern issues, and climate diplomacy.
100. MRIF is also stepping up its efforts in the areas of economic and trade partnerships, international solidarity, security, culture, science, the Francophonie, and human rights and freedoms, especially gender equality, and respect for the human rights of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

#### Initiative

Objective 4.1 of the International Policy is "*Fostering Cohesion Among Québec Stakeholders Active on the World Stage*".<sup>51</sup> MRIF is accordingly implementing a new approach to the governance of its international action. This process is overseen by the Minister and involves all government departments and agencies active on the world stage.

The review aims that the government and its network of offices abroad should be agile and capable of adapting to global trends, while at the same time reviewed on a regular basis. The idea is that a thematic approach could give new impetus to Québec's international representation. In this context, the government plans to entrust delegates or envoys with missions of specific strategic interest consistent with government and International Policy priorities.

Additional efforts will be devoted to training to upgrade employee skills in areas such as changing diplomatic practices, and to the development of tools to bolster Québec initiatives in public and digital diplomacy. Special attention will also be paid to animating networks that link Québécois in all sectors of activity.

The government will use the information shared during consultations to promote civil society initiatives and the actions of local and regional authorities consistent with the priorities of Québec's International Policy, notably through its network of offices abroad.

#### Brand architecture

101. Québec's International Policy does not address branding as such, but the importance of communications is recognised under the heading of Public Diplomacy. The policy recognises that reputation and image and how they are

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<sup>51</sup> [Québec's International Policy – Québec on the World Stage: Involved, Engaged, Thriving](#)

used have been radically transformed by new communications tools such as social media, and the government aspires to ensure that its global promotional and communications efforts are coherent and effective. Their view is that success depends in part on how well messages tie-in with the government's international priorities, and on thoughtful deployment. They are therefore planning to strengthen the coordination of communication efforts abroad.

## **Institutions and resources**

102. MRIF plans, organises, and directs the government's international actions and implements the International Policy. At the sub-provincial level, Québec International's mission is to support the Québec City region's economic development and national and international standing. Its priorities<sup>52</sup> are set out under 3 headings:
- *Attract and retain*: International talent; Foreign investments and international entrepreneurs.
  - *Guide*: Innovative high-tech entrepreneurship; Commercialization and export; Innovation and digital transformation; Key cluster development and animation.
  - *Improve visibility*: Promoting the region's business environment; Support excellence.

## **Evaluation**

103. There was no evidence of any evaluation of Québec's current diaspora engagement from which lessons could be drawn. The International Policy does say that there are future plans to hold regular reviews of the work of Québec's international offices.

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<sup>52</sup> [Québec International - À propos de Québec International](#)

# China

## Overview

104. Current UN estimates of the Chinese-born diaspora are that it consists of roughly 10 million people, though other estimates have run to some 45 million under a broader definition that includes second generation and longer-settled Chinese populations.<sup>53</sup>
105. The Chinese people have a long history of migrating overseas dating back at least to the Ming dynasty (1368 to 1644), a period known for its expansion of overseas trade. Overall, the population of overseas Chinese has more than doubled between 1990 and 2017, a numerical increase of more than 5.5 million. Yet the growth of this population has varied across countries and regions. The most rapid growth has occurred in Oceania, where Chinese migrants have more than quintupled over this time interval, as well as North America and Africa. More than 80 percent of recent emigrants from China are highly educated, wealthy, or both and the diasporic group that has grown fastest includes the soon-to-be-highly-educated students.<sup>54</sup>
106. It would be beyond the scope of this report to attempt to summarise such an ancient and vast diaspora. We focus therefore on one instrument of Chinese engagement, the Confucius Institutes. Confucius Institutes are non-profit public institutions affiliated with the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China whose stated aims are to promote Chinese language and culture, support local Chinese teaching internationally, and facilitate cultural exchanges. They operate through partnerships with universities and have been active in Scotland for many years.<sup>55</sup> They do not have diaspora engagement as an explicit aim, but they are nonetheless active in activities such as re-connecting Chinese diaspora populations to Chinese language and culture, thereby encouraging them to retain a sense of their Chinese identity.

## Diaspora target segments

107. The Confucius Institutes target people with social, commercial, or academic influence, or who represent interest groups.

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<sup>53</sup> See: [Daniel Goodkind - The Chinese Diaspora: Historical Legacies and Contemporary Trends, United States Census Bureau](#) (2019)

<sup>54</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>55</sup> See, for example: [Confucius Institute for Scotland - 'About us'](#)

## Policy goals

108. China has had a diaspora policy since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the Qing government of China realized that the overseas Chinese could be an asset, a source of foreign investment and a bridge to overseas knowledge.
109. China's diaspora policy today is highly politically and culturally contested. Under Xi Jinping, China has moved towards a more assertive foreign policy. In his speech marking the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Communist Party, he remarked: *“The patriotic united front is an important means for the Party to unite all the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation, both at home and abroad, behind the goal of national rejuvenation.”*<sup>56</sup> The overseas Chinese affairs work, led by the United Front Work Department (UFWD), has intensified its efforts to mobilise the Chinese diaspora, regardless of citizenship, for the cause of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) whose aim, it is claimed, is to extend its rule to the diaspora.<sup>57</sup>

## Brand architecture

110. At the National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2012, President Xi Jinping declared that China should no longer only be a place to produce components for Western products.<sup>58</sup> Instead, it should build its own world-renowned brands. Despite criticism of previous Chinese culture-led brand efforts, China today undoubtedly has succeeded in establishing a range of very valuable and resilient brands.<sup>59</sup> There is, however, little sign of connection between this focus on brands and China's diaspora strategy today.

## Institutions and resources

111. The United Front Work Department of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (UFWD) leads on China's diaspora strategy. The UFWD is described by the Financial Times<sup>60</sup> and others as *“China's secret weapon”* and is responsible for intelligence and influence operations, establishing and maintaining contacts with non-party and foreign entities, and China's ethnic minority nationalities.

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<sup>56</sup> [Nikkei Asia - Full text of Xi Jinping's speech on the CCP's 100th anniversary](#)

<sup>57</sup> See for example: Oscar Almén (2020) The Chinese Communist Party and the Diaspora

<sup>58</sup> [BBC – Full text: China's new party chief Xi Jinping's speech](#), 15 November 2021

<sup>59</sup> [Brand Finance – China 500 2021: The annual report on the most valuable and strongest Chinese brands](#)

<sup>60</sup> [Financial Times – “Inside China's secret ‘magic weapon’ for worldwide influence”](#), 26 October 2017.

112. The UFWD functions in China and abroad.<sup>61</sup> Among its 12 specific priority areas are those relating to:
- Those who have gone abroad and returned from study abroad.
  - Overseas Chinese, returned overseas Chinese and their relatives.
113. The UFWD uses a range of methods to influence overseas Chinese communities, foreign governments, and other actors to take actions or adopt positions supportive of Beijing's preferred policies.<sup>62</sup> It focuses its work on people or entities that are outside the party proper, especially in the overseas Chinese community.
114. [The UFWD has significant resources](#). It presently has more than 600 senior bureaucrats and half a dozen Ministers, which makes it equivalent in strength to many Ministries put together. Six new bureaus have recently been added to the UFWD, including one for overseas Chinese affairs and one for building up and strengthening intelligence and communications networks in foreign countries. The US\$6.6 billion allocated for an international communications offensive is at the disposal of the UFWD as are the Confucius Institutes. Budgets are not disclosed.
115. There are a range of other organisations which carry out united front activities relating to the Chinese diaspora.<sup>63</sup> Until 2018, the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (OCAO) was responsible for liaising with overseas Chinese residing abroad or returning to China. In 2018, OCAO and its functions were absorbed into the UFWD. The OCAO previously ran the China News Service and focused on technology transfer through agreements with professional associations in science and technology fields such as the Silicon Valley Chinese Overseas Business Association (SCOBA). OCAO also oversaw the Chinese Overseas Exchange Association (COEA), which sponsored annual "Discovery Trips to China for Eminent Young Overseas Chinese".
116. Hanban/Confucius Institute Headquarters, as a public institution affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Education, is committed to providing Chinese language and cultural teaching resources and services worldwide, it aims to meet the demands of foreign Chinese learners and contribute to the development of "*multiculturalism and the building of a harmonious world*".<sup>64</sup> It also has a significant role to play in promoting Chinese identity through education to the diaspora, providing a mechanism of language and cultural rediscovery and

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<sup>61</sup> [U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission - China's United Front Work: Background and Implications for the United States](#)

<sup>62</sup> [U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission - China's United Front Work: Background and Implications for the United States](#)

<sup>63</sup> [The Jamestown Foundation - Reorganizing the United Front Work Department: New Structures for a New Era of Diaspora and Religious Affairs Work](#)

<sup>64</sup> The phrase is used by the Hanban/Confucius Institute Headquarters, but their website is currently unavailable. The phrase however appears on partner sites such as: [China Institute - Confucius Institute at China Institute \(CI@CI\)](#)

consolidation. Confucius Institutes have partner universities in China and operate always in partnership in target countries.

