

CONNECTING WITH THE SCOTTISH DIASPORA

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Introduction

Scotland's population is in decline. According to the Registrar-General's 2004-based projections¹, the population is expected to rise slightly to just over 5.1 million in 2019 then slowly decline to 4.86 million by 2044, primarily because of a fall in the birth rate. Calculations show that the decline will be most marked amongst children and those of working age, while numbers of persons of pensionable age will increase.

The economic implications of such decline are well understood at government level, and the Scottish Executive has sought to address the issue in part by encouraging in-migration. One of the most significant initiatives is the Fresh Talent Initiative, aimed at encouraging people to consider coming to live and work in Scotland. It was formally introduced in a statement in the Scottish Parliament by the First Minister, Jack McConnell, on 25 February 2003 and followed by a publication entitled **New Scots: Attracting Fresh Talent to Meet the Challenge of Growth** (Scottish Executive 2004), setting out how the

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¹ See <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/library/popproj/04population-projections/index.html>

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Scottish government intended to operate a scheme of managed migration. Some of the measures included in the scheme involve allowing non-EU graduates from Scottish universities to remain in the country for two years after graduation without requiring a work permit, the establishment of a relocation advisory service for people considering settling in Scotland, and assistance to Scottish universities to offer bursaries to overseas students.

A particular strand in the attraction of in-migrants has been a focus on the Scottish diaspora. The **New Scots** report states:

There are many thousands of Scots living and working elsewhere and we will actively encourage these expatriate Scots to return home. The extent of the Scots diaspora means that there are millions of people across the globe who have a strong emotional and cultural link with Scotland. Friends of Scotland and GlobalScot² will be reorganised to create a more focused relationship with this group, to encourage some of them to live and work in Scotland. (Scottish Executive 2004, p.7)

The targeting of the diaspora is interesting, as its members have sometimes been regarded with some embarrassment, as having an unrealistically romantic view of their 'homeland'. Hunter (2005) states:

Scotland's relationship with its overseas diaspora [is] anything but easy. Of course, when our distant cousins come as individuals to our homes, we make them welcome. It is their collective behaviour, as can be seen from the Scottish media's treatment of New York's annual Tartan Day parade, we find mystifying or, worse, embarrassing. Hence Scotland's failure to mobilise its diaspora – as Ireland, in contrast, has done brilliantly – in support of national causes that could do with international backing (Hunter 2005, p.14).

The Scottish Executive's approach now demonstrates that there is an increasing awareness of the diaspora as a resource and as a possible source of business investment.

This article seeks to assess how realistic is the Scottish Executive's aim of harnessing the resources of the diaspora, by reporting on recent research with

² *Friends of Scotland and GlobalScot have been set up by government to promote Scotland internationally. See the web site <http://www.FriendsofScotland.gov.uk>*

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the Scottish diaspora in America. It discusses ways in which policies on improving relations with the diaspora are being put into practice, and identifies four key questions which may be asked about the diaspora in relation to Executive policy. These relate to the view of Scotland held in general by the Scottish American diaspora; the extent to which the diaspora can be said to be 'in touch' with contemporary Scotland; the extent to which members of the diaspora might actually consider returning to Scotland; and the potential willingness on the part of diaspora members to invest in Scotland. These questions form the basis for discussing the views which are held within the diaspora, and allow us to suggest that certain parts of Executive policy may be more successful than others.

PUTTING POLICY INTO PRACTICE

As noted (Hunter 2005), other countries such as Ireland have had a more comfortable relationship with their diaspora. For example, the then President of the Republic of Ireland, Mary Robinson, in an address to the Houses of the Oireachtas in 1995 argued strongly that Ireland should cherish its diaspora. She spoke of the huge numbers of Irish people living across the world, but particularly in America, and suggested that Ireland needed to respond to desires for dialogue, interaction and practical links involving trade and business (Robinson 1995).

