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Irish in America

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Over the course of winter quarter, we have discussed some major themes of Ireland and its history, including stereotypes, poverty, and emigration. We have also discussed Ireland’s current financial state. This has been a highly trending topic on the Facebook group with the Dublin City University students, who are obviously quite passionate about it. As a young woman of Irish heritage, it is also important to me that Ireland sees some positive changes, whether in economics or population growth. Something needs to be done to improve Ireland’s current state. As a marketing major, I wanted to know what Ireland was doing to make the country more attractive to current residents, potential residents, and tourists. Current Irish politicians are taking measures to incorporate aggressive tourism initiatives to help boost the economic environment of Ireland.

Since The Great Potato Famine of the mid-1800s, Ireland has had a constant flow of residents emigrating to the United States and other countries in the United Kingdom. There was also a huge spike in emigration in the late 1980s, as lottery visas were being issued to those who wanted to travel to the United States to live, work, and reside. Since those years, Ireland has had a steady flow of approximately 30,000 people leaving each year. Economic initiatives are being discussed currently to slow this constant flow of emigration and to increase migration into Ireland. Ireland has huge pharmaceutical and software industries, but struggles to sustain other businesses. When talking with the Dublin City University students, many are planning to finish their schooling in Ireland and then move out of the country to find a job. This is also what Michelle Duffy did in the 1980s, which shows that very few new jobs are being created. When I asked about initiatives to get people to reside in Ireland, Sean Mcgann commented, “Let’s face it, all the initiatives in the world can’t bring people back if there are no jobs in the country.” Sean plans on graduating from Dublin City University and will then move to Sweden for employment.

While investigating what is being done to curb this issue, it became apparent that one strategy for redeveloping Ireland is to target its youth. Ireland is also looking to increase its philanthropy efforts, realizing that its charitable efforts are lagging behind most other countries. There is a networking event held for Ireland’s young businesspeople to encourage them to give back to their country through supporting disadvantaged children and elderly, the education system, or world peace organizations. These young people are enthusiastic about giving because they can see their investments making a difference. It is also holds the youth accountable for helping to make the country succeed in the future. Another program, Wave Change, was started to encourage the youth to become entrepreneurs. These students, ages 18-25, are encouraged to help make a difference in Ireland to change the future of the country. The program also encourages a strong democracy as students take a real interest in the country’s political and economic structure. The goal of the program is to create an Ireland in which everyone wants to live. Wave Change helps youth make this goal a reality through retreat weekends where policies, suggestions, and changes are made for the betterment of mental health programs, employments, art and culture, education, immigration, and civil rights. By encouraging youth to get involved in entrepreneurship and Wave Change, they are helping to make a difference through reform while simultaneously spurring economic growth. By targeting the youth of Ireland, fresh ideas will boost the economy and encourage population stability and increased tourism.

To rapidly spur economic growth, Ireland needs to attract more tourists. In this current economic slump, people are reluctant to fly halfway across the world to see Ireland’s beautiful country sides, castles, and cities. Many ambassadors and friends of Ireland recently met at the Global Irish Economic Forum to discuss tactics to entice tourists. This is not the first forum which has resulted in viable reform opportunities. Implementation groups have been established to hold people accountable for their actions to ensure that the initiatives are put in place. In order to reach 20 million people, the forum agreed that approximately $12 million will be spent on a marketing blitz. The country has teamed up with various airlines that will co-sponsor the events. A social media website, WorldIrish.com, has been established to inform the world about upcoming events. In 2013, after all the marketing programs have been implemented, it is expected that 325,000 people will visit Ireland. The Gathering is a year-long promotional program that includes events based on Irish food, music, heritage, lineage, and sports. The Gathering is being marketed as a huge Irish homecoming, complete with festivals and parades. At one event, awards will be given out to people who have dedicated hours of service to helping revive Ireland. In 2011, radio advertisements, golf advertisements, and web-isodes were used to attract people to Ireland. It is apparent that Ireland is willing to try anything that will increase tourism and help salvage its economy.

During discussions with the Dublin City University students, they did not seem aware of the programs in place to attract visitors, and did not seem too sure they were necessary. Sean Mcgann said that the fact that countries all over the world celebrate “Paddy’s Day” is great advertising for Ireland. He also thought that turning the Empire State Building top green was also great marketing for Ireland. Sometimes on St. Patrick’s Day, the United States and Ireland presidents meet, which is also a great source of publicity. While I do not think that a single day can impact Ireland’s economy, it is free advertising that could undoubtedly bring increased interest to the country.

According to [www.besttourism.com](http://www.besttourism.com) , the Cliffs of Moher are among the most beautiful places in the world. Ireland needs to take advantage of its beauty when trying to attract visitors. While many initiatives are in place, there are so many hidden attractions in Ireland that could pique someone’s interest! Cultural movements like The Gathering and Wave Change will help create an Ireland in which we all would want to live. Ultimately, the goal is to help Ireland out of its economic slump and with the tourism and youth initiatives, the country should begin to realize expansion and improvements.

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