117. The All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese is a “people's organisation” for returned overseas Chinese and their relatives. It also functions as a point of contact and coordination between overseas Chinese, the Chinese government, and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

## Evaluation

118. There is a great deal of academic literature and commentary on the Chinese diaspora and how the Chinese Government engages with it, by Chinese and other scholars.<sup>65</sup> However, there is no readily available evaluation material which could inform this research.

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<sup>65</sup> See for example:

Ding S. (2015) [Engaging Diaspora via Charm Offensive and Indigenised Communication: An Analysis of China's Diaspora Engagement Policies in the Xi Era](#). *Politics*. 35(3-4): 230-244. DOI: 10.1111/1467-9256.12087

Hong Liu & Els van Dongen (2016) [China's Diaspora Policies as a New Mode of Transnational Governance](#), *Journal of Contemporary China*, 25:102, 805-821, DOI: 10.1080/10670564.2016.1184894



# Denmark

## Overview

119. 250,000 Danes live abroad, 5% of the total population (2017 figures).<sup>66</sup> The diaspora has not been a priority for the Danish State: there are a relatively low number of Danes living abroad and those that do tend to return after no more than 10 years. Engagement with the diaspora is largely left to voluntary civil society organisations.
120. Recognising that the Danish diaspora was a largely untapped resource, however, in 2018 a task force was created to provide advice on how the Government should engage with it.<sup>67</sup> The Task Force was composed of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Danes Worldwide, an advocacy body for Danes living overseas; and Copenhagen Capacity, the Danish Capital's organisation for investment promotion and economic development. The next development was the creation of a non-profit association in 2019, DANIAS, a consortium of the MFA, Copenhagen Capacity, the Danish Chamber of Commerce, the Confederation of Danish Industry, and the Danish Export Association. In October 2020, under the auspices of DANIAS, a group of 20 leaders from the public and private sectors then made a list of recommendations on how Denmark could strengthen its collaboration with Danes abroad, constituting a new strategy for diaspora engagement.

## Diaspora target segments

121. The target groups identified by the Task Force were businesspeople abroad, specifically those who could facilitate inward and outward trade and investment, and those members of the diaspora with skills and knowledge in short supply in Denmark: IT experts, STEM professionals and Life Scientists.<sup>68</sup>

## Policy goals

122. The recommendations recognised that there was a lack of coordination between those organisations currently working in diaspora engagement and even more importantly a lack of knowledge exchange. The vision statement of the new strategy stated that *“strategic collaboration with Danish diaspora will lead to renewed value-creating alliances where knowledge can systematically and easily be shared between the diaspora and domestic stakeholders to enhance*

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<sup>66</sup> Cited in 'The Danish Diaspora: An Untapped Resource', Danes Worldwide, 2017

<sup>67</sup> [DANIAS - 'Who we are'](#)

<sup>68</sup> (Ibid.)



*Danish growth, knowledge and employment*".<sup>69</sup> Also missing was a values-based (trust, equality, and innovation) core narrative of modern Denmark, one which could use to promote Denmark as an attractive career destination for the diaspora, as well as present a modern credible image to other countries.

123. Practical recommendations to address these gaps included the creation of a new association, Diaspora Denmark, to implement the new strategy and the creation of a digital community platform for "*Danes from all over the world to meet up and help each other, plan events, share knowledge, network and make investment and business opportunities prosper*";<sup>70</sup> this platform would also enable Danish businesses directly and free of charge to access the knowledge and networks of specific people in the diaspora. Other recommendations included a project fund to enable local Danish players abroad, e.g., embassies, chambers of commerce, seamen's churches etc., to promote Denmark's collaboration with the diaspora and a request to the Danish Government and Parliament to reduce the barriers experienced by Danes abroad in their connection to Denmark (e.g., visas and administrative barriers).

## Brand architecture

124. One of the recommendations of the Task Force was the development of a new core narrative of modern Denmark; this has yet to be developed but one of the ingredients will be the Danish Canon: in 2016, over 2,000 Danes were asked "*which social values, traditions or movements that have shaped us in Denmark will you carry through to tomorrow's society?*". The results were 10 values which taken together, according to the Danish Minister for Culture, "*make it clearer what creates our national identity and cohesion*".<sup>71</sup>

## Institutions and resources

125. [Danes Abroad Business Group Online](#) (DABGO) organises monthly meetings in 40 cities around the world for Danish business people. Organised by volunteers, it runs a job portal to help Danes looking for jobs abroad. [Danes Worldwide](#) acts as an advocacy body for Danes living overseas. Advocacy issues include dual citizenship; family reunification; and the right to vote. Founded in 1919, it provides advice about settling abroad and returning to Denmark, provides language courses and runs a network for Danes abroad. No formal government support apart from occasional grants is available, it is a membership funded organisation. Apart from Danes Worldwide, the other main civil society diaspora support organisation is the [Danish Church Abroad](#) (DSUK) which organises

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<sup>69</sup> [Diaspora: A Resource for Denmark](#), p.10, Task Force for Collaboration with Danes Abroad, 2020.

<sup>70</sup> (Ibid.) p.20

<sup>71</sup> See: [Danmarkskanon - About](#)

cultural and social events, as well as religious services, via a widespread network of Danish churches in the main seaports of the world.

## Evaluation

- <sup>126</sup>. There was no evidence of any policy evaluation of Denmark's current diaspora engagement from which lessons could be drawn. There is no academic literature on Denmark's approach, apart from a 2019 comparative study of Nordic and Baltic perspectives on diaspora diplomacy.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> [Birka, I. and Klavins, D. \(2019\) "Diaspora Diplomacy: Nordic and Baltic perspective", \*Diaspora Studies\*](https://doi.org/10.1080/09739572.2019.1693861), DOI: 10.1080/09739572.2019.1693861

# France

## Overview

127. While predominantly a country of immigration, France also has a population of citizens overseas of some 1.8 million individuals (3% of the domestic population).<sup>73</sup> By European standards, emigration from France is a relatively recent phenomenon, as comparatively few people left the country in the nineteenth century. Emigration has, however, increased over the past 20 years and has resulted in a uniquely ambitious approach to the diaspora, sustained efforts, and the application of considerable resources by French authorities to reach out to them.
128. As a result, France today has an exceptionally strong level of engagement with its expatriates, particularly in the areas of electoral rights, culture, and social protection. Based on the author's analysis, there are four features of France which explain its unique approach:
- A highly egalitarian conception of citizenship, which has become increasingly disconnected from residence in the country and is particularly true regarding political rights.
  - A highly redistributive welfare state, which has been gradually expanded to citizens abroad, and
  - A vast diplomatic network which is the direct institutional legacy of France's past as a prominent European and colonial power. A variety of policies directed to the diaspora today can be traced back in one way or another to colonial arrangements.
  - France's continued ambition to be a global actor.
129. To implement this approach, in recent years, France has engaged in a far-reaching diaspora-building project through a variety of institutions: ministries, the diplomatic network, consultative and representative bodies, and parliamentary representation. French political parties have also significantly increased their presence abroad in recent years.
130. In terms of ideas, France's diaspora engagement is essentially driven by its desire to project its power and prestige abroad, in an effort to convey the image of a super-power, both internally, to the French population, and externally, to the rest of the world. However, the myth of France's omnipotence has become increasingly hard to sustain. The discrepancy between an idea of France which, as de Gaulle famously said, "*cannot be France without 'grandeur'*",<sup>74</sup> and the

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<sup>73</sup> [Statista – Distribution of the number of French expatriates across the world in 2020, by geographical area](#)

<sup>74</sup> See: Jackson, J. (2018) De Gaulle. Harvard University Press.

reality of a medium-sized power, is also reflected in a diaspora policy characterised by ambitious policy aims, and relatively modest policy outcomes.<sup>75</sup>

## Diaspora target segments

131. French expatriates living and working abroad are the target – there are no defined groups below the level of French citizens.

## Policy goals

132. France has a very elaborate and diversified set of diaspora policies, though the political aspect stands out. By international standards, France has one of the most generous extra-territorial franchises for citizens residing abroad. French authorities also claim that no other country in Europe has such advanced and comprehensive systems of social protection for citizens abroad.<sup>76</sup>

133. France is also very active on the cultural front, though its extra-territorial cultural policies mainly target non-resident foreigners as part of its diplomatic policy ([Diplomatie d'Influence, programme 185](#)). These extra-territorial cultural policies however indirectly benefit French citizens abroad. Three main cultural institutions oversee these policies:

- The French Institutes ([Institut Français](#)).
- The French Alliance ([Alliance Française](#)).
- Agency for the Teaching of the French Language Abroad ([Agence pour l'enseignement français à l'étranger](#), AEFÉ).

