

National Treasury Management Agency

Language Scheme 2017-2020

under Section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003

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1. Introduction

This is the first Language Scheme (Scheme) prepared by the National Treasury Management Agency (the “NTMA”) under Section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003 (the “Act”). Section 11 of the Act provides for the preparation by public bodies of a language scheme which outlines the services that the public body proposes to provide:

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

and the measures to be adopted to ensure that any services not provided by the NTMA at present through the medium of Irish will be provided within an agreed timeframe.

1.1 Preparation of the Scheme

The NTMA was requested by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to prepare a draft Scheme under Section 11 of the Act and to submit it to the Minister’s office on or before 18 November 2016.

This Scheme has been prepared in accordance with Guidelines issued by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

1.2 Objectives of Scheme

The aim of the scheme is to develop the use of the Irish language throughout the NTMA and where required, in its areas of communication with the public. The NTMA will create awareness of the content and purpose of the scheme among employees and monitor the demand for Irish language services throughout the course of the scheme.

1.3 Commencement of Scheme

This Scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. The Scheme will commence with effect from 24 July 2017 and shall 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 Act.

2. Overview of NTMA

2.1 Mission and Goals

The National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA) was established under legislation in 1990. In December 2014, its governance structure was simplified with the introduction of a new over-arching board known as the Agency. One of the purposes of the new, simplified governance structure is to facilitate a more integrated approach to the execution of the NTMA's business mandates. The unifying purpose across the NTMA's varied mandates is to manage public assets and liabilities commercially and prudently as reflected in our mission statement:

"The mission of the National Treasury Management Agency is to manage public assets and liabilities commercially and prudently."

The NTMA has developed an over-arching Corporate Strategy 2016-2018 to support its business units in the fulfilment of their mandates. The strategy commits the organisation to four strategic goals. The primary goal of the NTMA is to deliver long-term value to the State. Three supporting goals: maintaining and enhancing our reputation; developing our capabilities as an adaptive organisation; and enabling our people to reach their potential will enable delivery of long-term value while building sustainable business performance.

2.2 What We Do

The National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA) is a State body which operates with a commercial remit to provide asset and liability management services to Government. Businesses managed by the NTMA include borrowing for the Exchequer and management of the National Debt, the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund (ISIF), the National Development Finance Agency (NDFA), NewERA and the State Claims Agency (SCA).

Funding and Debt Management

The NTMA is responsible for borrowing on behalf of the Government and managing the National Debt in order to ensure liquidity for the Exchequer and to optimise the interest burden over the medium term.

Ireland Strategic Investment Fund

The NTMA controls and manages the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund, which was established in December 2014 with a statutory mandate to invest on a commercial basis in a manner designed to support economic activity and employment in the State. The ISIF is the successor to the National Pensions Reserve Fund.

National Development Finance Agency

Acting as the National Development Finance Agency, the NTMA is the statutory financial advisor to State authorities in respect of all public investment projects with a capital value over €20m. It also has full responsibility for the procurement and delivery of Public Private Partnership (PPP) projects in sectors other than transport and local authorities and for the traditional procurement and construction of schools as instructed by the Department of Education and Skills.