Within the Scottish Executive, there have been some important initiatives in working with the Scottish diaspora. The Global Friends of Scotland (or GlobalScot) project referred to above aims, firstly, to promote a contemporary image of Scotland internationally through a network of people who feel an affinity to the country; and, secondly, to 'showcase' Scotland's achievements in culture, sport, education and business, through the internet. The network links with a similar initiative run by the Scotland Office, entitled 'Friends of Scotland'. A second initiative is Scotland Europa, which promotes Scotland's interests within the European Union and which co-ordinates activity with the Executive's office in Brussels³.

Thirdly, there has been a proactive approach within the Executive's tourist strategy, to attract members of the diaspora back to Scotland to rediscover their heritage and undertake genealogical research. In the past, there was little

³ See web site <http://www.scotlandeuropa.com/>

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positive encouragement of such ‘roots tourism’ but this has become an important niche tourism market (Scottish Executive 2000). Basu (2004) provides an interesting example of this in the Orkney Homecoming event, in which 150 Canadians of Orcadian descent participated.

North America is particularly important in terms of diaspora relations and there are a number of organisations established to promote business links. In 2002, for example, the National Tartan Day Committee in Washington D.C. established a Scottish-American Business Forum. At its first meeting, it was addressed by Wendy Alexander MSP, then Scottish Minister for Enterprise, who stressed Scotland’s science and skills based approach to enterprise, in contrast to what she referred to as ‘**Braveheart, Brigadoon** and bagpipes’.⁴ The following year, a similar Forum was established in New York, under the aegis of the American Scottish Foundation.

Ministers have continued to visit North America, to expand business opportunities. In October 2005, McConnell visited the USA and Canada, meeting business leaders and those, like Donald Trump, with Scottish ancestry. He announced that activity in Canada would continue in 2006 in collaboration with the British High Commission, and he clearly saw Canada as the focus of his attempts to attract both migrants and investment (**Herald** 28 October 2005). He had previously argued that one of the significant impacts of devolution had been the opportunity to form such international relationships (**Herald** 17 September 2005), with Executive policy ‘increasingly becoming separate from the activities of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office’ (**Sunday Herald** 2 October 2005, p.9). McConnell’s efforts prompted some caustic correspondence to the **Herald** from some Scots who had emigrated because of what they saw as a lack of opportunity and of financial reward in Scotland (see **Herald** 29 December 2005, for example).

During 2003-4, the Scottish Parliament’s European and External Relations Committee undertook an inquiry into the promotion of Scotland overseas and received a significant number of submissions either from or about the diaspora⁵. What was striking in the responses was the large number of

⁴ www.scotland.gov.uk/pages/news/2002/04/SEet003.aspx

⁵ *The various responses referred to here have been published on the Scottish Executive website at <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/committees/europe/reports-05/eur05-01-01.htm>*

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individuals who referred to Tartan Day as being the event which most engaged the diaspora in America but which was seen as being inadequately supported by the Scottish Executive. Tartan Day itself dates from a Senate Resolution passed in March 1998, identifying 6 April each year as a day for Scottish-Americans to celebrate their heritage, the date being chosen to commemorate the signing of the Declaration of Arbroath, seen by some as a model for the American Declaration of Independence (Hague 2002).

The US Senate, in passing the resolution, promptly invented a tradition, one specifically developed outwith Scotland to serve a diaspora community (Hague 2002). America has seemingly embraced the symbolism of Tartan Day because, for Scottish-Americans, tartan is a badge of membership within the Scottish community and of clan affiliation (Ray 2001). In Scotland, however, the hesitancy of the Scottish Executive in supporting Tartan Day may reflect its clear discomfort in participating in an event, in which Scotland's image is portrayed as one of heritage, and 'tartanry'. Thus, for the Executive, there is a tension between promoting their particular vision of contemporary Scotland which is at odds with the selective (and stereotypical) drawing on the past which is represented in such celebrations as Tartan Day.