134. The first two of these organisations do not specifically target French citizens abroad, but their numerous services are used by French citizens and their centres abroad are often the epicentre of French diasporic communities. They allow French citizens abroad to maintain a close link with French culture and ensure its reproduction across generations. The AEFÉ does target expatriates (see below).

135. Unlike other large emigration states, France does not have economic policies targeting citizens abroad.

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<sup>75</sup> See: Lafleur, J.M. and Vintila, D. (2020) [Migration and Social Protection in Europe and Beyond \(Vol. 2\): Comparing Consular Services and Diaspora Policies](#). Springer.

<sup>76</sup> See: Arrighi, J.T. and Lafleur, J.M. (2020) [Diaspora Policies, Consular Services and Social Protection for French Citizens Abroad](#). Springer.

## Brand architecture

136. France does not have a national brand. It nevertheless is consistently highly ranked in surveys of nation brands. Branding plays next to no part in France's diaspora policies or engagement.

## Institutions and resources

137. The [Assembly of French Citizens Abroad](#) is the political body that represents French citizens living outside France. The assembly advises the government on issues involving French nationals living outside France, as well as the role of France in overseas developments. Membership consists of directly elected representatives, senators representing French citizens abroad and officials appointed by the [Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs](#).
138. The [Consular Council](#) is the institution responsible for defending the interests of French expatriates in their countries of residence. It is a consultative body dedicated to consular affairs. Since 2013, its members are elected every six years by citizens abroad officially registered in each of the 130 consular constituencies.
139. The [Alliance Solidaire des Français de l'Étranger \(ASFE\)](#) is an independent movement dedicated to French people living abroad.
140. In 2018, France introduced a Support Fund to the Network of French (cultural) Associations Abroad (Dispositif de soutien au tissu associatif des Français à l'étranger: [STAFE](#)). In its first year, it was endowed with €2 million, which were distributed to relatively small associations in a range of countries, benefiting diaspora populations.
141. The representation of emigrants' interests in the French Parliament is guaranteed through reserved seats in the Lower and Upper Chambers of the national Parliament. For the election of the Lower Chamber ([Assemblée Nationale](#)), there are 11 geographically defined extra-territorial constituencies, based upon the demographic distribution of French citizens abroad (since 2011). In the Upper Chamber (Sénat), there are 12 reserved seats for representatives of citizens abroad, but these are non-geographically defined as those representatives are indirectly elected by consular councillors.
142. The French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) determines and implements France's foreign policy. One of its priorities is to "provide security and administrative services for French nationals abroad."<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> [Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs - "The work of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs"](#)

143. The MEAE funds:

- the Agency for French Education Abroad ([AEFE](#)) which carries out a public service role providing education for French children living outside France. It also helps promote the French language and culture internationally and build ties between French and foreign education systems. The main goal of the AEFE is to serve and promote a unique educational network made up of 523 schools in 137 countries educating 366,000 pupils. The AEFE's network of 500 schools is a major asset when it comes to supporting French businesses abroad and developing France's attractiveness. This educational support encourages the presence of French businesses and helps them build relationships with various local stakeholders, both private and institutional, often in very specific contexts. By developing and strengthening French educational diplomacy, the AEFE network therefore supports French economic diplomacy. The AEFE's total budget for 2021 is over €1 billion with €417.1 million coming from *Programme 185 - Cultural diplomacy and influence*.
- [Campus France](#) supports the attractiveness of the French higher education sector and promotes it among foreign students. The agency is also responsible for managing recipients of scholarships from the French and foreign governments, facilitating the creation of personalized scholarship programmes, and supporting foreign students and researchers. 256 Campus France offices, situated in 125 countries, also serve as local representatives of the wider Campus France agency.
- Campus France governs the [France Alumni](#) platform, which is managed locally by embassies. This network of foreign alumni, which currently has nearly 333,000 members, in 126 countries, helps them maintain their ties with France, stay in touch, take part in events, and consult job offers. The budget for Campus France was €3.8 million in 2021.

## Evaluation

144. Given the scale of French expenditure, while there was no evidence of any evaluation of France's diaspora engagement as such, there is extensive scrutiny of the policy programme from which it is funded, by audit and by Parliament. [The Assemblée Nationale, for example, has in 2021 established a working group](#) which will look at communications with overseas French citizens in the light of COVID-19, and debated the report<sup>78</sup> of the Commission d'évaluation des politiques publiques ([CEPP](#)) which evaluated the activities of Campus France in relation to alumni.

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<sup>78</sup> [Assemblée Nationale - Debate on the report of the Commission d'évaluation des politiques publiques](#)

# Ireland

## Overview

145. Ireland takes a broad definition of its diaspora, perhaps the broadest of our comparator countries. It includes Irish citizens living overseas, both those born in Ireland and those born abroad to Irish parents; the heritage diaspora, often quoted as many as 80 million people claiming Irish ancestry<sup>79</sup> (although there is no clear evidence to support this figure); the reverse diaspora, those people who have studied or worked in Ireland before returning to their home countries; and the affinity diaspora, people who have a particular affection for or appreciation of Ireland's people and culture.
146. Ireland, together with China and France, has the most developed diaspora strategy of the comparator countries; indeed, the most recent iteration, *Global Ireland: Ireland's Diaspora Strategy 2020-2025* has the ambition of promoting Ireland as a hub of expertise for diaspora engagement.<sup>80</sup> The diaspora strategy sits within a set of Strategy "Russian dolls": it reflects the Global Citizenship vision of the international engagement strategy, *Global Ireland*,<sup>81</sup> which seeks to double the impact Ireland has in the world, and this strategy in turn reflects the ambition of *Project Ireland 2040*,<sup>82</sup> the government's long-term overarching strategy, which assumes an increase of one million additional people living in Ireland and plans to deliver the infrastructure to support this growth. All three strategies are the result of extensive public consultations and in the case of the diaspora strategy this involved consultations with Irish communities abroad as well as domestic stakeholders.

## Diaspora target segments

147. From 1700 to the present 10 million people left Ireland and settled abroad, more than half of them in the United States, and this is where most of the heritage diaspora reside today. There are also significant heritage diaspora populations in the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada. Contemporary Irish migrants, Irish citizens or those born in Ireland, are mostly to be found in the UK (500,000), the United States (130,000) and Australia (100,000).<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> See for example: Irish Times editorial, "[The Irish Times view on the diaspora strategy: extending a hand to the 'global Irish'](#)", 18 November 2020.

<sup>80</sup> [Government of Ireland - Global Ireland: Ireland's Diaspora Strategy 2020-2025](#)

<sup>81</sup> [Government of Ireland - Global Ireland: Ireland's Global Footprint to 2025](#)

<sup>82</sup> [Government of Ireland - Project Ireland 2040: The National Planning Framework](#)

<sup>83</sup> [United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs - International Migration Figures Estimates 2015](#)



148. The current diaspora strategy (2020-25) targets the heritage diaspora via the ancestor tracing programme Irish Reaching Out, but the primary focus is the welfare of Irish emigrants who benefit from the strategy's flagship programme, the Emigrant Support Programme, which provides grants to provide care for *"the most vulnerable and marginalised Irish emigrants"*. Other target groups of the latest strategy include women in the diaspora, alumni networks, and Irish scientists and innovators abroad.

## Policy goals

149. The welfare of the Irish abroad was at the heart of the approach to the diaspora taken by the Irish Government in the 2015 diaspora strategy and it is still central to the 2020-2025 strategy whose vision statement is *"To support the welfare of the Irish abroad and deepen and strengthen ties with our diaspora"*. Funding for welfare-related projects via the [Emigrant Support Programme](#) has been mainly focused on the United Kingdom where issues arising from isolation, age, location, immigration and employment status, and health were identified during the consultation process. The [2011 UK census](#) found that the Irish was the oldest ethnic group. Another factor was the wave of emigration from Ireland to the UK after the 2008 financial crisis. Other policy goals in the current strategy include the promotion of Irish values, the celebration of diversity, the creation of mutually beneficial economic ties with the diaspora, supporting cultural expression, and extending global reach by connecting with the next generation.
150. Both the 2015 and the current strategy had the policy goal of helping Irish emigrants return to Ireland, for example by identifying and minimising administrative barriers: *"As an Irish citizen living abroad, I would like Irish politicians to factor in my interests, however potential or distant. I'd like to think I would not have difficulty opening a bank account when I return to Ireland, or finding a home, a job, or a school place for my child...Do I feel a remote desire for an Irish diaspora social network? Do I want to "connect" with Ireland on any terms other than my own? No, I do not"* ([Siobhán Brett in The Times, 7<sup>th</sup> September 2018](#)).
151. The most recent policy issue concerning the diaspora has been whether to extend presidential voting rights to Irish citizens living outside the state. A constitutional referendum was promised in 2019 but that has yet to be held.

