



ÚDARÁS  
CRAOLACHÁIN  
NA hÉIREANN

BROADCASTING  
AUTHORITY  
OF IRELAND

## **Broadcasting Authority of Ireland – Irish Language Scheme 2013-2016**

**Under Section 11 of the Official  
Languages Act 2003**

## Chapter 1 - Introduction

### 1.1 Approach to development of Scheme

This is the first Irish Language Scheme prepared by the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) under section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003 (“the Act”). Section 11 provides for the preparation by public bodies of a statutory scheme detailing language services which they will provide

- through the medium of Irish;
- through the medium of English; and
- through the medium of Irish and English.

In addition, Section 11 outlines the measures to be adopted to ensure that any service not provided by the body through the medium of the Irish language will be provided within an agreed timeframe.

This BAI Irish Language Scheme has been developed to set out a standard approach across the organisation to fulfil its obligations in relation to the Irish language over the coming three years, taking into account what is practical and achievable within that timeframe. Objective setting will be incremental in nature, with service provision increasing on a year-by-year basis.

The specific aims of the BAI Irish Language Scheme are as follows:

- to set out and inform stakeholders and staff of our Irish language commitments
- to build on the level of Irish language services currently provided by the BAI
- to set incremental targets to be achieved over a 3-year timeframe
- to ensure staff are well supported through training and awareness programmes
- to review progress on a regular basis.

A notice was published in January 2013 under section 13 of the Official Languages Act 2003 inviting representations from interested parties. The Irish-language coordinating body, Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge was also provided with a copy of the call which it distributed to Irish language organisations across its network. BAI stakeholders were informed of the call for submissions through the social media sites Facebook and Twitter. Views were also sought from BAI staff through surveys and consultation.

9 submissions were received in total and these can be viewed on the BAI’s website: [www.bai.ie](http://www.bai.ie). The Scheme has been informed by these submissions, as well as by views received from staff during the consultation period.

This Scheme takes account of the Government’s *20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030*, which aims to increase the use and knowledge of the Irish language nationwide. Firstly, in the context of the strategic objective to increase the number of people who access State services through Irish, the BAI endeavours to increase the visibility and quality of its Irish Language service provision. Secondly, in the context of the strategic objective to develop the Irish Language through Media and Technology, the BAI aims to improve the services it currently provides those applicants wishing to develop Irish-language programming through the Broadcasting Funding

Scheme and to those broadcasters and individuals who wish to communicate with the organisation through the medium of Irish.

## 1.2 Commencement date of Scheme

This Scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and has effect from **16<sup>th</sup> September 2013**. It will remain in force for a period of 3 years from this date or until a new Scheme has been confirmed by the Minister pursuant to section 15 of the Official Languages Act, whichever is the later.

## Chapter 2 - Overview of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland

### 2.1 Broadcasting Act 2009

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland was established on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2009 to regulate content across all broadcasting, assuming the roles previously held by the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland (BCI) and the Broadcasting Complaints Commission (BCC). The Broadcasting Act 2009 sets out a range of general and specific objectives for the BAI and its statutory committees, including the following:

- that the number and categories of broadcasting services made available in the State by virtue of this Act best serve the needs of the people of the island of Ireland, bearing in mind their languages and traditions and their religious, ethical and cultural diversity;
- that the democratic values enshrined in the Constitution, especially those relating to rightful liberty of expression, are upheld;
- the provision of open and pluralistic broadcasting services.

The Act further determines that the Authority will:

- stimulate the provision of high quality, diverse and innovative programming by commercial, community and public service broadcasters and independent producers,
- facilitate public service broadcasters in the fulfillment of their public service objects as set out in this Act,
- promote diversity in control of the more influential commercial and community broadcasting services,
- provide a regulatory environment that will sustain independent and impartial journalism,
- provide a regulatory environment that will sustain compliance with applicable employment law,
- protect the interests of children taking into account the vulnerability of children and childhood to undue commercial exploitation,
- provide a regulatory environment that will facilitate the development of a broadcasting sector in Ireland that is responsive to audience needs and in particular is accessible to people with disabilities, and
- promote and stimulate the development of Irish language programming and broadcasting services.

