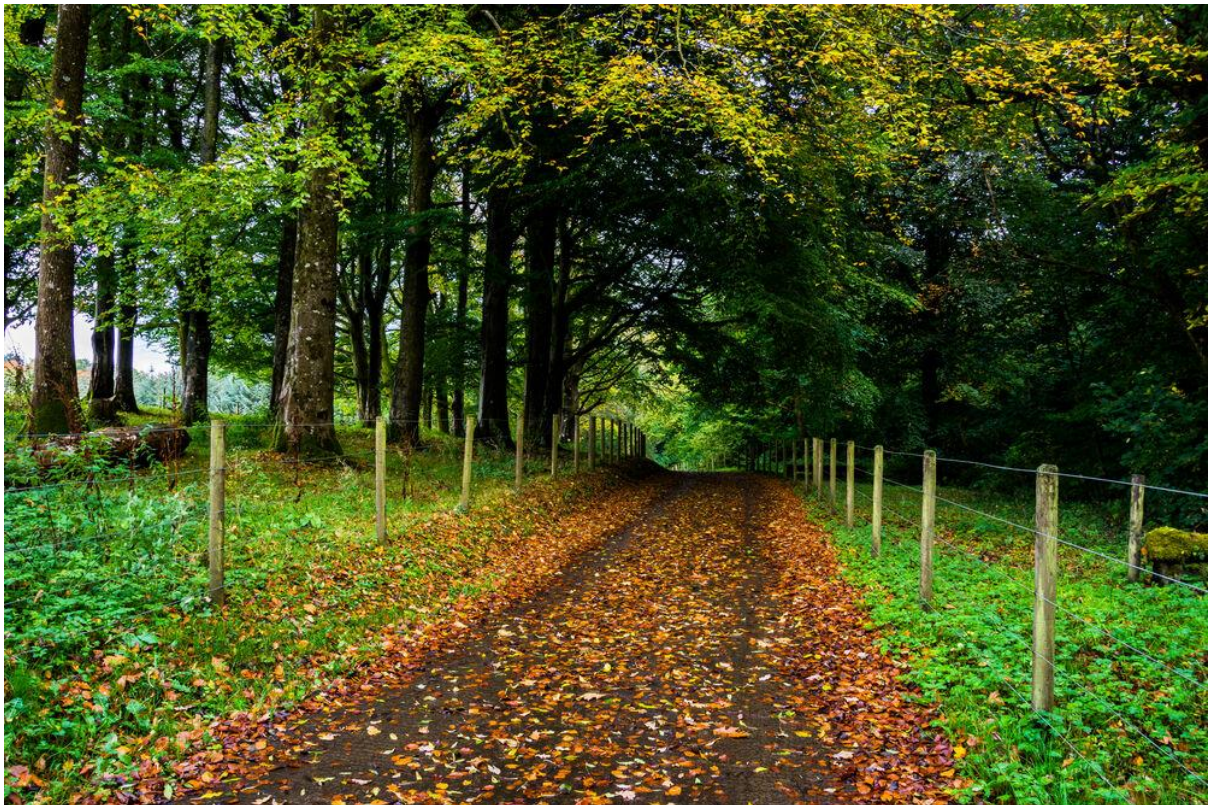




Ambasáid na hÉireann
Embassy of Ireland

An Update from the Irish Embassy in Bratislava

September 2021



Message from Dermot McGauran Ambassador of Ireland to the Slovak Republic

Dear Irish community, friends of Ireland, A chairde,

I am delighted to have this opportunity to introduce myself as Ireland's new Ambassador to the Slovak Republic. With my wife and two young daughters, I arrived in Bratislava in late August and got straight down to work. It has been a busy and intense few weeks, managing the family's move, unpacking countless boxes, getting the girls ready for their new school while also attending to the many tasks that fall to an Ambassador.

It is a great privilege to represent Ireland in the Slovak Republic. My meeting with President Čaputová on 9 September, when I presented my formal letters of credence from President Michael D. Higgins, was a wonderful occasion. The Irish Tricolour was flown at the Palace and the army band expertly played Amhrán na bhFiann. The goodwill towards Ireland in this country was very evident and a real source of pride. With such friendly hosts who are keen to cooperate with Ireland in my areas, I am confident that my time in Slovakia will be productive.

My key priorities are to broaden and deepen our engagement and connections in the political, economic and cultural spheres and to protect the interests of Irish citizens. With all the team at the Embassy, I warmly welcome your ideas and proposals.