## Brand Architecture

152. [Global Ireland](#) is the Irish Government's strategic initiative to *"...help define Ireland's global outlook for our own time and the generations to come."* Launched in June 2018 it set in train a consultation process on a new policy and strategic approach to supporting citizens overseas and diaspora networks internationally. The result was the new *Diaspora Strategy 2020-2025* which views the Irish diaspora as *"a diverse and dynamic global community connected*



*to Ireland through ties of citizenship, heritage and affinity*".<sup>84</sup> Global citizenship is a recurring theme throughout the strategy documents, including the notion that *"Irish citizens are citizens of the world as well as Ireland"*.<sup>85</sup>

## Institutions and resources

153. The role of Government is primarily one of support and facilitation, mainly through Ireland's network of embassies and consulates. The Embassy network has 678 personnel assigned to 80 missions abroad with an additional 94 honorary consuls in 59 countries (2018 figures).<sup>86</sup> The latest diaspora strategy aims to strengthen ties with significant diaspora communities by appointing honorary consuls with specific responsibility for diaspora engagement; guidance and training will be provided for the new network. Another recent innovation has been the *"Team Ireland"* approach embodied by co-locating embassies and trade and investment bodies in "Ireland Houses" in Washington, Abuja and Tokyo. The [Global Irish](#) Network (equivalent to the GlobalScot programme), also make use of the embassy network: based in 40 countries it claims to provide *"reach, power and influence"* by connecting with 300 of the most influential and Irish-connected people abroad.
154. It is worth noting however that the new strategy also plans to shift maintaining links with the diaspora through embassies to forging and maintaining them through the digital space by means of a single digital platform providing content and resources for all diaspora groups.
155. As outlined above, direct financial support for the welfare of the diaspora is provided via the [Emigrant Support Programme](#) (€13 million in 2019). The creation of the role of Minister for Diaspora Affairs in 2014 and then an interdepartmental committee chaired by the Minister, recognised the need for coordination across government when dealing with diaspora issues: the departments and agencies responsible for foreign affairs, trade and investment, education and skills, culture, tourism, are all represented on this committee.
156. Other government funded bodies linked with the diaspora include [Culture Ireland](#), [Tourism Ireland](#), and the inward and outward investment agencies, the Industrial Development Agency ([IDA](#)) and [Enterprise Ireland](#). Culture Ireland supports arts events which offer opportunities to engage with the diaspora and support them in maintaining their cultural ties to Ireland; emphasis is placed on sharing rather than showcasing Ireland's culture. Tourism Ireland's 15 offices overseas run annual campaigns, Global Greening and St Patrick's day, aimed at diaspora worldwide. *"Let's get back to Ireland"* print and digital media campaigns are being run in 2021 in the UK, USA, and Canada. The IDA and Enterprise

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<sup>84</sup> [Government of Ireland - Global Ireland: Ireland's Diaspora Strategy 2020-2025](#), p.2

<sup>85</sup> Sean Lemass, quoted in [Government of Ireland - Global Ireland: Ireland's Global Footprint to 2025](#), p.8

<sup>86</sup> [Government of Ireland - Global Ireland: Ireland's Global Footprint to 2025](#), pp.24-25

Ireland both claim to work closely with diaspora and some investment funds and programmes are aimed specifically at the diaspora. Private business networks are also active in the UK, USA (19 chapters), Germany and France. The new diaspora strategy plans to establish regional business forms in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America, the USA, and Canada; it also has the ambition of establishing a Global Irish Business Directory.

157. The *International Education Strategy 2016-2020* wants “Ireland to become internationally recognised for the development of global citizens through our internationalised education system” and the new diaspora strategy’s target is to have 15 per cent of Ireland’s university students from overseas by 2025.<sup>87</sup> The government is committed to the promotion of Irish and the teaching of Irish abroad, particular emphasis is placed on supporting the teaching of Irish in universities abroad.

## Evaluation

158. There was no evidence of any overall evaluation of Ireland’s diaspora engagement, but there is extensive scrutiny of the policy programme.

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<sup>87</sup> [Government of Ireland - Irish Educated Globally Connected an International Education Strategy for Ireland, 2016-2020](#)

# Japan

## Overview

159. According to the [Association of Nikkei and Japanese Abroad](#), in 2017 there were some 3.8 million members of the Japanese diaspora (the diaspora are known as *Nikkei*).<sup>88</sup> As of 2018, the Japanese [Ministry of Foreign Affairs \(MOFA\)](#) reported the five countries with the highest number of Japanese expatriates as the United States, China, Australia, Thailand, and Canada.<sup>89</sup>

## Diaspora target segments

160. In addition to providing consular services to Japanese overseas, where welfare and citizenship are the priorities, in cooperation with the [Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology](#) (MEXT), MOFA provides assistance to Japanese Schools and liaises with host country governments to eliminate the complexity of various procedures for Japanese nationals living overseas, such as converting Japanese driving licenses, obtaining residence/work permits and generally to make living abroad more comfortable.

161. MOFA has a specific geographic priority to support the 2.24 million Nikkei in South America. They prioritise young Nikkei to strengthen their ties to Japan recognising that second generation emigrants may have less awareness of their Japanese identity. They do this by drawing on pop culture, culture, Japanese language learning and visits to Japan.<sup>90</sup>

## Policy goals

162. MOFA publishes the [Diplomatic Bluebook](#), which describes Japan's foreign policy. Chapter 4 of the 2020 edition sets out Japan's strategic approach to connection to diaspora through agencies, businesses, and partnerships.

163. MOFA is responsible for [the policy on Emigration and the Nikkei Communities](#). The policy, from 2000, has not been updated. One of the basic concepts of Japan's diplomatic policy is stipulated in the law establishing MOFA 2001 as *"contributing to the maintenance of a peaceful and stable international society, creating a favourable international environment through positive and assertive measures, and maintaining and developing harmonious external relations while*

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<sup>88</sup> [Discover Nikkei - "What is Nikkei?"](#)

<sup>89</sup> [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan - Diplomatic Bluebook 2019: Cooperation with Emigrants and Japanese Descendants, Nikkei](#)

<sup>90</sup> [MOFA - Report on the current situation of Communities of Japanese Immigrants and Descendants \("Nikkei"\) in Central and South America \(Summary\)](#)

*promoting the interests of Japan and the Japanese people in international society."*<sup>91</sup>

164. The policy calls for the relationship between Japan and overseas communities of *Nikkei* people to be one of reciprocal cooperation based on needs. In recent years there has been a shift from "support" to "cooperation". The policy has established the three Japan Houses as a strategic and innovative initiative targeted at cities with large *Nikkei* populations, and with remits that include all aspects of diaspora engagement. Various forms of assistance are offered to the *Nikkei*, including welfare support for ageing emigrants, training in Japan for *Nikkei* people, and the dispatch of volunteers to the local *Nikkei* communities.

## **Brand architecture**

165. Japan is consistently in the top nation brands of the world,<sup>92</sup> despite the lack of an overall strategy. To date, there has been very little relationship building between the Japanese government's work on international promotion and the Japanese diaspora. Consequently, the diaspora network that could play a significant role in Japan's nation branding has been overlooked, except for the highly brand-conscious Japan Houses.
166. The [\*Diplomatic Bluebook\*](#) describes how MOFA implements its strategic communications based on a three-pillar approach:
- Disseminating Japan's policies and initiatives, including an "accurate" image of Japan – mainly with a focus on peace, the international order, and enhancing public awareness of issues concerning the recognition of history.
  - Sharing Japan's rich and varied attractiveness, and
  - Expanding the circle of people with a great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan.
167. Communications are with governments, media, the public (via social media), and specifically with think tanks and experts. Japan has a wide range of engagement strategies to address controversial issues such as 'comfort women' and the rising sun flag, and extensive people to people initiatives, including with its diaspora, to preserve Japan's intangible cultural heritage and promote global connections through exchanges, sports, support for Japanese studies, and research.