These tensions are well illustrated by a series of interviews undertaken during 2005 by MSPs Kenny MacAskill and Henry McLeish of members of the Scottish diaspora across the world (MacAskill and McLeish 2005). All the interviewees were Scots-born and had emigrated usually to obtain better career opportunities. A large number of those interviewed in America recognised the difficulties created by a tartan image but believed that the energy and range of activities surrounding Tartan Day clearly presented a promotional window of opportunity for certain Scottish interests, such as tourism. Tartan Day, they believed, could provide a platform for the Executive to cement high-level political links and build on other important relationships.

Scottish Executive policy, however, aims to go further and actively encourage members of the diaspora to move back to Scotland and to invest in the Scottish economy and society. It is certainly true that some members of diasporas are internationally mobile, sometimes more so than people rooted in their home territories (Cohen 1997), but the Scottish diaspora has been settled in North America for a number of generations and it is not clear if there is much appetite for reverse migration. Business investment may, however, be a more realistic option to pursue.

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Thus, while the Executive has sought to strengthen its relationship with the diaspora, the potential for success may rest on four questions. The first is the extent to which the view of Scotland held in general by the Scottish American diaspora equates with what the Scottish Executive sees as a more 'authentic' contemporary view of Scotland. Secondly, and on a related point, how 'in touch' is the diaspora with contemporary Scotland, as opposed to their understanding of Scotland? Thirdly, at a time when the Executive is urging members of the diaspora to return 'home', to what extent might this actually be achieved? Are there economically active individuals who might be willing to relocate? And fourthly, how willing might members of the diaspora be to invest in Scotland? These four questions form the basis of discussion, based on research conducted in America.

THE SCOTTISH AMERICAN DIASPORA: REPORTING ON RESEARCH

The research which is reported here was undertaken in late 2003 in Colorado. Since 1980, American censuses of population have asked questions about ancestry and so it is possible to identify those areas where identification with Scottish ancestry is strongest. In 2000, the states with the largest percentages of Scottish-Americans were all either in New England or the north west (including Colorado); many areas traditionally associated with Scottish settlement such as the Carolinas did not feature strongly.

Representatives of Scottish organisations (St Andrew Societies, An Comunn Gaidhealach America, Highland Games committees, Scottish dance organisations, local pipe bands etc) were contacted by email, asked if they were willing to participate, and if they could suggest other potential contacts. Social events and local newsletters were also used to advertise the research and, in this way, the sample was 'snowballed'. In total, 21 separate interviews were conducted, involving 27 individuals. In addition, social contact with a large number of other individuals helped to provide valuable contextual information (ranging from informal conversations to being given access to photographs, videos, books, and the reports and newsletters of many local organisations). Interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed.

Of the 27 people interviewed, seven were retired, one was a student and the rest were working; most were aged in their 40s and 50s and were employed in 'white collar' jobs. The sample was therefore rather middle class but this

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implies a degree of wealth and an ability to travel back to Scotland for both business and pleasure.

Interviewees were asked about a range of issues, including personal histories, involvement with Scottish organisations and questions of identity. Specifically, the interviews explored visits to and extant links with Scotland, knowledge of contemporary Scotland, the ways in which individuals kept 'in touch' with Scottish affairs, and individual intentions for the future – including any possible future return to Scotland.

AWARENESS OF CONTEMPORARY SCOTLAND

There is evidence (MacGregor 1980, Shepperson 1981, Fry 2003) that members of the Scottish diaspora have a rather unrealistic view of the country. For example, the experiences of Alan Bain, President of the American-Scottish Foundation, whose romanticised views of Scotland are not always shared by native born Scots are described in Devine and Logue (2002). But it was clear that the romance of Scotland and its heritage still remained as potent aspects of a Scottish identity for many people.

I know modern day Scotland doesn't want to accept this, but you have to accept the fact that Americans have a mystical relationship with Scotland. Modern day Scotland wants to be known as computers and whisky and manufacturing and education and medicine but Americans have this mystical relationship that defies definition. It's bagpipes and clan wars and castles. (Male, aged 76)

Scotland is fantasy. I suppose we dream of going to Scotland like many Scots have dreamed of the American Dream. The history of Scotland is so old, so interesting. ... I think of heather, I think of moors. I think of sheep dogs. It's the fantasy part and I think that's what we are living over here. (Female, aged 77)

Those diaspora members who had been born and brought up in Scotland had a rather different, and less romantic view of Scotland, while recognising that this was the side of Scotland which most appealed to Americans.

