



An Roinn Iompair
Department of Transport

Department of Transport

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

ACT 2003

LANGUAGE SCHEME

2021 - 2024

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

The Official Languages Act 2003 provides for the preparation by public bodies of a language scheme detailing the services which they will provide:

- through the medium of Irish,
- through the medium of English, and
- through the medium of Irish and English

and the measures to be adopted to ensure that any service not currently provided by the body through the medium of the Irish language will be so provided within an agreed timeframe.

In accordance with section 14(3) of the Act, language schemes remain in force for a period of 3 years or until such time as a new scheme is confirmed by the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Gaeltacht, Arts, Sports and Media whichever is the later.

This Scheme has been developed to express a unified approach for the Department in fulfilling its obligations towards the Irish language in the daily conduct of its business over the next three years as part of Quality Customer Service, taking account of what is reasonably practicable while also seeking to build on the progress achieved by the Department in the implementation of earlier schemes.

1.2 Preparation of the Scheme

This Scheme has been prepared in accordance with the Guidelines under Section 12 of the Official Languages Act 2003. This Scheme is predicated on all of the commitments in any previous scheme having been implemented. In the event of commitments in earlier schemes not having been fully implemented to date, this matter is the subject of discussion with the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga.

The time and effort put in by all concerned in this process is acknowledged and appreciated.

1.3 Commencement Date of Scheme

In the preparation of this scheme, due regard has been given to the Guidelines issued by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. In addition, there has been a comprehensive process of consultation with relevant stakeholders.

The Department of Transport is guided by the principle that the provision of Irish language services should be based on:

- The level of demand for specific services in the Irish Language,
- The importance of a proactive approach to the provision of such services, and
- The resources, including human and financial resources, and the capacity of the body concerned to develop or access the necessary language capability.

This scheme complements the principles of Quality Customer Service and our Customer Charter. It has been formulated with the intention of ensuring that all relevant obligations under the Official Languages Act by the Department of Transport will be fully addressed on an incremental basis, through this and future schemes.

This Scheme is predicated on all of the commitments in any previous scheme having been implemented. In the event of commitments in earlier schemes not having been fully implemented to date, this matter will be the subject of discussion with the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga.

The time and effort put in by all concerned in this process is acknowledged and appreciated.

This Scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. It commences with effect from 12 April 2021 and shall remain in force for a period of 3 years or until a new scheme has been confirmed, whichever is the later.

Chapter 2: Overview of Department of Transport

2.1 Mission and Goals

The Department of Transport was established on 17th September 2020 and its mission is: To deliver an accessible, efficient, safe and sustainable transport system that supports communities, households and businesses.

2.2 Main functions of the Department

The Department has a central role in devising, promoting and implementing Government policy in the areas of transport development. The Department also advises and supports the Minister for Transport, the Ministers of State in the Department and the Government in these areas.

The Department is arranged into five sectoral areas which broadly reflect distinct functional units and the breadth of its statutory remit. The five sectors are:

- Aviation
- Corporate Affairs and Central Policy Co-ordination
- Maritime
- Public Transport, Sustainability and Climate Change
- Road Transport and Accident Investigation Units

As set out in the Department's Statement of Strategy, the high-level goals of the sectors are as follows:

- **Connectivity**
Maintaining and developing the transport links between households, communities, and businesses on the island of Ireland and ensuring our international connectivity, a key element in growing our economy.
- **Climate & Sustainability**
Ensuring that our transport modes are environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.
- **Safety, Security & Accessibility**
Putting safety, security and accessibility for all at the centre of our transport policies.
- **Effective Regulation**

Anticipating change and creating regulatory frameworks which are fit for purpose, future-proofed and that ensure the highest standards.

- **Public Engagement**

Listening to the public, protecting equality and human rights and using technological advances to improve services.

- **Organisational Excellence & Innovation**

Working to best serve the public and their elected representatives, always innovating and improving.

2.3 Structure of the Department

The Department is organised by policy area with five separate policy/management areas headed by Assistant Secretaries who, in addition to the Secretary General, make up the Department's Management Board.

The Department's Dublin-based staff is located at Leeson Lane, Dublin 2. Staff are also located at Shannon, Loughrea and at various Coast Guard Stations throughout the country.

