

Ireland, Japan are strong partners, warm friends

By Damien Cole
Ambassador of Ireland to Japan

Every year, Ireland's national day on March 17 is celebrated by 70 million people of Irish heritage and also by our friends and partners around the world, including here in Japan.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to Minister Seán Canney, Minister of State at the Department of Transport, who will represent the Government of Ireland at St. Patrick's Day events in Japan this year. During an intensive program, he will engage with political, economic and cultural counterparts and will lead the 30th St. Patrick's Day Parade in Tokyo on Sunday, March 15.

I am delighted that the diverse and vibrant Tokyo Parade on Omotesando and the Green Ireland Festival in Yoyogi Park combine to represent the oldest and largest annual St. Patrick's Day celebration in Asia. Beyond Tokyo, lively community groups, marching bands, parades and the illumination of landmarks in green from Yokohama to Matsue and from Sapporo to Kumamoto will bring the Irish spirit to cities across Japan.

This annual festival is a time to reflect on the strong political, economic, cultural and academic partnerships that have brought Ireland and Japan closer together.

Ireland's relationship with Japan reached an important milestone last July with the official opening, by Taoiseach Micheál Martin, of Ireland House in Yotsuya, Tokyo. This exciting new hub in central Tokyo houses the Embassy as well as government agencies and a state-of-the-art event space. It reflects Ireland's ongoing commitment to the bilateral relationship with Japan. Ireland is also continuing the legacy of our award-winning pavilion at the 2025 Osaka-Kansai Expo which



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reminded Japanese visitors of Ireland's rich culture, stunning landscapes and renowned hospitality as well as highlighting opportunities for advancing business, trade and academic ties.

As a small, highly open trading economy with a strong global outlook, Ireland is committed to the value of an open and fair trading system. Free and fair trade brings economic opportunities, creates well-paid jobs, fosters innovation and builds economic resilience — essential for small states like Ireland to thrive and prosper.

Japan is Ireland's most important partner in Asia. This is particularly true of economic relations, trade and investment. The benefits of our economic ties flow in both directions and two-way trade between Japan and Ireland now stands at €23 billion (¥4.2 trillion).

Foreign direct investment from Japanese companies into Ireland continues to grow, especially in the areas



Seán Canney, Minister of State at the Department of Transport

of semiconductors, technology services, financial services and medical technology. We are delighted to see Japanese investment continue to increase in Ireland, as demonstrated by Astellas Pharma Inc.'s recent announcement to invest €129 million across its three sites in Ireland, and by Sony Interactive Entertainment's announcement to establish a 100-person digital innovation and engineering center in Ireland.

We are also deepening cooperation on the green agenda through new partnerships in areas such as alternative energy and electricity grid management, supporting our shared ambition for a sustainable future. Irish innovation finds its way to Japan and continues to attract growing interest from Japanese companies.

Ireland and Japan share a deep commitment to international peace and security, and to a rules-based multilateral system. As Ireland prepares to assume the six-month Presidency of the European Union from July, we look forward to shaping these shared values with our EU partners, as well as our trade, research and people-to-people links.

Japan's recent accession to the Horizon Europe research and innovation program is just one of the many



Tourism Ireland

Achill Island is a popular tourist destination of Ireland.

exciting opportunities for our mutual collaboration within the EU framework that we hope to advance.

The many events taking place in Tokyo and around Japan this month are a testament to the hard work and dedication of the Irish community and friends of Ireland in Japan. I urge everyone to don something green and join in the fun. Without a doubt, Japan is one of the best places in the world to celebrate St. Patrick's Day!

Beannachtaí na Féile Pádraig daoibh go léir!



Jonathan Savoie

Ireland House, Tokyo, an exciting new hub marking strong bilateral relations with Japan

*Happy
St. Patrick's Day
from Team Ireland
in Japan!*



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Embassy of Ireland | Japan
アイルランド大使館 | 日本



Ireland Japan
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Happy St. Patrick's Day

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