I think that they have more of a romanticised view. That it's quaint and even though their forbears came from there, they're still going there on

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vacation. Whereas when I go, I'm going to places that I remember from childhood. (Female, aged 46, born in Scotland)

A number of interviewees were involved in genealogical research. This could be time consuming and sometimes required considerable expenditure; it could therefore be seen as a rather middle class pursuit (cf. Novak 1971). Such research led many Scots Americans to return to Scotland, yet despite the growing awareness in Scotland of the importance of roots tourism, many Scots viewed it with mild amusement. One couple had stayed at a guest house in Mallaig, where the hotelier was hostile towards what he saw as a continuous stream of Americans asking questions about their origins. They believed that their presence on holiday, rather than on a search for family history, helped to redeem them in his eyes.

His first question for us while we were unloading our luggage, was: 'Do you have ancestors in Scotland? Why are you here? Are you looking for your ancestors?' We explained that we knew those things pretty much and we were just here to enjoy a couple of castles and soak up a little atmosphere in pubs and not make ourselves conspicuous. We passed the test. (Male, aged 60)

Others had a wider awareness of social issues in Scotland:

My goal is to travel every year there. I would like to attend a Hogmanay in Edinburgh for example and see what that's like – social things. Movies are a good thing to see. **Trainspotting**, **Sweet Sixteen** and everything are a little intense, but I don't want to get a picture of Scotland that I am just comfortable with. I want the truth, I want the facts. They have drug problems just like everybody else and they have thugs and monsters just like we do. So I don't want it watered down. (Male, aged 53)

Such views were, however, relatively rare. More common were the romantic views:

I think it's a wonderful little country ... it has such its own character and its own identity. (Female, aged 50)

For me it's a lot of the history and a romantic type of thing. (Male, aged 62)

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Thus, the general picture which emerged from the interviews was of a group of people well aware of Scotland as a modern West European country, but whose prime interest, nevertheless, was in heritage and family history.

HOW 'IN TOUCH' WITH SCOTLAND IS THE SCOTTISH DIASPORA?

The impact of both the internet and greater frequency of visits to Scotland, using cheap air travel, were both mentioned in interviews as helping Scottish-Americans to keep in touch with Scotland. Many members of the Scots diaspora never visited Scotland until serving in Europe during the First World War (Hunter 2005) and, as recently as the 1960s, air travel was expensive, making it difficult for Scottish emigrants to return home. Today, air travel is relatively cheap and commonplace. The internet provides an immediate set of links to a range of web sites pertaining to Scotland. Such changes may therefore have made it easier for expatriates to maintain contact with current transnational values and involvements (Eckstein 2002). That said, both travel to Scotland and use of heritage websites may also merely reinforce a particular view of 'Scotland' and so the images which are held may not necessarily change over time.

A simple test of awareness was to ask interviewees about their knowledge of devolution. There appeared to be a strong awareness of the Scottish Parliament and some people had been to the Parliament's visitor centre at Holyrood.

I know the Scottish Parliament was reconvened because that happened about four years ago and we were there. (Male, aged 52)

I stayed up till 3 o'clock in the morning to watch the Queen open Parliament, on television. (Male, aged 71)

Devolution was not, however, seen as being particularly newsworthy, in the context of America's perceived insularity. Nevertheless, there appeared to be wide support for the establishment of the Scottish Parliament, although sometimes this was tinged with a certain romanticism. There was also some confusion between Scottish devolution and independence:

It's hard to describe that feeling. It's kind of like in **Braveheart**. We have a country of our own. (Male, aged 35)

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I think any country should have their own independence, even though they are a part of Britain. (Female, aged 77)

There were a number of interviewees who made historical allusions, linking the establishment of the Parliament to the return of the Stone of Scone, the Declaration of Arbroath and other events. There were also references to more recent history, with one person recalling the long struggle to achieve devolution and the camp outside the Royal High School building on Calton Hill in Edinburgh.