## 2.2 Mission and Goals

### Mission

As Ireland's broadcasting regulator, the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) is an independent statutory body, committed to serving Irish society by regulating, shaping and supporting the broadcasting environment, so that broadcasting reflects Ireland's diverse and democratic nature.

### Vision

- On behalf of the public, the BAI aims to facilitate the development of a responsible, vibrant and responsive Irish broadcasting sector;
- Within the broadcasting environment, the BAI aims to encourage and cultivate excellence in programme-making, journalism and broadcasting performance;
- On an organisational level, the Authority, Statutory Committees and Executive, in their respective roles, endeavour to serve the public interest fairly and transparently, work together effectively, respond and adapt to changing circumstances in Irish society and to evolving technology in the broadcasting sector.

### Values

The BAI considers the following core values to be vital in shaping its thinking and in informing its approach to the task of regulation:

- Motivated by the public interest
- Fair and proportionate
- Expert and informed
- Independent and impartial
- Professional and committed to learning
- Accountable, transparent and cost effective.

## 2.3 Authority Organisational Structure

The BAI is based in Dublin and has a staff of 33. It has a nine-member Authority, and two committees: Contract Awards Committee and Compliance Committee.

## 2.4 BAI Stakeholders

The BAI deals with a broad spectrum of stakeholders within the broadcasting sector in addition to relevant government departments. Through its licensing and regulatory functions it interacts with commercial, community and public service broadcasters in the television and radio industry. The BAI facilitates a large number of applicants through funding initiatives such as the Broadcasting Funding Scheme and the Archiving Scheme. It provides sectoral development support to the broadcasting industry through the provision of Network Funding and a range of other initiatives. The BAI has ongoing dealings with the general public through its broadcasting complaints

function. It consults with interested parties when making decisions on broadcasting issues, inviting the views of the public as well as those within the broadcasting industry.

In the context of a new language scheme, the needs of those stakeholders expressing a greater interest in Irish Language service provision will be served, from broadcasters to companies and individuals wishing to develop Irish language programming as well as broadcasting services, industry representatives and members of the public who choose to deal with the BAI through the medium of Irish.

## Chapter 3 - Commitments to Service Delivery in Irish

This chapter outlines the BAI's Irish language provisions over the first three years of the scheme; a timeframe indicating the incremental roll-out of these provisions is provided at Appendix 1. At the end of this period it is intended that yearly targets will have been reached in full through staff support and training. Stakeholders will be aware of the BAI's Irish-language commitments and encouraged to engage with the organisation through this language if they so wish. An increased number of services will have been provided either through Irish or bilingually and initiatives reflected in future corporate plans. Progress will be reviewed on a regular basis with a view to developing the scheme further during subsequent timeframes.

*All commitments enhancing services offered by the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland are given based on the current situation. It must be acknowledged that delivery on the commitments may be negatively affected by financial and staffing changes that may occur in the future, which are beyond the control of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland.*

### 3.1 Irish language services that the Authority currently provides

The BAI has always taken a proactive approach to the Irish language and has been providing services in Irish to all who request it. In general terms therefore, all those who seek to interact with the BAI through Irish are accommodated. For example, broadcasters who prefer their correspondence to be conducted through Irish are facilitated, and members of the public who submit complaints in Irish are dealt with in Irish.

Press releases are issued in Irish and/or bilingually where speakers are being specifically targeted, and main web pages have Irish language versions also. All policies, codes and general documentation directed at the public are also available in Irish and are published on the organisation's website.

The BAI has responsibility for two funding schemes as part of the Broadcasting Funding Scheme, (the Archiving Scheme and Sound & Vision). Information notes, guidelines and application forms for the Archiving Scheme are all available in Irish. Sound & Vision applicants can apply to the scheme in Irish and for those who initiate communication in Irish, assessment feedback, contracting negotiations and future correspondence is provided also through this language.