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<sup>91</sup> See: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan - Recommendations of Overseas Emigration Council Future Policy Regarding Cooperation with Overseas Communities of Nikkei \(2000\)](#)

<sup>92</sup> [Brand Finance – "Japan is world's 3<sup>rd</sup> most valuable nation brand"](#)

## Institutions and resources

168. As noted above, MOFA publishes the *Diplomatic Bluebook*, which describes Japan's foreign policy. Chapter 4 of the 2020 edition sets out Japan's strategic approach to connection to diaspora through agencies, businesses, and partnerships.
169. MOFA created the [Japan Houses](#) specifically to boost their communications and engagement strategy. An important part of their function is “*promoting outreach that reflects the needs of local communities*” (including diasporic communities). The three Japan Houses are located where there are major concentrations of *Nikkei* and significant Japanese business interests (London, São Paulo, and Los Angeles), and they target local audiences through a unique approach that presents traditional Japanese cultural expressions (that may be unfamiliar) alongside very contemporary material on high technology, science, global challenges, or social futures. The [London Japan House programme](#) illustrates this approach very well with its mix of exhibitions, events, screenings, workshops and talks, both on and offline. This mix of the old and the very new, the popular and the unknown, generates curiosity and attracts large audiences – not least because the presentation is unashamedly quality-driven, upmarket, and commercial. The Japanese retail experience itself is part of the attraction as a highly branded cultural phenomenon. The Japan Houses also host forums on a wide variety of topics such as Japan's foreign policy, Japan-host country relations, economic cooperation, science and technology, and sport.
170. The [Association of Nikkei and Japanese Abroad](#) organises a range of engagement activities as do a range of other bodies including the [Japan Foundation](#), and the [Nippon Foundation](#). In addition, there are several civil society organisations active in diaspora relations.
171. Relationships with business diasporas are integral to MOFA's *Nikkei* strategy, forming an important element of the activities of the Japan Houses, even if they are not explicitly described as such in the published policies of either MOFA or the [Ministry of the Economy, Trade, and Industry \(METI\)](#).
172. Finally, it is worth noting that Japanese business traditionally operates through networks (*Keiretsu*) which can include Japanese diaspora companies, driving innovation and increasing competitiveness.

## Evaluation

173. There was no evidence of any overall evaluation of Japan's diaspora engagement from which lessons could be drawn, but the Japan Houses' performance is closely monitored by MOFA through a system of KPIs.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Based on previous work the author has carried out for Japan House London.

# New Zealand

## Overview

174. [New Zealand's diaspora](#) has grown in recent decades to the fourth highest relative to population in the OECD – at 13.5 percent in 2015/16. The figure is inflated by large numbers of young people living abroad for short periods. Of these, around 640,000 live in Australia. Other communities of New Zealanders abroad are heavily concentrated in other English-speaking countries, specifically the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada, with smaller numbers located elsewhere.
175. Many of New Zealand's expatriates are well educated, prosperous, and successful.<sup>94</sup> New Zealand has the highest proportion among developed countries of its skilled workforce living outside the country and is second among developed countries for its expatriates holding tertiary degrees. There are indications that in the past, the potential of the outward diaspora may have been overestimated, and that of the inward diaspora underestimated ([NZ Treasury, 2004](#)). This perception may account for today's situation where the Government has policies for the inward and returning diasporas, but not for the outward diaspora.

## Diaspora target segments

176. New Zealand focuses entirely on the development of “talent networks” in scientific, technical, entrepreneurial and management, and cultural areas.

## Policy goals

177. [Briefing for the new incoming Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) (November 2020) is very clear – the diaspora is not a priority for New Zealand's international engagement, nor is it seen as an asset for New Zealand.
178. The focus of New Zealand policy is to encourage the return of New Zealanders with skills from overseas. While there is a limited amount of support for New Zealand citizens going overseas, it is not a priority. There is a strong emphasis on returnees who are seen as a more valuable potential asset for the country than are those going out or those already living as expats.

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<sup>94</sup> [OECD Economic Surveys – New Zealand \(Chapter 2\)](#)



## Brand architecture

179. The [New Zealand Story](#) was created by a partnership of [Tourism New Zealand](#), [New Zealand Trade & Enterprise](#), and [Education New Zealand](#). It promotes New Zealand through a values-led approach, but it has no connection to the diaspora community.

## Institutions and resources

180. The [Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade \(MFAT\)](#) is responsible for New Zealand's foreign policy, and for services that support New Zealanders overseas, which are purely a matter for Consular services.
181. New Zealand's international business development is led by [New Zealand Trade and Enterprise](#) who have no explicit engagement with the New Zealand diaspora.
182. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) partly funds [Kea New Zealand](#) which has a [mission](#) *"to enable better understanding of these exploring Kiwi (i.e., New Zealanders who leave to go overseas) through goodwill and connection for the benefit of New Zealand and to provide our expats with the information and support they need to thrive."*<sup>95</sup> The Ministry carried out an [evaluation of Kea](#) in 2009 which concluded that *"There is evidence that Kea increases the wealth and productivity of New Zealand and New Zealanders"*, but that it needed to be better integrated with domestic policy:

*"The value derived from Kea by New Zealand might be increased through better linking it with domestic activity in which expatriates could play a role through the use of the network, where appropriate, by relevant agencies and other domestic actors and firms. At a minimum we consider that there needs to be a more effective interface of Kea New Zealand with NZTE and MFAT in New Zealand in order to provide for ongoing alignment across all relevant activity. There is no sign of any more recent evaluation activity."*

183. The evaluation also highlighted the risk that where Kea interacted with its stakeholders, it could come into competition with other agencies who were also looking to maintain strong relationships with key influencers. Other networks were focused upon a particular segment of the expatriate population (in terms of demographics or professional or academic status), and in some cases expatriates were but one part of the network.
184. Other issues were the challenges Kea faced, despite being a light touch network, in achieving financial sustainability and the difficulty in quantifying its impact. Despite this, the authors concluded that Kea provided a *"...low cost means of helping deliver economic value to New Zealand through its expatriate*

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<sup>95</sup> [Kea New Zealand – "About us"](#)

*community. There is also a range of social and cultural benefits arising from Kea which are beneficial to New Zealand.”*

## **Evaluation**

- <sup>185</sup>. With the exception of the Kea New Zealand evaluation, there was no evidence of any overall evaluation of New Zealand’s diaspora engagement from which lessons could be drawn.



# USA

## Overview

186. The State Department's estimate of the American diaspora is 7.6 million spread widely across the world with the biggest concentrations in Europe and Central and South America.<sup>96</sup> Mexico has recently become the most popular destination for permanent residence abroad for Americans. The term "American diaspora" is hardly ever used by the government or its agencies. This is in part because of the association of the term in the USA with the poor and displaced but also because its size is relatively small and its role regarded, rightly or wrongly, as unimportant in foreign policy and external trade and investment.<sup>97</sup>

## Policy goals and brand architecture

187. The USA has no diaspora engagement policy or goals, or a national brand architecture. It does have substantial public diplomacy programmes, but while they aim to promote American values, they are not directly relevant to diaspora engagement.

## Institutions and resources

188. The only Federal level initiative is [IdEA](#), the International diaspora Engagement Alliance, a partnership between the State Department and USAID working mainly in the development sector.

189. Engagement with the diaspora is left to civil society organisations who mainly concern themselves with networking activities and lobbying work in Washington to support the legal rights of the diaspora. [American Citizens Abroad \(ACA\)](#) is a voluntary membership organisation which educates, advocates, and informs the US Government and US citizens abroad on regulatory and legislative issues of concern to the overseas American community; the [Association of Americans Resident Overseas \(AARO\)](#) is based in Paris with members in 46 countries. It has a very similar mission to ACA and is a non-profit membership organisation; both ACA and AARO organise networking and social events. Two other organisations worthy of note are [Democrats Abroad](#) and [Republicans Overseas](#), both of which recently increased the membership and activities among the American diaspora before and during Donald Trump's Presidency.

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<sup>96</sup> Figure cited in "[Americans Abroad: A Disillusioned Diaspora](#)" feature article by [Amanda Klekowski von Koppenfels](#) in Migration Policy, July 2015.

<sup>97</sup> See von Koppenfels, 2015

## Evaluation

190. There was no evidence of any evaluation from which lessons could be drawn.

## 4. Thematic Analysis

191. Analysis of the country profiles revealed a number of cross-cutting themes which are of relevance to diaspora engagement.

### The drivers for diaspora engagement

192. Traditionally, at least since the 1990s, the rationale for diaspora engagement was economic: to address the “brain drain” from poorer or more marginal, but educated countries, to richer countries with more economic opportunities.<sup>98</sup> Not seen as a very high policy priority in the first years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this started to change following the financial crisis of 2008, when historical patterns of emigration started to reappear.
193. The other main traditional driver for diaspora engagement was cultural identity in an increasingly globalising world. The roots of this can be seen in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in countries as different as France and China where institutions and policies began to be developed to support the cultural identity of people living overseas.<sup>99</sup>
194. Today, the evidence we have found is that these two historical drivers are still the strongest, with the addition of soft power/public diplomacy. Our research has identified the following key drivers:

**The economy:** labour market considerations predominate, especially policies to manage skills shortages in ageing populations. This is *the* key driver (sometimes the *only* driver) for diaspora engagement in most countries studied, but is especially prominent for Australia, Denmark and New Zealand. Exports and inward investment through support for diaspora business networks are also important, as is knowledge transfer (Australia, Denmark, Québec, New Zealand), and support for alumni (Australia, France).