I feel I'm very well informed about it. ... There was a picture of Sean Connery getting recruited by the SNP people to rally round the troops. There's a little movie out there called **Interrogation of a Highland Lass**⁶ and it's about the repatriation of the Stone of Scone back in 1950, 1951. I admire the fact that people are still willing to fight for that. The Declaration of Arbroath – how that has gradually led to an identity. (Male, aged 53)

Thus, even contemporary events and issues were linked to and viewed through a range of historical events and a remembered 'Scottish' past that was consistent across many of the interviews – an American Scots' collective memory, reinforced through their own shared traditions and invoked by their own ceremonies and gatherings.

Given that there was some awareness of political and constitutional change, this raises the issue of how individuals kept informed. The BBC web pages were mentioned by interviewees and a significant number of people also subscribed to BBC television programmes or watched the BBC world news on the Public Broadcasting Services channel.

I do watch BBC. We have that, it's on twice a day on the PBS station. It's so much better news because you get a totally different viewpoint of more

⁶ This is a film which was shown on the BBC in December 2000, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the taking of the Stone from Westminster Abbey. It was made in Gaelic (titled *An Ceasnachadh*), with English subtitles, and dramatises the interrogation of one of the participants, Kay Matheson, by a less than sympathetic detective inspector, who is unable to comprehend either the language or the strength of national feeling involved. It would appear that video copies sell well in America.

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areas of the world that you don't see on local or national stations. (Female, aged 77)

There is no doubt that there is an awareness of current Scottish issues within the diaspora but even those who had followed key events such as devolution were sometimes confused about the process. There was also some conflation in the minds of some interviewees between contemporary and historical issues.

MOVING BACK TO SCOTLAND

One part of the Scottish Executive's approach to the diaspora involves active encouragement of expatriate Scots to return home. Our research suggests that, although many people visited Scotland for holidays and talked about moving 'home', the actual purchase of property was very rare. One family, however, had bought a house which they then used as a base for future visits:

We did a house exchange in Troon. ... Then we met really good friends through that house exchange. ... We ended up buying a house together as an investment ... down at Dunure. We're renting that house out. Sometimes I use that house but sometimes I stay with friends. (Female, aged 58)

Other interviewees, however, appeared much less certain about making such an investment. There was a recognition that moving to Scotland represented a huge, possibly unrealistic, step.

I would like to [live in Scotland]. But I have so many children here and grand children that it would be kind of hard. The perfect scenario would be to live in both places. ... Buy a house. Three or four years ago, some of my friends and I got together and we were going to put in money together and buy a £50,000 to £70,000 house and take turns using it. (Male, aged 59)

In the event, the money which had been earmarked for this potential purchase had been used for a family wedding.

For some interviewees, their main interest was in finding a home for retirement and so these potential reverse migrants would not necessarily be economically active. Others spoke of living in Scotland for extended periods during the summer, but were not anticipating moving permanently. They seemed to be keeping Scotland at a distance, as it were, drawing on the connection at certain times:

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My wife and I have talked about maybe living there for a summer. If I were on my own for some reason, I would probably go there for a year and study. That's not likely to happen. A summer or something like that is quite possible. Now that we're empty nesters, we're free to plan. So we might. (Male, aged 59)

A number of interviewees speculated as to whether the notion of moving to Scotland was a realistic one. For one couple, there was a concern that expatriate Americans might not be welcome if they were seen to be using their wealth to buy properties in areas of housing shortage like the Highlands.

