

# AsiaMatters

**Asia Matters Summit Cork 17 May 2017**  
**Executive Summary**

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**Building Win-Win Strategic Partnerships  
Between China & Ireland**

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In partnership with



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## Executive Summary



Gerard O'Donovan, Conor Healy, Ann Doherty, HE Dr Yue Xiaoyong - Ambassador of China to Ireland, Tim Lucey, Orla Flynn, Martin Murray



Women at the forefront of The China Ireland partnership



Niall Gibbons, Martin Murray, HE Dr Yue Xiaoyong - Ambassador of China to Ireland, Dearbhail McDonald

## Key Findings

- **It is critical in a changed global trade landscape** of Brexit and a new US administration **to realise the need for Ireland to diversify into new global markets**, particularly Asia with 40% of global wealth and 60% of global consumers who need quality products and services in niches where Ireland can strongly compete. In this context, China is now more important than ever and Cork has a strong leadership position given its successful twinning leadership in the China Ireland relationship.
- **China has particular partnership opportunity for Ireland.** Bilateral trade grew in 2016 by 13.75% to 8.1 billion U.S. dollars. Irish food and drink exports to China have increased six fold in last six years. China has become the third largest market for Irish food and beverages, and the second for Irish dairy and pork products. The current five year plan to 2020 has a target of \$750 billion of Chinese outbound FDI. China is the world's leading outbound tourism market. The number of outbound travellers rose 6% to 135 million in 2016 with Chinese tourism spend up 12% to €240 billion.
- **By 2020, the Chinese outbound tourist market will stand at 200 million**, representing a spend of €422 bn. Ease of access through a direct flight and an easing of the visa situation are necessary steps to drive growth in Chinese tourist numbers.
- **Brexit and OBOR both put the need for Ireland to define and promote its brand in China in sharp relief.** Our nation and city brands can and must embody trust, integrity and quality. Ireland's current image in Asia is largely culturally or experientially based. To have impact, we must move beyond a fragmented multi-agency approach to our national brand - to a joined up and long term strategy. To that end Asia Matters will launch a working group on place branding in Q4 2017.
- **The Cork City Council and Cork County Council cases exemplify long term commitment** to building the relationships, understanding and trust needed to build mutually beneficial partnerships with China.

- **The Cork City twinning programme has provided a gateway** for China to learn first and foremost about Cork; educated Cork people about China and has allowed engagement for the citizens of both cities. Ann Doherty, Chief Executive Cork City Council announced the signing of a health memorandum of understanding with Shanghai.
- **Driving growth in tourist numbers for Cork County requires a visitor led and highly differentiated strategy.** After significant research, Tim Lucey, Chief Executive Cork City Council announced a new tourism proposition: Cork - Maritime Paradise of Ireland.

## About The Asia Matters Summit Cork 2017:

The Asia Matters Summit Cork 2017 is an annual national event held in Cork in partnership with key stakeholders, Cork City Council, Cork County Council, Cork Institute of Technology and Cork Chamber of Commerce.

The timing of this, the third annual Asia Matters Summit Cork, was critical. In a changed global landscape China is now more important than ever and Cork takes a leadership position in the Ireland China relationship.

## Key themes for The Asia Matters Summit Cork included:

- **Win-Win Cooperation between China and Ireland**
- **Best Practice in Business Branding of Nations, Regions & Cities as a Competitive Advantage**
- **Cultural Tourism: Heritage Branding as a USP tied to Place Promotion**

Asia Matters would like to thank all speakers, panelists and participants for giving of their valuable time to contribute to an engaging strategic discussion on the future of the China Ireland Strategic Partnership. We would also like to acknowledge the support of our partners, Cork City Council, Cork County Council, Cork Institute of Technology and Cork Chamber of Commerce and the Asia Summit media partners, Independent News and Media and Emerald Media.

For more information on Asia Matters, Membership queries or to register an expression of interest in upcoming events please see: [www.asiamatters.eu](http://www.asiamatters.eu)