**Culture and identity:** a smaller range of countries give priority to helping diaspora communities retain a sense of cultural identity with their origin country (China, France). There can be an overlap between these activities and the economy through initiatives which aim to attract tourists and support for business networks through activities and events that draw heavily on well-recognised symbols of national belonging and identity.

**Soft Power:** the OECD identified a role for diasporas to act as ambassadors for their countries.<sup>100</sup> A range of states and civil society actors also see potential in working with diaspora stakeholders to impact on world events,

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<sup>98</sup> [Migration Data Portal - Diasporas](#)

<sup>99</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>100</sup> [OECD - Connecting with Emigrants: A Global Profile of Diasporas 2015](#)

and shape preferences of decision makers in target countries in favour of the home country. Sometimes these activities are very explicit, for example Flanders' desire to increase its influence in the European Union, or the French integration of diaspora engagement in their Cultural Diplomacy.

195. There is another driver of diaspora engagement which is perhaps the most prevalent of all, and that is the activities states undertake to exercise their right to protect their citizens who live abroad. This is one of the primary duties and functions of a diplomat.<sup>101</sup> States have different approaches to how they approach this, ranging from balancing the right to protection with an emphasis on the responsibilities of citizens for their own safety, through the provision of services such as information provision or emergency assistance, to including diasporas and citizens abroad in the domestic affairs of the home country.<sup>102</sup> These activities and services can range from supporting political and civic participation (voting, representation, rights) through to easing barriers to return from overseas. As these activities can only meaningfully be taken forward by states with legal competence, diplomatic missions (especially consular services) and substantial resources, we have ruled them out of scope for this study.

## Modes of engagement with the diaspora

196. The drivers for diaspora engagement are broadly similar between the countries in this study. It is striking that the institutional arrangements, activities, and programmes are also similar. There appears to be a consensus internationally that the way to develop diaspora policy and strategy is through extensive stakeholder engagement and consultation – there are useful examples here from Denmark's Task Force, and from Ireland. Multi-stakeholder engagement is the norm, but it broadly takes three forms:
- Diplomatic services in countries with established diaspora engagement strategies and activities, typically lead on policy, especially where diaspora engagement is seen as key to soft power aspects of external relations. China, France, and Japan are good examples. They also lead on provision of services to diasporas, budget allocation, questions relating to security (of diasporas) and coordination of other Government stakeholders, including Ministries, sub-Ministry level bodies (such as international office networks), other national level institutions (especially Parliaments), consular networks and public-private bodies.<sup>103</sup>
  - Where states such as Ireland develop new diaspora engagement policies, they involve relevant domestic interest groups, typically local government, business and its representatives and umbrella

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<sup>101</sup> See: Sen B. (1965) [Diplomatic Protection of Citizens Abroad](#). In: A Diplomat's Handbook of International Law and Practice. Springer, Dordrecht. DOI: 10.1007/978-94-011-8792-3\_12

<sup>102</sup> For the UK approach, see: [FCDO Outcome Delivery Plan: 2021 to 2022](#)

<sup>103</sup> For a typology of institutions, see: [Migration Data Portal - Diasporas](#)

organisations, and universities. Sometimes they also consult the diaspora itself, but this is not always done.

- Where civil society actors take the initiative as in Canada and Denmark, this usually comes from business, cities/city regions, or diaspora groups who want something from the home country.

197. Given the nature of diasporas and the extensive range of interests involved, from states and local governments, corporations, small businesses, public agencies, universities, NGOs, and even individuals, it is unsurprising that multi-stakeholder engagement is the norm. The range of domestic stakeholders requires leadership, extensive consultation, and a willingness to listen. Our research suggests, however, that this can lead to a sense of policy fatigue – it becomes all too complex, contested, and difficult; the benefits are not clearly articulated; and the costs are under-estimated. An example would be Australia where, after extensive engagement and advocacy in support of diaspora engagement in the early 2000s, and periodic revivals of interest from external stakeholders, the Government has not developed a strong commitment to diaspora engagement beyond one specific initiative (its alumni strategy) and one organisation (Advance.org). Countries tend to fall back on diaspora engagement that is more manageable as it is more narrowly targeted and where the burden of delivery can be shared. As the evaluation of Kea in New Zealand has shown, while initial claims for the return on investment are often optimistic, the contraction of ambition and lack of resources can lead to the potential of diaspora engagement being only partly realised. It is necessary therefore to manage expectations and to be able to demonstrate tangible results.

198. Other cross-cutting themes are relevant to Scotland:

- **A strategic approach to higher education and alumni.** This is an area where Scotland, with its very strong higher education base, could learn from initiatives in other countries, such as Australia's Alumni Strategy, or aspects of France's provision of education for expatriates. Following the digital turn during the COVID-19 pandemic, there are more opportunities than before to offer a Scottish education remotely, and to take advantage of universities' innovative initiatives and existing partnerships in online learning.<sup>104</sup>
- **A rigorous approach to data and statistics.** Lack of data on diasporas is a general problem, but some countries have rigorous and comprehensive national statistics (as does the UK), and others report on progress with strategy implementation. There is, however, strong international interest in developing better data on diaspora engagement internationally, and addressing the methodological challenges of understanding the sites and flows of diaspora populations in global labour and study markets. There is also a general lack of evaluation in this area which could be addressed.
- **A sophisticated approach to nation branding.** Generally, countries that are active in diaspora engagement wish to align their activities with

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<sup>104</sup> See for example the [University of Edinburgh's COVID-19 response](#).

national brands. Several, for example Australia, are in the process of developing nation brands through processes of engagement and consultation, but that tends to be a parallel process to that of consultation on their diaspora strategies. Other countries, for example Japan, face challenges in connecting their nation brands to their national imaginary (how they see themselves, especially their values and symbols), to the perceptions of others (how others see them) and to the associations others make between references to the past which do not play well in the modern world. There is also the question of how accurately nation brands express the reality of the country. As with data, these are issues which face a number of countries in this study (Australia, Denmark, Ireland, Japan).

- **Digital engagement, networks, and platforms.** The COVID-19 pandemic is accelerating the turn to the digital, globally, in terms of how people live, work, transact and engage. Countries offer a range of digital experiences and opportunities to diasporas – but these are almost never targeted specifically at them unless they address specific sectoral concerns (business networking), sell individual experiences (ancestry and tourism sites), provide services (consulates), or project an image of the country (in relation to global challenges). Very few sites we looked at in this study drive diaspora engagement as such, and where they do (for example Advance.org), their offer is focused on the interests of the home country, rather than on the diaspora population.

## 5. Conclusion

### How Scotland compares internationally

199. This section of the report addresses the questions: *How does Scotland's diaspora engagement compare to other countries and what more can be done over the next 5 years?* Having compared the strategies and relative effectiveness of a sample of other countries, we have an overview of current global good practice and an idea of what works, and, to some extent, what does not.
200. Our assessment of effectiveness needs to be caveated, however. A risk we identified, that there would be insufficient data on diaspora engagement to enable rigorous comparative evaluation to be made, turned out to be justified. Countries (with a few exceptions) do not have fully developed policies and strategies for diaspora engagement and, even where they do have strategies, they do not embed evaluation in their activities. Therefore, it is hard to assess “what works”, even in a qualitative way, without further research.
201. We can, however, by comparing what countries say publicly, and where possible by drawing on academic assessments, Parliamentary reports, budget statements and other grey material, come to an overview of countries’:
- **Policy drivers:** what inspires countries to engage with their diasporas.
  - **Means of engagement:** how countries engage.
  - **Who engages:** the key actors in diaspora engagement in each country.
  - **Issues:** facing countries engaged in diaspora engagement, and
  - **Specific initiatives:** the activities or programmes which countries attach value to over time. This can function as a proxy measure for effectiveness.
202. With this overview, we mapped the current policies, strategies, institutions, initiatives, and engagement strategies employed by Scotland against other countries’ activities.
203. Scotland is already active in diaspora engagement:
- Scotland has an external network of eight international offices.<sup>105</sup> Their role is to promote Scottish interests internationally and strengthen Scotland’s relationships with countries and continents. The offices engage with a wide range of stakeholders in each location in many ways including Ministerial engagement, direct communications, events, projects, regular newsletters and via social media activity.
  - [Scottish Development International](#) (SDI) is Scotland’s trade and foreign direct investment agency. With a network of over 30 offices across the

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<sup>105</sup> See: [“International Relations” on the Scottish Government website.](#)



world SDI's aim is to encourage and support more overseas businesses to set up a location here, invest in Scottish businesses or buy high quality Scottish products and services.