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible in the period ahead. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy our autumn newsletter

Take care and stay safe.

Dermot McGauran

Ambassador of Ireland

Ambassadors' biography is available at this [link](#).

Message from Janet O'Sullivan Consul at the Embassy of Ireland to the Slovak Republic

Hello Irish community, friends of Ireland,
A chairde,



Janet with Dundalk F.C. team, Bratislava, August 2019

Is my wife Janet O'Sullivan, your new Consul and contact at the Irish Embassy in Bratislava replacing Conor who I believe a lot of you had the pleasure of meeting? I am sure Conor and our former Ambassador Hilda O Riain will be missed. I spent an enjoyable number of weeks here in Bratislava acting as Chargé d'Affaires in the summer of 2019 so when the opportunity arose earlier this year to take up this long-term posting I did not hesitate. For me it has been a delight getting re-acquainted with the Embassy team and Bratislava.

I arrived in late June with my husband Des and it has been a bit of a whirlwind since, with much work to be done at the Embassy, not to mention sorting out our permanent accommodation but enjoyable none the less. We are so fortunate to have experienced an exceptional summer in terms of weather and have met some lovely people since our arrival.

I had the honour and pleasure of accompanying our new Ambassador H.E. Dermot McGauran when he presented his formal letters of credence to President Čaputová last week.

I bring with me a wealth of experience having worked in the Cork Passport Office for many years leading the ICT team and working with all Irish Embassies abroad on a daily basis.

Des is a dedicated Irish musician playing uilleann pipes and tin whistle which he insisted on bringing with him and is very keen to play Irish music while here so if anyone plays music and would like to get together to play a tune let me know.

I have already had the pleasure of meeting a small number of you in person and look forward to meeting many more of you in the near future.

Keep in touch and stay safe

Janet



Embassy activities

Following our successful Bloomsday public event back in June, we are pleased to continue with its second phase – the **Global Joycean Book Giveaway**. We will donate books to English and Irish studies departments at Slovak universities, starting with universities with Irish lecturers - Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica and Trnava University in Trnava.

The Embassy is working with Culture Ireland on welcoming a number of Irish illustrators attending the upcoming **Biennale of illustration Bratislava (BIB)**, a regular international competition exhibition of original book illustrations for children and youth. We had a very successful participation back in 2019 when children book illustrators, Tatyana Feeney and Margaret Anne Suggs visited several schools in the capital for creative workshops and readings from their books, *Eva and the Perfect Rain* and *Socks for Mr Wolf*. We hope to be able to showcase similar Irish talent this autumn.



Ambassador's activities

Ambassador Dermot McGauran has been very active since he arrived in late August. He has already called on senior Slovak politicians and officials as well as meeting many of his fellow Ambassadors. The Ambassador has participated in wreath-laying ceremonies, begun to discover this country's outstanding countryside and enjoyed his introduction to traditional Slovak cuisine. He is looking forward to meeting the Irish community and Irish companies as soon as possible.

His first public activity in Slovakia was a very typical one for this country – a **hike in the mountains**. Following the official wreath laying ceremony on the anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising on 29 August, he joined the State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Mr Martin Klus and many of fellow diplomats for a scenic hike. They also visited Nová Baňa, a small mining town in central Slovakia.





On 8 September, **Ambassador met with the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Mr Ivan Korčok** for their first official bilateral meeting. In what was a friendly and cordial meeting, they discussed how to further deepen the already excellent relations between our two countries and agreed to work together on trade as well as political and cultural cooperation.

On the following day, **Ambassador Dermot McGauran presented his credentials to the president** of the Slovak republic, Ms Zuzana Čaputová, thus formally becoming Ambassador of Ireland to the Slovak Republic. In a wide-ranging exchange, they discussed rule of law issues, tackling climate change and how Ireland and Slovakia have managed the pandemic.



Later that day, the Ambassador attended a moving ceremony attended by the Prime Minister and other dignitaries commemorating Slovakia's Jewish population who perished during the

Holocaust. The Ambassador joined others in laying a **wreath in memory of those who were deported and killed** during that terrible period

During the Papal visit to Slovakia, **Ambassador McGauran attended a meeting with the Pope** in the Presidential garden as well as Mass in Šaštín. Throughout his visit to Slovakia, Pope Francis highlighted the importance of peace, brotherhood, solidarity and integration.