### 3.2 Irish language services that the Authority aims to provide

The Authority aims to go beyond the terms of the Official Languages Act and to provide the following language services to its stakeholders over the 3-Year timeframe of the scheme. This it aims to achieve by taking a strong proactive approach and ensuring

visibility for the language at all levels. This scheme concentrates its activities across the following four main areas:

- Customer Service
- Website and Computer Systems
- Correspondence, Information Provision and Communications
- Promotion and Publicity

### **3.2.1 Customer Service**

- Irish-speaking callers to the BAI will be greeted in Irish and passed on to a staff member capable of dealing with their query through Irish;
- A dedicated email address for Language-specific queries ([teanga@bai.ie](mailto:teanga@bai.ie)) will be provided and monitored regularly;
- A minimum of two staff members, increasing to 4 over 3 years, will be available to deal with stakeholders through Irish, where this is the language of choice.

### **3.2.2 Websites and Computer Systems**

- There will be a full Irish-language version of the corporate website [www.bai.ie](http://www.bai.ie);
- Links on the Irish-language website will lead to Irish-language versions of the relevant documents/pages;
- A splash screen will be introduced to give users a choice of English or Irish versions of the website;
- All computer systems will be compatible with the Irish language spelling norms and diacritics specific to this language;
- The new BAI On-line service will be fully available in Irish for **Sound & Vision** queries, applications and contracting;
- The new BAI On-line service will be fully available in Irish for **Archiving Scheme** queries, applications and contracting (or within one year of that scheme being made available on the system).

### **3.2.3 Correspondence/Information Provision/Communications**

- Correspondence will be initiated in Irish with stakeholders known to have preference for corresponding through Irish;
- Stakeholders will be made aware that all correspondence is welcomed in either language;
- Standard email notifications (disclaimers/'out of office' replies, etc.) will be provided in Irish only or bilingually;
- All stationery and public signage will be bilingual;



- Key documents (policies/strategies/ work plans) will be provided in Irish at the same time as English-language versions where practicable but in any event not later than two weeks;
- All official invitations to BAI events will be produced bilingually;
- Posters, brochures, information leaflets and all general notifications will be produced bilingually or separately in both languages;
- BAI speeches at events and general presentations to the public will be provided through Irish, if requested;
- Copies of speeches and or presentations will be made available in Irish if delivered in Irish;
- Speakers will be provided for Irish language presentations and for television and radio in Irish;
- Standard BAI presentation templates (PowerPoint, etc.) will be made available to staff members in Irish;
- Press releases relating to Irish-language/Gaeltacht broadcasting will be issued in Irish and/or bilingually;
- There will be an incremental increase in the provision of bilingual versions of all other press releases over the period of the scheme;
- Public meetings in Gaeltacht areas will be addressed through Irish.

#### ***3.2.4 Promotion and Publicity***

- A ‘Seachtain na Gaeilge’ event will be held every year.

## Chapter 4 - Improving the BAI's Irish Language Capability

This chapter briefly outlines how the BAI intends to build on its language capabilities in delivering the above commitments over the agreed three-year timeframe. Several members of staff already have some fluency in Irish and use it to provide Irish-language services. It is also intended to make best use of the dormant language skills of other staff members, and to encourage those who are interested in engaging further with the language.

### 4.1 Recruitment and Placement

- The BAI will maintain at all times an adequate number of staff members who are proficient in Irish;
- Posts will be advertised through Irish in Irish language media;
- Irish-language applications for advertised posts will be publicly welcomed;
- Interviews will be conducted through Irish where/when appropriate.

### 4.2 Training & Development

- The organisation will maximize the capacity of current staff to engage in Irish-language service provision;
- Staff will be fully appraised of the implications of the BAI Irish Language Scheme within the context of the Language Act and guidelines will be provided to inform of best practices in relation to the use of the language;
- Irish-language in-house training will be provided to staff;
- 'Irish-language development' will be included as an option in staff performance objectives;
- Staff will be facilitated in attending Irish language courses.