Contact information for the above offices can be found at [Appendix 1](#).

2.4 Functional Areas of Department

Further information on the activities of each functional area and unit of the Department is contained in the Department's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme. The Scheme came into effect on the 14th April 2016.

English - Freedom of Information [Publication Scheme](#)¹

Irish – Freedom of Information Publication Scheme – being finalized.

In addition, several State agencies, which report to the Department, are charged with specific responsibilities in the transport sectors. It is a matter for those agencies to produce their own schemes in accordance with the Act.

¹ <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation-information/45306e-freedom-of-information-foi-publication-scheme/>

2.5 Our Customers

The Department of Transport is primarily a policy Department. Our customer base reflects the wide range of sectors and activities which fall within our remit. Among our customers we count specifically the Minister and Minister of State, other members of the Oireachtas, individual members of the public, representative bodies engaged in the sectors for which we are responsible, other Government Departments and public bodies, the European Union, the media, and voluntary groups whose interests and concerns bring them into contact with the Department.

Implementation of some aspects of the Department's policies has been entrusted to a range of bodies for which the Department retains overall responsibility. These bodies have direct dealings with members of the public and further information on them can be obtained by accessing the following link [Bodies under the aegis of the Department](#).

Chapter 3: Details of services currently being provided in English only, in Irish only or bilingually

Please indicate which language your services are provided through, including services in Gaeltacht areas.

Provision of Services			
Name of Service	In English Only	In Irish only	Bilingually
Driver Vehicle and Computer Services Division (DVCS)			✓
Road Haulage			✓
Irish Coast Guard (IRCG)			✓
Marine Survey Office (MSO)			✓
Mercantile Marine Office (MMO)			✓
Freedom of Information Unit			✓
Customer Service			✓

Service Provision in Gaeltacht areas			
Name of Service	In English Only	In Irish only	Bilingually
IRCG services			✓

Chapter 4: Enhancing the provision of Irish Language Services

The provisions shaded in grey in the table below are mandatory requirements under the Official Languages Act 2003.

Means of communication**Commitment****with the public****Recorded Oral
Announcements**

The following recorded oral announcements will be in Irish or bilingual: **Mandatory**

(a) Recorded oral announcements provided on the telephone when the offices of the public body are closed;

(b) Recorded oral announcements transmitted by a public address system;

(c) Recorded oral announcements created and transmitted by means of a computerised messaging system or a computerised telephone answering system.

This provision relates to 'recorded' announcements rather than 'live announcements'.

Where a Placenames Order is in force, a public body is required to use the Irish language version of the placename specified in that Order in recorded oral announcements made by it or on its behalf.

**Written
Communication****Letters and
Electronic Mail
Stationery**

All written communication will be responded to in the official language in which it was received. **Mandatory**

Headings of stationery, including notepaper, compliment slips, fax cover sheets, file covers and other folders, labels and envelopes are provided in Irish or bilingually. **Mandatory**

Signage	Signage	All signage placed by the Department of Transport or on its behalf must be in Irish or bilingually, in accordance with the regulations (S.I. No.391/2008).	Mandatory
	Publications	Documents setting out public policy proposals, audited accounts or financial statements, annual reports and strategy statements will be published simultaneously in Irish and English.	Mandatory
	Circulars/Mailshots	Where a public body communicates in writing or by electronic mail with the general public or a class of the general public for the purpose of furnishing information to the public or the class, the body shall ensure that the communication is in the Irish language or in the English and Irish languages.	Mandatory
Publications			
An Ghaeltacht	Gaeltacht Placenames	The official placenames of Gaeltacht areas will be used by the public body in accordance with the legislation.	Mandatory

The Department of Transport will also undertake the following lists of actions under each service.