NewERA

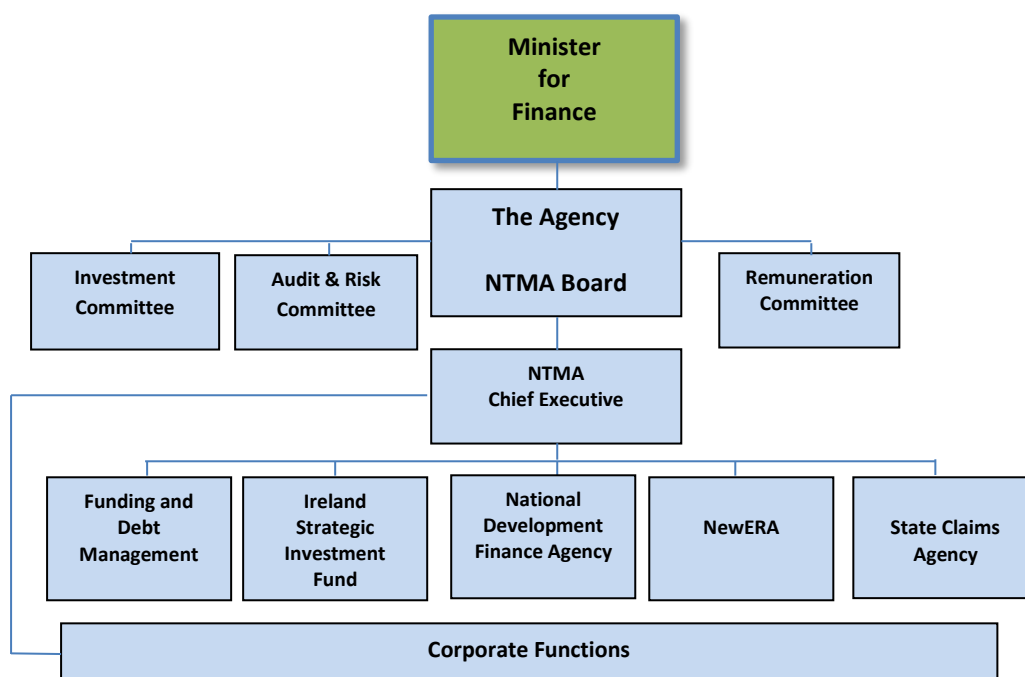
Acting as NewERA, the NTMA provides a dedicated centre of corporate finance expertise to Government, in particular in relation to commercial oversight of certain State bodies. It provides financial and commercial advisory services to Government Ministers including in relation to financial performance, corporate strategy, capital and investment plans, proposed acquisitions or disposals, restructuring and board appointments. In addition, NewERA may, in consultation with the relevant Minister, develop proposals for investment in the energy, water, telecommunications and forestry sectors to support economic activity and employment.

State Claims Agency

Acting as the State Claims Agency, the NTMA manages personal injury, property damage and clinical negligence claims brought against certain State authorities, including the State itself, Government Ministers, the Attorney General, the Health Service Executive, the voluntary healthcare sector, an Garda Síochána, the Irish Prison Service, the Defence Forces and community and comprehensive schools. It also has a risk management role, advising and assisting State authorities in minimising their claim exposures. In addition, it manages third-party costs arising from certain Tribunals of Inquiry and claims for legal costs by parties who have successfully sued the State in respect of personal injury and other non-personal injury related actions.

In addition to the above functions, the NTMA assigns staff to the National Asset Management Agency (NAMA) and the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SBCI) and also provides them with business and support services and systems.

2.3 National Treasury Management Agency Organisation Structure:



2.4 Our Stakeholders

We engage with a broad range of stakeholders across all our business units and corporate functions including:

- The Minister for Finance, Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, other Government Ministers and Departments, State Bodies, Commercial State Bodies and EU counterparties;
- Domestic, international and EU lending institutions, central banks and commercial banks;
- Domestic and international investor communities e.g. institutional investors, sovereign wealth funds, pension funds; and
- Domestic and international business communities and sectors e.g. entrepreneurs, start-ups, SMEs and business firms.

3. Preparation of Scheme

3.1 Working Group

An internal working group, assisted from time to time by subject experts from relevant business units, assisted in the drafting of this Scheme. This group familiarised themselves with the Official Languages Act 2003 and associated Regulations of 2006 and 2008 and attended information sessions provided by An Coimisinéir Teanga. Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the Scheme has been assigned to the Freedom of Information (FOI) Unit.

3.2 Staff Survey

An email was issued to all employees of the NTMA to ascertain their interest in the Irish language. A questionnaire was issued to employees who responded to the initial email asking them to rate their ability to speak and write Irish and their interest in attending training courses. The results of this questionnaire are being used to identify employees who can assist with Irish translation and who may be interested in further developing their Irish language skills.