We thought about looking for a house that we would buy for our family, for future time. ... I have a lot of money in comparison to some of the people we stayed with when we were in Scotland. I am more ambivalent about it then I was before, because nobody said 'Won't you come here and be with us, we would welcome you back'. There was none of that. It was a sense of 'This is who we are and this is what we are about and thanks for your money'. (Female, aged 58)

Another interviewee likened moving to Scotland to people in Colorado who decided to live in the Rocky Mountains because of the attractiveness of the scenery but eventually found the existence there – particularly in winter – too hard to endure.

It's just like you think about moving up to the mountains. You think about moving up to Nederland or Estes Park. A lot of people go up there and spend all this money with these really expensive houses. They stay one year. And then they come back down the hill. The weather is horrible up there. The wind blows and howls and screeches up there. It snows up there. You could get killed up there or get eaten by something, and it's a year. They sell the house, they move back down. I know that might happen to me too. You have to be a realist, you can't be a romantic. (Male, aged 59)

Some were concerned that employment opportunities and welfare services might be poorer in Scotland than in the United States.

When you get older, you need the medical backing, you need a lot of things. You can't just pack up and move over there and think this is going to be Heaven because you're going to get older and you're going to get

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frail. But it would be nice. (Male, aged 59)

Even those who had been born and brought up in Scotland acknowledged that while they had a periodic hankering to return, it was not necessarily realistic, as they would be returning to very changed circumstances.

A: I don't know. I must say we have seen a lot of couples here go back [to Scotland] and with one exception, they all came back.

Q: They couldn't settle back?

A: No. Even one of my nurse friends. She went back but she was back again. She just couldn't.....

Q: Hard making the adjustment?

A: Hard – and she went back to family. You miss your family, you do, but...

(Female, aged 71, born in Scotland)

While a number of people had therefore considered moving back to Scotland, most saw it as unrealistic. Those who thought of it as a serious possibility tended to be older, seeking a home to which they might retire, or at least visit for part of the year. Nobody who was interviewed had thought seriously about moving to Scotland for employment. This suggests that the Scottish Executive may have difficulties in attracting economically active members of the diaspora back to Scotland.

THE DIASPORA AS A RESOURCE

During the interviews a few individuals referred to the business opportunities offered by Scotland and, for them, the establishment of the Scottish Parliament had been significant. There were also important links with other bodies in Scotland.

I have a lot of connections. ... So I served on the Patron's Committee of Glasgow University when they had their 550th anniversary. I am on the American board of the National Trust for Scotland. ... At one time I had several connections with the Scottish Parliament. Wendy Alexander was a friend who is now out of power. I also met Donald Dewar and had two or

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three opportunities to visit with him. (Male, aged 76)

We established several years ago a Scottish Business Forum in the hope that we could increase traffic between Chicago and Scotland. (Male, aged 54)

Those who were involved in the development of business links between Scotland and America saw the involvement of Scottish expatriate organisations as a part of that process. Sometimes, the involvement of social organisations provided a useful bridge to the American-born expatriate Scottish community.

The British-American Business Council's events tend to be more social than anything else. ... Therefore, what we're trying to do, and it's mutually beneficial, is to bring in the St Andrew Society and allow the members of the St Andrew Society to have access and participate in the BABC events, as members. (Male, aged 55, born in Scotland)

Reference was made by a number of interviewees to Tartan Day, with surprise that the Scottish Executive did not make more use of it to promote links between the two countries. This highlights the differing attitudes towards Tartan Day from the Executive and the diaspora community.

I think it would be important for the Scottish Executive to help Americans celebrate Tartan Day. I know there was some criticism about how much money they spent on their trips to this country last year, but they need to send their national leaders to America – and not just to New York or Washington. They need to scatter them across the country. (Male, aged 76)

As might be expected, roots tourism was identified by many interviewees as a key source of revenue for Scotland. Some people visited to see family or to play golf; others went to learn Gaelic, and one respondent pointed out what he saw as the value of both roots tourism and of Gaelic learning to the Scottish economy, suggesting that it had been undervalued within Scotland itself.