Means of communication with the public	Commitment	Timeline
		By end Yr 1/ Yr 2 / Yr 3

**Oral / Written
Communication**

Reception	There will be always at least one receptionist who will be able to assist the public with accessing a service through Irish, whether by telephone, online or face-to-face.	Years 1-3
Face to Face/Counter Service	Staff with an ability to provide inter-personal Irish language service will, with their agreement, continue to be identified in an appropriate way on telephone lists, at reception and on the organisation chart, and their e-mail addresses will be included under relevant sections on the web site. In addition, a dedicated help desk for callers through Irish will continue to be manned and a special e-mail address (gaeilge@transport.gov.ie) for dealing with queries through Irish will continue to be made available.	Years 1-3
Switchboard	There will be at least one switchboard worker who will be able to assist the public with accessing a service through Irish, whether by telephone, online or face-to-face.	Years 1-3
Telephone communications with the public	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) From the date of commencement of the Scheme, switchboard and reception staff will continue to give the name of the Department in Irish and English.2) An up-to-date list of staff members who have the ability to deal with the public in Irish will continue to be provided to the Switchboard operators and Reception staff. This list will continue to be used for putting members of the public in touch with officers who are proficient in Irish3) For an Irish call that cannot be responded to immediately in Irish, we will continue to offer to have the call returned within one working day. Suitable arrangements will be put in	Years 1-3

place so that they can put members of the public in touch without delay with whatever office or officer is responsible for offering the service through Irish.

4) Refresher training in answering telephone queries in Irish will be provided on a voluntary basis to the Switchboard operators and Reception staff.

Recorded Oral Announcements

- 1) The oral announcement on the Department's main switch board will continue to be bilingual. **Years 1-3**
- 2) Individual voicemail messages will continue to be bilingual where the individual can provide a service through Irish.
- 3) The voicemail systems of the Department will continue to be fully capable of handling the Irish language and generic voicemail messages will continue to be bilingual on the system.

Other

- 1) The Department will make available to staff a list of companies and individuals that have been awarded an accreditation certificate from Foras na Gaeilge for the provision of translation services at a level of excellence. **Years 1-3**

Information Leaflets/ Brochures

All public information leaflets produced by the Department will be made available bilingually. **Years 1-3**

Application Forms

All public application forms produced by the Department will be made available bilingually. **Years 1-3**

Publications

The FOI Publication Scheme will continue to be published bilingually in accordance with the requirements of the Official Languages Act 2003. **Years 1-3**

Generally, research documents, reports of committees, working groups, proposals,

documents intended for an audience outside the State, documents of a technical nature and other documents not specified within the realms of the Official Languages Act will be available in English only.

Where publications generated by other bodies are available from the Department, these publications will be made available in the language in which they have been published by the generating Department or body.

Press Releases

- 1) 30% of Press Releases will be made available bilingually. Press releases that are translated will be published simultaneously in both languages.
- 2) 100% of press releases specific to a Gaeltacht area will be bilingual.
- 3) A higher number of Press Releases during Seachtain na Gaeilge will be bilingual.

Years 1-3

Media Spokespersons

Where possible, a spokesperson should be provided who can interview the media through the medium of Irish.

Years 1-3

Speeches

- 1) At public events, the Irish language will be used as part of that event during receptions, speeches, or other talks to cater for the Irish language and Gaeltacht community
- 2) We will endeavour to add an Irish Language element in all speeches or statements made by the Minister or Minister of State.

Years 1-3

Other

- 1) Where possible advertisements will be bilingual.

Years 1-3

Media

**Information
Technology**

Email

- 2) In the case of social media accounts, the Department will endeavour to post bilingually as often as possible.
- 1) Standard messages on the Department's e-mail, such as disclaimers of responsibility will continue to be in both English and Irish.
- 2) Individual out of office messages will continue to be bilingual where the individual can provide a service through Irish.
- 3) A general Departmental queries e-mail address (gaeilge@transport.gov.ie) will continue to be available.
- 4) Where feasible, corporate email addresses will be bilingual.

Years 1-3

Websites

- 1) We aim to provide domain names for all or websites bilingually, where applicable.

Years 1-3

- 2) www.gov.ie/transport

The Irish version of the main Department website www.gov.ie/transport will be further updated to ensure that it will be equivalent to the English language website as regards site structure and the provision of general information about the Department.

- 3) www.motortax.ie

This site will continue to provide information in relation to motor tax, including general information about motor tax matters on a bilingual basis.