### 4.3 Language resources

- A glossary of commonly-used terms in Irish specific to the BAI and broadcasting will be provided to staff.
- A dedicated Irish language resource page will be set up on the organisation's intranet.
- Staff will be provided with helpful online resources (GaelSpell, Ceart, [www.focal.ie](http://www.focal.ie), [www.focloir.ie](http://www.focloir.ie)).
- Staff will be kept informed of public service Irish language initiatives (classes, e-learning, social events).
- A minimum of one Irish-language social activity will be organized every year.
- The BAI will explore the development of joint initiatives with other public service bodies.

#### 4.4 Translation Services

- Internal staff members will be nominated to support other staff with small Irish-language related tasks/queries;
- A number of translators will be retained on stand-by to ensure that quickly-needed translations can be provided, if required.

### Chapter 5 - Monitoring and Revision

Implementation of the new scheme will be monitored on an ongoing basis and feedback sought quarterly on each action from the various BAI work areas. This will include suggestions from staff on progress and experience to date and future improvements. Line managers, where applicable, will monitor day-to-day implementation and report in turn on a regular basis to their own line managers.

It is further intended to include a section on Irish-language developments in the corporate Annual Reports to include updates on:

- progress against each of the commitments set out in the Scheme
- the incidence and nature of any complaints and suggestions relating to the provision of services in Irish
- the level of demand for Irish services

### Chapter 6 - Publicising of Scheme

The BAI Irish-Language Scheme will be officially launched within one month of acceptance by the Department. The launch will be supported by press releases, website presence, and direct notifications (email shots, etc.) to stakeholders.

Information sessions/s will be held to inform staff members of their responsibilities in respect of the Official Languages Act and they will be kept aware of responsibilities on an ongoing basis.

The general public and other stakeholders will be kept informed of the BAI's commitments to services for the language and all advertisements placed on behalf of the Authority will emphasize that this office provides services through Irish and accordingly welcomes contact in the Irish language.

## **Concluding statement**

This BAI Irish language scheme endeavours to deliver high-quality Irish-language services to the public in accordance with the Official Languages Act 2003. While cognisant that the scheme is incremental and limited by available resources, the BAI intends to be proactive in this regard and open to suggestions on how to further enhance and strengthen its Irish-language services in the years ahead. As an organisation therefore, the BAI is committed to increasing the number and type of services it offers to the public through Irish, and hopes to achieve this goal through this new scheme and future Irish Language schemes.

Appendix 1 below outlines actions for completion over the three years of this current scheme:

## Appendix 1

| Target Year | Service Area   | Objective  |
|-------------|--|--|
| End of Yr 1 | <b>Customer Service</b>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irish-speaking callers to the BAI will be greeted in Irish and passed on to a staff member capable of dealing with their query through Irish.</li> <li>• A dedicated email address for language-specific queries (<a href="mailto:teanga@bai.ie">teanga@bai.ie</a>) will be provided and monitored regularly.</li> <li>• A minimum of two staff members, increasing to 4 over 3 years, will be available to deal with stakeholders through Irish, where this is the language of choice.</li> </ul>  |
|             | <b>Websites and Computer Systems</b>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All computer systems will be compatible with the Irish language spelling norms and diacritics specific to that language.</li> </ul>   |
|             | <b>Correspondence/Information Provision/Communications</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correspondence will be initiated in Irish with stakeholders known to prefer Irish.</li> <li>• Stakeholders will be made aware that all correspondence is welcomed in either language.</li> <li>• Key documents (policies/strategies/work plans) will be provided in Irish at the same time as English-language versions but not later than two weeks.</li> <li>• Standard email notifications (disclaimers/'out of office' replies, etc.) will be provided in Irish only or bilingually.</li> <li>• BAI speeches at events and general presentations to the public will be</li> </ul> |