I hope to live another maybe twenty years, and ... if I do that, I expect that maybe I will live there for the summer, perhaps half a dozen times. On a typical trip to Scotland, I spend probably \$6,000, and I know how many Americans are doing that. My reason for doing that is largely Gaelic. ... And when I hear certain critics bemoaning the expenditure of amounts of money to support Gaelic, well here I am contributing, loosely speaking,

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\$30,000 or \$40,000 towards that. Gaelic is there and available to me, and so that's money that I'm putting into the Scottish economy as an individual. (Male, aged 59)

Other respondents referred to visits to Scotland for special events such as country dancing summer schools and the World Pipe Band Championships in Glasgow. Genealogical research was also very important and many members of the diaspora visited research sources in Scotland, such as Register House in Edinburgh.

Clearly, tourism is a major activity amongst the Scottish diaspora, with most of the individuals interviewed visiting Scotland fairly frequently. Some were forthright regarding the amount of money they spent in Scotland, arguing that roots tourism should be better regarded. Others who had an interest in business investment were keen to improve networks with Scotland and, where appropriate, use Tartan Day as a networking opportunity. Thus, there appear to be important opportunities to develop business links and encourage diasporic sources to invest in Scotland.

CONCLUSION

The research reported in this paper suggests that the Scottish diaspora within America has a rather mixed view of Scotland itself. For some, they had a romantic image of the country, rather at odds with that which the Scottish Executive portrays. For others, however, the advent of cheaper air travel and the internet had allowed them to become more 'in touch' with contemporary Scotland than would otherwise have been the case. One person had acquired property, for example, while others had considered it. Several people were very aware of business links with Scotland and the value to Scottish tourism of visits from the diaspora. There was also a general awareness of the establishment of the Scottish Parliament, although some confusion about what devolution actually meant.

The Scottish Executive's Fresh Talent Initiative is seeking to engage with the diaspora, and has suggested the desirability of both reverse migration and of investment in Scotland by members of the diaspora. In relation to the first of these aims, we would argue that it may not be entirely realistic. Quite apart from the considerable personal upheaval, many expatriates may actually be happier being at a distance from Scotland as it allows them to maintain their

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own image of the country. Certainly, few of the people we interviewed could imagine themselves relocating to Scotland, in part because of the difficulties in leaving behind family, friends and existing employment. This echoes the findings of Boyle and Motherwell (2005) in their study of Scots in Dublin. They found that most Scots working there, while recognising the possible advantages of moving back, felt that they were unable to do so as employment opportunities in Scotland were poorer than in Ireland. Only a limited number had thought seriously about it, believing that the 'quality of life' was better in Scotland.

This issue of Scottish economic opportunity was raised again in evidence to the Scottish Parliament's European and External Relations Committee Inquiry. In the absence of clearly identified employment opportunities, the Fresh Talent Initiative was thought to be asking potential economic migrants to 'bet on a long-term future in Scotland'. Many migrants would be unwilling to bet in this way and the uncertainty as to job prospects in Scotland would be likely to act as a deterrent.⁷

Certainly, a few individuals in our study who were of retirement age could envisage spending more time in Scotland but such people would not be economically active and it is unclear if their migration would be encouraged by the Fresh Talent Initiative.

In relation to the Executive's second aim, of attracting investment into Scotland from diaspora members, it would appear that this is an area with more likelihood of success. Many of our interviewees demonstrated considerable goodwill towards Scotland and some individuals spoke of developing business links. Indeed, the Executive was criticised for making insufficient use of opportunities presented by events such as Tartan Day. Tourism is a part of this investment and the recent recognition of the value of roots tourism is important; many Scottish-Americans are very aware of their spending power and the important role they can play in relation to Scottish tourism. It should be acknowledged however, that promotions linked to Tartan Day and the heritage industries engender some discomfort in the Executive, which would rather promote Scotland in a more 'modern' way.

⁷ www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/committees/europe/reports-05/eur05-01-01.htm, paragraphs 76-77

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In summary, the Executive's policy on working with the diaspora is an interesting development but the prospects for success are perhaps more circumscribed than has so far been acknowledged.

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May 2006