3.3 Consultation

The NTMA published a notice of intention on the website www.tuairisc.ie inviting representations in relation to the preparation of the Scheme from members of the public and also posted a notice on the NTMA Intranet. A dedicated email address was set up to receive submissions or to receive any queries in relation to the draft Scheme. No submissions were received upon conclusion of this process.

4. Services to be provided in Irish, English or Irish and English

The NTMA does not provide services directly to the public. However, there are three functions performed by the NTMA in which the public may have an interest, as follows:

- **Dormant Accounts:** the NTMA is the manager of the Dormant Accounts Fund, into which certain balances on dormant accounts are paid, together with the encashment value of certain life assurance policies.
- **Eligible Liabilities Guarantee (ELG) Scheme:** the Credit Institutions (Eligible Liabilities Guarantee) Scheme 2009 (the “ELG Scheme”), which provided for the guarantee of certain bank liabilities, came into effect on the 9 December 2009 and

was discontinued on 20 March 2013. The NTMA acts as operator of the ELG Scheme.

- **State Savings:** is the brand name used by the National Treasury Management Agency to describe the range of Government savings products offered by the NTMA through its agents, An Post and the Prize Bond Company, to personal savers.

The NTMA communicates with the general public through:

- Publications (Annual Reports)
- Press Releases
- Websites
- Social Media
- Press Briefings
- Media Interviews

4.1 Existing Services provided in Irish

The working language of the NTMA is English. However, the NTMA provides information in Irish in compliance with its obligations under the Official Languages Act 2003. In addition, certain information relating to State Savings products is available in Irish. Further information in this regard is set out below:

In compliance with obligations in section 9 of the Act:

- official stationery is in both Irish and English language
- correspondence received in Irish is responded to in Irish
- signage in public areas is in Irish and English

In compliance with obligations in section 10 of the Act:

- the Corporate Strategy is published in Irish and English
- NTMA Annual Report is published in Irish and English
- The Carbon Fund Annual Report is published in Irish and English

In respect of State Savings a significant proportion of the documentation relating to the products, including terms and conditions and product brochures, is available in Irish via the State Savings website. As already mentioned, An Post acts as an agent for the NTMA in respect of State Savings and An Post has made the following commitment in terms of enhancing the services it provides to State Savings customers over the life of its Language Scheme, which runs from 2015 to 2018:

'All standard forms, which are available in English will be made available in digital form on the Internet in Irish during the lifetime of the Scheme as follows: 40% by end of year 1, 60% by end of Year 2, 100% by end of Year 3.'

4.2 Services Available only in English

There are some documents which will only be available in English.

These include documents of a specialist or technical nature produced by the NTMA. In addition speeches or statements will be made available in the language in which they are delivered.

4.3 Enhancement of Services to be provided bilingually under the NTMA Scheme

The objective of the Act is to ensure better availability and a higher standard of public services through Irish. The NTMA aims to increase the visibility and usage of the Irish language throughout all business units over the next three years. To this end, the NTMA is committed to achieving the following milestones over the course of its first Irish Language Scheme:

4.3.1 First point of contact

- The NTMA reception area is the first point of contact with the public. Employees working in the Reception area have access to a list of employees, located in the FOI Unit, who are available to communicate with callers through Irish. Should these employees be unavailable, there is a bilingual out of office voice message on the FOI Unit phone line on which members of the public may leave a message in the language of their choice.
- Training will be provided to reception staff so that they are able to and will give a basic greeting in Irish, by the end of year one of the scheme.

4.3.2 Documents and Publications

- 10% of all press releases will be published in Irish as well as English. We will endeavour to publish these simultaneously by the end of year two of the scheme, however there will be certain circumstances where this will not be possible.
- The ISIF Investment Strategy, which is published in English, will be available in Irish on request from the NTMA and/or may be accessed in Irish on the NTMA's website in year one of the scheme.