- Led and managed by SDI, [GlobalScot](#) is a worldwide network of business professionals, entrepreneurs, business leaders and community figureheads, who have a connection to Scotland and work on a voluntary basis to help the wider Scottish business community thrive internationally by providing market intelligence, connections and mentorship. They also act as advisors and advocates in promoting Scotland as a place to live, work, invest and study.
- **Brand Scotland / Scotland.org:** The Brand Scotland collaboration targets international audiences to promote its vision for Scotland to be recognised as a leading global citizen and a highly desirable country in which to live, work, study, visit and do business. [Scotland.org](#) is the international-facing online platform for Brand Scotland activity, along with a range of social media channels. The website contains a broad range of information and features and links online visitors to a range of partner information and websites. A toolkit is available from the website; it is free to sign up to for anyone interested in promoting Scotland and using assets in their own communications and events. It is planned to further develop this toolkit with the Scottish diaspora in mind with the assets developed on an annual basis for Scotland's Winter Festivals.
- **Culture:** Scotland's Winter Festivals (SWF) was established in 2010 as a legacy of Homecoming 2009. SWF is primarily an events and marketing/PR programme which aims to mobilise the people of Scotland (and those with an affinity to Scotland) to join in the St Andrew's Day, Hogmanay and Burns Night celebrations.
- **Higher Education:** Scotland's higher education institutions are highly globalised, and have excellent relationships with alumni worldwide. A new strategy for international education, to promote Scotland's education offer globally, increase the number of international students and maintain links with the EU, is in the early stages of development.

204. Scotland however, similarly to most other countries, currently lacks an overarching strategy for diaspora engagement that contributes to its wider vision for international engagement. There is no clearly articulated vision for what Scotland wants to achieve through diaspora engagement and no dedicated institutional framework. The [Programme for Government](#) however commits the Scottish Government to "...expand on our work with Scottish diaspora networks across the world." This research confirms that Scotland has a solid base from which to expand, but that there are lessons to be learned from others' experience.

205. Countries and regions are increasingly interested in developing policies and strategies for diaspora engagement. This is principally driven by concerns about the economic impact of demographic change, and is particularly evident where they have ageing populations, skills shortages, and good education systems that equip globally mobile workers to work overseas. Australia, Denmark, Ireland,



and New Zealand fit that pattern, which also applies to Scotland – traditionally a net exporter of educated, skilled, workers. Policy responses tend to focus on measures to encourage diasporas to return home. This requires sustained effort over years, and a range of measures, some of which Scotland has competence in, but some of which are the responsibility of the UK Government.

206. There are also varying views of who falls within the scope of diaspora engagement. Temporary migrants,<sup>106</sup> including some students and alumni, are an increasing focus, reflecting increased labour mobility. This is true for the countries mentioned above, but also for sub-states like Québec, which loses large numbers of skilled workers each year to other parts of Canada. Internal migration is, of course, not impacted by right to residency, right to work or other constraints. This issue too is highly relevant to Scotland and represents a major opportunity.
207. Some countries take a broad view of diaspora engagement. Others are very focused, either on issues, or on specific groups. Where they are focused, they prioritise:
- Economic and business agendas (Australia, Denmark, Flanders, New Zealand, Québec).
  - Specific target groups such as alumni (Australia).
  - Support for the expatriate community in terms of citizenship and education (France).
  - Soft power (influence) through education and culture (China, France).
  - The creation of specific institutions with clear remits (Japan).
208. Where they take a broad approach, this could reflect the salience of the diaspora population in the history and national narrative of the home country, and perhaps its size vis-à-vis the population of the home country. The best example is Ireland.
209. Scotland can learn from any of these approaches, but it is hard to generalise as to what the better approach, broad or narrow should be. That would depend on what Scotland wants to achieve, and how it sees itself in the world.
210. Scotland can, however, undoubtedly benefit from the experience other countries have of how to develop a sustainable diaspora engagement policy and strategy. The policy development process itself, where it is effective, is characterised by multi-stakeholder engagement and consultation, both within the home country and with diaspora populations. This leads to the extensive involvement of civil society in diaspora engagement, reflecting that those who wish to engage with them are mostly non-state actors with a range of agendas and interests which can be in competition for scarce resources. It is worth noting that some

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<sup>106</sup> [Temporary migrants are defined by the European Commission](#): “Migration for a specific motivation and / or purpose with the intention that afterwards there will be a return to the country of origin or onward movement.”

countries' diaspora engagement strategies are led by non-state actors with varying levels of Government facilitation and support (Denmark, USA).

211. Policy must be communicated effectively. At the highest level, this leads to careful attention being paid to the national brand architecture, how it embodies values and serves a positive national reputation. This matters where countries are highly aware of the need to compete for attention (Australia, Québec), have to overcome history (Japan), where national values have been the subject of attention domestically (Denmark), or where national identity is already lodged in the popular global mind in a way which is hard to shift (arguably, Scotland).
212. At the level of delivery, there is a spectrum of three main levels of “meaningful engagement”. These range from countries that have existing long-term rationales, policies, institutions, budgets, and strategies for engaging with their diasporas (France, China) to those that have no clear approach, or even ignore them (USA):

- Level 1:** The most “meaningful engagement” happens where the home country provides services and entitlements to the whole diaspora through Embassies, Consulates, a range of other official channels, and supports and enables civil society initiatives. The diaspora in that case is actively involved with the home country even to the extent of exercising citizenship and political rights (France, Ireland). Table 4 suggests that Scotland currently has to work at this level within the institutional framework of the UK. There is scope to do so through cooperation with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and other UK international organisations, and Scotland can engage with parts of its diaspora through this route, taking advantage of existing well-known and valued Scottish events such as St Andrew’s Day, Hogmanay, and Burns Suppers (as it already does), and exploring the potential to extend them to connect with less traditional diaspora networks, particularly younger members of the diaspora including alumni.

**Table 4: Level 1 diaspora engagement**

<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Citizenship rights and services to the whole diaspora who enjoy legal entitlements (and in the case of France, political rights and representation).</b>	<b>Existing national policy and strategy framework, resources, and initiatives.</b>	<b>Support through state institutions (Embassies, Consulates), and a range of other national public agencies with an overseas presence.*</b>
Australia			
Belgium (Flanders)			
Canada (Federal)			
Canada (Québec)			
China			
Denmark			
France			
Ireland			
Japan			
New Zealand			
USA			
<b>Scotland</b>			

\*Sub-states in the sample vary in their relationship to their national governments, but they are all reliant on them for the provision of diaspora services relating to citizenship, rights, entitlements, including emergency services.

- **Level 2:** At the next level, countries engage meaningfully by providing support to a section of the diaspora. This is most often to businesses, or to groups of diaspora in which the home country has a direct economic interest, such as diaspora members it wants to return to fill skills gaps (Denmark, New Zealand), or where there are economic interests (inward investment, export support) that are served by existing institutions. Table 5 shows that Scotland already operates at this level as do the other sub-states and some countries.

**Table 5: Level 2 diaspora engagement**

<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Support to a section of the diaspora, most often to businesses, or a focus on engagement with specific groups for specific reasons.</b>	<b>Policy and strategy framework minimal or under development.</b>	<b>Support through sub-state international offices, arm's length bodies, state-funded and supported partnerships. Supports and enables civil society initiatives.</b>
Australia			
Belgium (Flanders)			
Canada (Federal)			
Canada (Québec)			
China			
Denmark			
France			
Ireland			
Japan			
New Zealand			
USA			
<b>Scotland</b>			

- **Level 3:** At this level, diaspora engagement is more tenuous in that it is less clearly defined in policy and strategy, there is no clear set of aims, there is a lack of institutions and resources, it is often driven by civil society and by notions of cultural affinity, rather than by Government and policy (Canada, USA). Table 6 (below) shows that Scotland operates at this level as it currently lacks a clear policy, though it does have specific diaspora facing institutions and networks such as GlobalScot (Scotland’s network for international business) with resources and international offices. This is also true of some major countries.

**Table 6: Level 3 diaspora engagement**

<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Currently lacking a policy framework for diaspora engagement. Often driven by civil society.</b>	<b>There is a lack of institutions and/or resources.</b>
Australia		
Belgium (Flanders)		
Canada (Federal)		
Canada (Québec)		
China		
Denmark		
France		
Ireland		
Japan		
New Zealand		
USA		
<b>Scotland</b>		

213. The question of what the right level of diaspora engagement within existing competencies is, can and should be addressed by Scotland as it considers diaspora engagement in the context of its wider international aims.

## 6. Recommendations

214. Based on this literature review, we have identified two areas with a number of sub-themes where Scotland can make practical progress in developing an effective diaspora strategy. The recommendations expressed in this report are those of the contractors appointed. They are all intended to be short term, practical recommendations for action, except where otherwise indicated. The report does not represent the views or intentions of the Scottish Government.