- 4) www.motortrans.ie

This website will continue to provide information for motor dealers on a bilingual basis in relation to change of vehicle ownership matters. It will also continue to operate as a bilingual interactive website for motor dealers. Should the Department be in a position to provide further interactive services, during the lifetime of this Scheme these will be introduced simultaneously in both languages subject to the resources available and on the basis of a viable business case.

Computer Systems

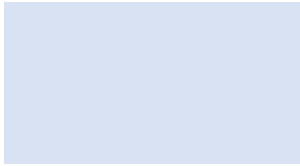
- 1) In the case of existing ICT systems (i.e., both computer and telephone systems), where an Irish language requirement has been previously identified and delivered, these will be maintained in the future.
- 2) During ICT system upgrade/ replacement programmes or through the development of any new business applications the needs for an Irish language capability will be assessed. Irish language capability on systems whether hardware and/or software will be provided where there is a viable business case to provide same.
- 3)The Department will provide Irish Language spellchecking software to work with its current industry applications on a case-by-case basis as required.
- 4)Computer systems in the Department will be able to accept entries in Irish

Years 1-3

Interactive Services

All apps developed by the Department of Transport will be bilingual

Years 1-3



Placenames

The official placenames of Gaeltacht areas will be used by the public body in accordance with the legislation. **Years 1-3**

Chapter 5: Enhancing the Provision of Irish Language Services in Gaeltacht Areas

Enhancing the provision of Irish language services in Gaeltacht areas and ensuring that Irish becomes the working language in offices located in Gaeltacht areas by a certain date.

The Department of Transport currently has no offices based in the Gaeltacht areas. However, should an office open in the Gaeltacht in the future, we will ensure that Irish is one of the working languages of the office.

Chapter 6: Improving Language Capability

6.1 Recruitment

The recruitment of staff with the appropriate level of competence in the Irish language in each area of work of Department of Transport will be the primary means of optimising the availability of services through Irish. Our recruitment policy, which is subject to the framework of agreed national recruitment procedures, will have regard to the need to improve Irish language capability on an incremental basis.

All new staff will be provided with an induction pack containing a copy of our agreed scheme in order to ensure that they are made aware of our commitments under the legislation.

6.2 Training and Development

The Department of Transport is committed to making available opportunities for staff to attend appropriately accredited Irish language training courses, as resources permit. All staff will be advised of facilities/opportunities to improve their competency in Irish.

	Commitment	Timeline By end Yr 1/ Yr 2 / Yr 3
Improving Irish Language Capability	Recruitment 1) The recruitment of staff with the appropriate level of competence in the Irish language in each area of work of the Department of Transport will be the primary means of optimising the availability of services through Irish. Our recruitment policy, which is subject to the framework of agreed national recruitment procedures, will have regard to the need to improve Irish language capability on an incremental basis.	Years 1-3



Training

- 1) Support the provision of appropriate Irish language training courses for staff
- 2) Provide advice to staff on the range of high-quality Irish language classes available outside office hours (e.g., third-level diploma in Irish, Gael Chultúr, Gael-Linn, etc.)
- 3) Assess all courses, including Irish language courses and courses delivered through Irish, on a regular basis to ascertain how effectively they meet the Department's goals

Years 1-3

**Participation in language promotion activities
/Provision of resources**

- 1) Include language awareness as part of induction training courses to ensure that staff
 - understand why the Department is developing an Irish language service policy
 - understand the context and background to the policy
 - are fully informed about how the policy will affect their work
- 2) Promote the refund of fees scheme as a mechanism for encouraging Irish language training conditional upon these staff being available to provide services through Irish subject to available resources
- 3) Provide advice to staff on the range of high-quality Irish language classes available outside office hours (e.g., third-level diploma in Irish, Gael Chultúr, Gael-Linn, etc.)
- 4) Put in place arrangements for the marking, in an appropriate way, of the

Years 1-3

annual Seachtain na Gaeilge event within the Department

Other

- 1) Explore opportunities to encourage the provision of further Departmental Services through Irish. **Years 1-3**
- 2) The Department will make available to all staff a list of companies and individuals that have been awarded an accreditation certificate from Foras na Gaeilge for the provision of translation services at a level of excellence.

