



1. combined work, mutual assistance
2. cooperation, partnership

Irish in Britain: Policy Bulletin – September 2019

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Irish in Britain's diaspora policy submission

We provided a submission to the Irish government's new diaspora policy consultation in July – available [here](#). In the submission, we called for a more dynamic relationship between the Irish government and diaspora organisations, continued acknowledgement of the diverse profile of our community and the highlighting of culturally sensitive care.

UK general election

It is likely that there will now be a general election in November or December of this year. This election will be a great opportunity to reach out to politicians and raise awareness about the many issues related to the Irish community. Once a date is announced, we will be sharing resources with members to help increase engagement, organise hustings and contact MPs.

Brexit through the Green

We hosted *Brexit through the Green: Interpretation, Identity and Irishness* on 13 July. You can read a full report [here](#). As a civil society meeting to address the Brexit process and the status and future of the Irish community in Britain, this event was the first of its kind. A diverse range of issues were discussed and our audience, made up by Irish in Britain friends and members of the public, engaged with passion and creativity.

Driving in Ireland and the UK

There have been several questions recently about British and Irish citizens driving in either country post Brexit. We addressed this initially in our Easter policy bulletin, but it is worth returning to.

UK residents will not require an International Driving Licence to drive in Ireland. However, if there is a no deal exit, British citizens resident in Ireland need to exchange UK-issued licences for Irish-issued licences.

In the event of the UK leaving the EU without a deal, UK residents driving in Ireland may require a [motor insurance green card](#). However, Irish residents driving in the UK will not require a green card.



Freedom of movement

There has been some concern after reported comments from Home Secretary Priti Patel that freedom of movement will end in the event of a no deal exit on 31 October. The government has [since clarified](#) that current immigration rules will be kept until December 2020.

In any case, the rights of Irish citizens travelling and moving to the UK will remain the same as spelled out in the [Memorandum of Understanding](#) signed between the UK and Ireland in May. It stated that the Common Travel Area “allows British and Irish citizens to move freely between the UK and Ireland.”

Referendum on voting in presidential elections

The Irish government has now published the [bill for the referendum](#) on whether citizens abroad should be able to vote in presidential elections. However, with the ongoing distractions and uncertainties surrounding Brexit, the vote will probably be held in the new year.

The proposal being put forward will allow “all citizens without distinction of sex who have reached the age of 18 years who are not disqualified by law and comply with the provisions of the law relating to elections for the office of President, shall have the right to vote at an election for the office of President.”

Regional consultations

We will be organising a series of policy consultation events across the country over the next 12 months which will be open to all our members. In the coming weeks, you should receive more information and a survey in which you can identify your particular policy priorities.

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