- The State Claims Agency Ezine, which is published in English, will be available in Irish on request from the NTMA and/or may be accessed in Irish on the NTMA's website by the end of year two of the scheme.

4.3.3 Internal Communications

- Irish training courses, beginning in 2017, will be provided to employees.
- The Induction course for employees will be updated in year one of the scheme, to include a section on the NTMA's Irish Language Scheme and its other obligations under the Act.
- Promotion of the Irish language generally in the workplace will be facilitated annually through social and other activities such as participation in Seachtain na Gaeilge and bi-annual Coffee mornings beginning in 2017.

4.3.4 Website

NTMA Corporate Website (www.ntma.ie)

By the end of year two of the scheme, the content of the following pages will be available in Irish and English (excluding links, FAQs and/or PDF documents that feature on the page):

- NTMA Home page (<http://www.ntma.ie/>)
- Dormant Accounts Fund page (<http://www.ntma.ie/business-areas/funding-and-debt-management/dormant-accounts/>)
- Eligible Liabilities Guarantee Scheme page (<http://www.ntma.ie/business-areas/funding-and-debt-management/eligible-liabilities-guarantee-scheme/>)
- The Contact Us page (<http://www.ntma.ie/contact-us/>)
- The Freedom of Information page (<http://www.ntma.ie/information-pages/freedom-of-information/>)
- The Data Protection page (<http://www.ntma.ie/information-pages/data-protection/>)

State Savings Website (www.statesavings.ie)

An Post will maintain the Irish language content on the State Savings website in accordance with the enhancements proposed in its Irish Language Scheme. In addition, the NTMA will liaise with An Post in respect of its follow-on Language Scheme with a

view to further enhancement of the services provided to State Savings customers in Irish.

4.3.5 Emails

- An Eolas@ntma.ie” email address will be set up in year one of the scheme in order to facilitate the submission of queries from the general public in the Irish language. This email address will be advertised on the NTMA website and reception staff will provide details of the email address to members of the public who request it.
- The disclaimer on all outgoing emails will be published bilingually by the end of year one of the scheme.

4.4 Official Placenames of Gaeltacht Areas

- NTMA will use the official placenames of Gaeltacht areas for official business.

4.5 Improving Language Capability

A number of employees have expressed an interest in expanding their knowledge of the Irish language in order to be able to deal with queries from the public in Irish.

Arrangements are in train to provide those employees who wish to do so with access to Irish language courses at varying levels. A number of employees have already completed an advanced level course. In order to create a greater awareness of the Irish language and the NTMA’s Irish Language Scheme, a specific section will be included in the Compliance Induction Training for new employees.

- The Human Resources Department (HR) will play an integral role in assisting employees with any Irish language requirements. Employees who express an interest in the Irish language are encouraged to approach the HR department to progress training options and courses that may be available.
- The HR department will amend all external recruitment advertisements and internal vacancy notices to inform applicants that applications can be processed in Irish and this will be facilitated by contacting HR.

Specified Irish Language Posts

Having regard to Government policy for enhanced provision of services in Irish, the NTMA will, by the end of year one of the scheme, identify any posts for which Irish language

competency is an essential requirement. Every effort will be made to fulfil these requirements by the end of this scheme having regard to recruitment, promotion and training policies, as appropriate. This will enable the NTMA to plan and prioritise the incremental improvement of services in Irish in a more strategic manner.

5. Monitoring and Review of Scheme

There will be a continuous review of the Scheme and monitoring of the number of instances whereby a service through Irish is requested.

6. Publicising of Scheme

The contents of this Scheme along with the commitments contained therein will be publicised to staff and the general public by means of:

- Press Release
- Website and Intranet Site Notices
- A copy of the Scheme will be forwarded to Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga.
- The English version of the scheme is the original version.