### Part I – A Delivery Plan for Scotland

We recommend the development of a delivery plan for Scotland. This will require further research (see part II), but should include the following elements as identified in this report:

#### 1. Structures and resources:

- 1.1. Ensure there is a clear lead on diaspora engagement policy, coordination, and delivery based in the External Affairs area of the Scottish Government, and that the team and approach is adequately resourced.
- 1.2. That policy lead would be responsible for strategy development, budgets, resources, data and evaluation.
- 1.3. Consideration should be given to increasing the resources available to Scotland's international office network and Scottish Development International (where appropriate) to build on and expand their existing engagement with and through the diaspora and support the establishment of additional productive networks that include both diaspora and local partners.
- 1.4. Intensify collaborations with existing networks and agencies such as Scottish Development International (SDI).
- 1.5. UK structures: consider how to maximise, for diaspora engagement, the value placed on Scottish events by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and others.

#### 2. Strategy:

- 2.1. Policy should focus on priorities that are consistent with Scotland's international aspirations described in [Chapter 6 of the Programme for Government](#) and "*embrace the opportunities of international connection and cooperation, acting as a good global citizen to champion our values-based approach on the world stage*". Our research identified that the process of strategy development is crucial to success, and in particular, it is essential to secure the support and engagement of domestic stakeholders, the diaspora itself, and overseas partners.
- 2.2. Democratic participation, as highlighted in the Programme for Government, should be exemplified in the process of developing and implementing the diaspora engagement strategy. The recent experience of Ireland is relevant.

2.3. Develop governance and accountability arrangements for Scotland's diaspora engagement to ensure effective strategic direction and coordination and, recognising that diaspora engagement is multi-stakeholder in nature, as a way to involve stakeholders in dialogue and decision making and responses to issues that arise. Arrangements should be based on good international practice, and include the roles of Ministers, governments, Parliaments, and civil societies. The experience of Ireland is particularly relevant.

### 3. Areas of engagement:

3.1. **Business:** Scotland is already successful in developing international diaspora business networks. In addition to additional resource for, and activity by, SDI (see above), the scope for these to be leveraged to support skills shortages in the Scottish economy should be considered.<sup>107</sup> The experiences of Denmark and New Zealand are particularly relevant.

3.2. **Alumni:** [Scotland: a trading nation](#) already commits the Scottish Government to enhancing the role of alumni in its international trade and engagement activities. This work should be developed, as a priority, to identify and realise the potential benefits of alumni engagement, including in relation to skills shortages, knowledge exchange, and cultural diplomacy. France and Australia offer contrasting approaches to alumni engagement which could inform discussions with higher education and other stakeholders.

3.3. **Culture:** Culture is a major theme of the Programme for Government. Existing thinking is based around showcasing abroad and major events at home. The potential for involving the diaspora on a long-term basis through an approach based on establishing mutually beneficial cultural exchange initiatives designed to connect them and their host countries to Scotland's contemporary culture and to enrich Scotland through knowledge exchange should be considered. Scotland can also benefit from Japanese experience and practice in working with both traditional and contemporary culture. The ways in which France works with local partners through culture and education could also be relevant.

### 4. Digital engagement:

4.1. As part of the Scottish Diaspora Engagement Strategy, we recommend to set up a digital platform dedicated to engagement with the Scottish Diaspora. Digital platforms offer more potential than do traditional websites: through aggregation, they can bring resources together and help users connect with these resources; they can act as social platforms to bring people together; they support mobilisation, taking common interests to action, and they support learning networks for knowledge exchange.<sup>108</sup> Diaspora engagement, by its nature, requires a strategic approach to engagement across geographies, and effective channels

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<sup>107</sup> See: [The Scottish Government - Shortage occupation list 2020: Call for evidence - our response](#)

<sup>108</sup> [Deloitte Insights – Digital Platform as a growth lever](#)

through which three-way relationships (home country ⇔ diaspora ⇔ host country) can be supported. A platform would provide the infrastructure for that engagement.

## **Part II – Further research**

5. We recommend to carry out **further research into Scotland’s existing assets** and resources to identify gaps and overlaps. We recommend specifically to:
  - 5.1. Map the gap between the opportunities, channels and tools for diaspora engagement and service provision available to states through diplomatic institutions, and those available to sub-states. The experiences of Flanders and Québec offer specific examples, but work could be done to consider specific initiatives of other sub-states in the European Union such as German Länder or French Régions, which could be relevant to Scotland.
6. **Data on diasporas is insufficient** and we recommend to:
  - 6.1. Collect comprehensive data on the diaspora including mapping the location of the diaspora, compiling inventories of diaspora skills and experience; and engaging a wide range of diaspora members to understand what the diaspora has to offer, what it is willing to offer, and what it expects from the government in turn. As noted in paragraph 198 on page 60 of this report, there is an urgent need to improve the evidence base for policy. Ireland is establishing a hub for expertise in diaspora engagement. This would be a good starting point for consideration.
  - 6.2. In the longer term, data gaps could be addressed in a collaborative way with other nations. We recommend investigation of the feasibility of establishing a Diaspora Data Working Group to draw on global best practice in diaspora data and statistics with Australia, Canada, Denmark, New Zealand (and possibly the USA, the OECD, and the European Union).
7. We recommend **to learn from others** by engaging with policymakers in Canada, Denmark, Ireland, and Québec. These all offer lessons for Scotland. While it was clear from the research that there is no “one-size-fits-all” model for governments working to engage their diasporas more effectively, these countries are all engaged in rethinking their strategies today, and it would be valuable to learn from their experience, particularly in relation to two aspects of policymaking that are crucial for success everywhere:
  - 7.1. **Identification of goals:** the drivers for engagement (as noted in the research there are three main drivers: economic, cultural and the desire to exert influence), desired practical outcomes, breadth versus depth, segments to target.
  - 7.2. **Stakeholder engagement:** domestically, in the diaspora, and in destination countries.
8. **Further desk-based research** to explore a limited number of cross-cutting themes from the research that are relevant to Scotland, including:



- 8.1. **Demography, labour mobility and skills:** further research into the experience of Australia, Denmark, New Zealand, and Québec, all of whom have experience of developing diaspora policy that focuses on these traditional drivers of diasporic engagement. They are all currently engaged in, or have agencies whose remit is focused on, these questions.
- 8.2. **Knowledge exchange and Higher Education:** if the focus is on highly skilled and educated expatriate workers, and the definition of diaspora is extended to include alumni, there is much to be learned from the experience of Australia (Alumni Strategy), Denmark (focus on very specific sectoral skills), France (higher education services and alumni), Ireland, and New Zealand.
- 8.3. **Culture:** consider the role of culture in the diaspora (broadly defined to include arts, heritage, questions of identity, media, values) in relation to Scotland's wider international engagement and influencing activities. Specifically, the goals of cultural engagement should be considered, drawing on the experience of Denmark (values), France (cultural promotion and the role of the Institut français), Ireland (identity and values), and Japan (the promotion of Japan through both intangible cultural heritage<sup>109</sup> and contemporary culture).

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<sup>109</sup> See: [UNESCO - "What is Intangible Cultural Heritage?"](#)

# APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

1. Our methodological approach was based on two insights:
  - a. the diaspora should be considered as one stakeholder among many in the context of an overarching international relations strategy which is in the process of transition and change, and
  - b. that we should start by gathering data to see what works “out there”, as far as practicable without preconceptions, then filtering that through the lens of current practice in Scotland to identify a first cut of what lessons can be learned, then refining that analysis through more detailed case studies to learn detailed lessons to arrive at a final set of insights and recommendations.
2. We therefore took a “funnel” approach to data collection – start broad and focus down on the most useful learning for Scotland. The broad analysis was a literature review of official websites and academic material. A list of sources is at Appendix B. We looked at the following countries: Australia, Belgium (Flanders), Canada (Federal and Québec), China, Denmark, France, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, USA. The selected countries built on the countries included in the 2015 Scottish Government research, but we changed the sample slightly to include countries we knew from our recent research for the British Council had relevant diaspora engagement policies and remove others which were not so directly relevant to Scotland.
3. The original brief was to then carry out deep dives on a limited sample of the comparator countries. The assumption had been that lessons could be learned from countries with particularly successful diaspora engagement strategies. We suggested to the client that a more fruitful approach would be to look rather at a limited number of cross-cutting themes from the first analysis. This enabled us to focus on what mattered to countries (the drivers) and to identify what were the main challenges of diaspora engagement that would need to be addressed in the next phase of strategy development. In the event, this approach did, in fact, identify a limited number of countries for further consideration.

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Scottish Chambers of Commerce	<a href="https://www.scottishchambers.org.uk/">https://www.scottishchambers.org.uk/</a>
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