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|  |                                   | <p>provided through Irish, if requested.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copies of speeches and or presentations will be made available in Irish if delivered in Irish.</li> <li>• Public meetings in Gaeltacht areas will be addressed through Irish.</li> </ul>   |
|  | <b>Recruitment and Placement</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The BAI will maintain at all times an adequate number of staff members who are proficient in Irish.</li> <li>• Posts will be advertised through Irish in Irish language media.</li> <li>• Irish-language applications for advertised posts will be welcomed.</li> <li>• Interviews will be conducted through Irish where/when appropriate.</li> </ul>   |
|  | <b>Training &amp; Development</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisation will maximise the capacity of current staff to engage in Irish-language service-provision.</li> <li>• Staff will be fully appraised of the implications of the BAI Language Scheme within the context of the Language Act and guidelines will be provided to inform of best practices in relation to the use of the language.</li> <li>• Irish-language in-house training will be provided to staff.</li> <li>• 'Irish-language development' will be included as an option in staff performance objectives.</li> <li>• Staff will be facilitated in attending Irish language courses.</li> </ul> |
|  | <b>Language Resources</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff will be kept informed of public service Irish language initiatives</li> </ul>   |

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|---|--------------------------------------|--|
|   |                                      | <p>(classes, e-learning, social events)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff will be provided with helpful online resources (GaelSpell, Ceart, <a href="http://www.focal.ie">www.focal.ie</a>, <a href="http://www.focloir.ie">www.focloir.ie</a>).</li> </ul>   |
|   | <b>Translation Services</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A number of translators will be retained on stand-by to ensure that quickly-needed translations can be provided, if required.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>In addition to fulfilling the above objectives, services will be enhanced in subsequent years as follows:</b></p> |                                      |  |
| <b>End of Yr 2</b>  | <b>Customer Service</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 staff members available to deal with stakeholders through Irish where this is the language of choice.</li> </ul>  |
|   | <b>Websites and Computer Systems</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There will be a full Irish-language version of the corporate website <a href="http://www.bai.ie">www.bai.ie</a>.</li> <li>The new BAI On-line service will be fully available in Irish for <b>Archiving Scheme</b> applications and contracting (or within one year of that scheme being made available on the system)</li> <li>Links on the Irish-language website will lead to Irish-language versions of the relevant documents/pages.</li> <li>A splash screen will be introduced to give users a choice of English or Irish versions of the website</li> </ul> |

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|                    | <b>Correspondence/Information Provision/Communications</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All stationery and public signage will be bilingual.</li> <li>• All official invitations to BAI events will be produced bilingually.</li> <li>• Posters, brochures, information leaflets and all general notifications will be produced bilingually or separately in both languages.</li> <li>• Speakers will be provided for Irish language presentations and for television and radio in Irish.</li> <li>• Standard BAI presentation templates (PowerPoint, etc.) will be made available to staff members in Irish.</li> <li>• Press releases relating to Irish-language/Gaeltacht broadcasting will be issued in Irish and/or bilingually.</li> </ul> |
|                    | <b>Promotion of/Presence at Irish Language Events</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 'Seachtain na Gaeilge' event will be held every year.</li> </ul>   |
|                    | <b>Language Resources</b>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A glossary of commonly-used terms in Irish specific to the BAI and broadcasting will be provided to staff.</li> <li>• A dedicated Irish language resource page will be set up on the organisation's intranet.</li> </ul>   |
|                    |  |   |
| <b>End of Yr 3</b> | <b>Customer Service</b>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 staff members available to deal with stakeholders through Irish where this is the language of choice.</li> </ul>   |
|                    | <b>Websites and Computer Systems</b>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new BAI On-line service will be fully available in Irish for <b>Sound &amp; Vision</b> applications and contracting.</li> </ul>  |



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|  | <b>Correspondence/Information Provision/Communications</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There will be an incremental increase to bilingual versions of all other press releases over the period of the scheme.</li></ul> |
|  | <b>Language Resources</b>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The BAI will explore the development of joint initiatives with other public service bodies.</li></ul>                            |



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