6.3 Designated Irish Language Posts

The posts listed below have been designated as having an Irish language competency requirement. It is the intention that holders of these posts will have achieved specified accredited standards in the Irish language, commensurate with the responsibilities of the post. When designating these posts, particular consideration has been given to posts located in Gaeltacht areas and to posts located outside Gaeltacht areas but whose customer base consists largely of Gaeltacht and/or Irish language speaking communities.

Title of Post	Location	Gaeltacht/Irish speaking community served	Indication of standard of Irish required (choose from basic, intermediate or advanced)
Irish Language Officer	Corporate Services and Agency Governance Division	No	Advanced
Irish Language Office Support	Driver and Vehicle Computer Services Division	No	Advanced

Chapter 7: Monitoring and Review

The implementation of the scheme will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis by the Irish Language Unit which forms part of the Corporate Services and Agency Governance Division in the Department of Transport. The contact person for the scheme will be the Department's Irish Language Officer who is contactable on gaeilge@transport.gov.ie.

A formal system for monitoring requests for services through Irish will be available and recorded in our Annual Report. The Irish Language Officer will continue to provide support and assistance to all areas of the Department on the commitments contained in this Scheme and will have overall responsibility for monitoring the operation of the Scheme. The day-to-day monitoring and implementation function will be carried out by Heads of Units in respect of the Divisions for which they are responsible. The Irish Language Unit will also continue to monitor on a periodic basis supply and demand for Irish language services across all areas of the Department.

The Irish Language Unit will continue to report on progress to the Management Board every 6 months in respect of both compliance by Divisions with the Scheme's commitments and on demand for Irish language.

Role of the Irish Language Unit

The Department will ensure that the Irish Unit will have a specific role with regard to;

- Assisting in the development of an Irish policy in the Department
- The organisation of Irish events as required for staff of the Department
- The organisation of a social and recreational programme that enhances the use of Irish in the Department's building
- The enhancement of the visibility of Irish and the provision of opportunities for staff who wish to learn and speak Irish
- Monitoring and reporting to Management Board on compliance with the commitments in the scheme and the other provisions of the Language Act

Chapter 8: Publicising of Agreed Scheme

This scheme will be publicised both internally and externally, through a press release initially. A bilingual version of the scheme will be made available on our website and circulated to all staff and appropriate agencies. Other means to publicise the scheme may also be used.

In addition, we will take every opportunity in our day-to-day interaction with customers to promote and publicise the services we provide in Irish through the following means:

- directly informing customers on a proactive basis of the option of conducting business with us through Irish, for example, by the display of notices at reception areas indicating the Irish language services that are available.
- prominently listing these services on our website.
- signifying on selected guidelines, leaflets and application forms that these documents are also available in Irish, unless presented bilingually.
- giving equal prominence to Irish and English language materials.

A copy of the agreed scheme will be forwarded to the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Departmental locations and contact details

Department Head Office:

Address: Department of Transport, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2 D02 TR60

Website: www.gov.ie/transport

E-mail: info@transport.gov.ie

Telephone: 01 6707444 or LoCall 0761 001601

(Please note that the rates charged for the use of the 0761 number may vary among different service providers and will be considerably more from a mobile phone.)

Opening hours: Monday to Thursday 9.15am to 5.30pm

Friday 9.15am to 5.15pm

Shannon Office – Motor Tax, Vehicle Registration Certificates and change of vehicle ownership

Postal Address: Driver and Vehicle Computer Services Division, Shannon Town Centre, Shannon, Co.

Clare V14 P298

Website: www.motortax.ie

E-mail: Motortax@transport.gov.ie

Fax: 061 365053

Telephone: 0818 411 412 or +353 818 411412 (outside Ireland)

(Please note that the rates charged for the use of the 0818 number may vary among different service providers and will be considerably more from a mobile phone.)

Loughrea Office – Road Transport Operator Licensing Division

Postal Address: Department of Transport, Clonfert House, Bride Street, Loughrea, Co. Galway H62 ET93

Website: www.gov.ie/transport

Email: rtol@transport.gov.ie

Telephone: LoCall 0761 001601 or +353 1 6707444 (outside Ireland)

(Please note that the rates charged for the use of the 0761 number may vary among different service providers and will be considerably more from a mobile phone.)