Beartas Gaeilge

Irish Language Policy

2027-2030

Dréacht

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Fermanagh & Omagh District Council
Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hOmaí
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Réamhrá

Aithní Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí agus ceiliúrann sí an éagsúlacht shaibhir de thraidisiúin teanga a d'fhionraigh stair an Cheantair, agus atá fós le feiceáil san éagsúlacht teangacha atá á scríobh, á labhairt agus á dtuigbheáil ag muintir agus cuairteoirí an Cheantair. Tá Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí tiomanta do chosaint, do chur chun cinn, d'fhorbairt agus d'éascú úsáid na Gaeilge ina cleachtais agus ar fud an Cheantair.

Tá sé mar aidhm ag Beartas na Gaeilge an Ghaeilge a chosaint, a chur chun cinn agus a threisiú laistigh den Cheantar. Beidh an Beartas seo ag feidhmiú sa chomhthéacs níos leithne de Bheartas Ilchineálachta Teanga na Comhairle, Aitheantas Branda Corparáideach, Plean Corparáideach na Comhairle agus Plean Pobail do Cheantar Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí.

Tacaíonn Straitéis Gaeilge an Chomhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí (2027-2030) agus an Plean Cur Chun Feidhme a bhaineann léi (2027-2030) leis an mBeartas Gaeilge seo.

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Introduction

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council (FODC) recognises and celebrates the rich diversity of linguistic traditions that has helped to shape the history of the District, and that continues to be reflected in the variety of languages that are written, spoken, and understood by the District's residents and visitors. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is committed to protecting, promoting, growing and facilitating the use of Irish Language within its practices and throughout the wider District.

The Irish Language Policy intends to protect, promote and enhance the Irish Language within the District. This Policy will function within the broader context of the Council's Linguistic Diversity Policy, Corporate Brand Identity and the Council's Corporate Plan and Community Plan for the Fermanagh and Omagh District.

This Irish Language Policy is complemented by the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Irish Language Strategy (2027-2030) and associated Implementation Plan (2027-2030).

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Tiomantas

Geallann Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí:

- Ról gníomhach a bheith aici maidir le pobail a spreagadh agus a chumasú le go bhfoghlaimeoidh siad, le go roinnfidh siad, le go gceiliúrfar agus le go gcuirfear an Ghaeilge chun cinn;
- Infheictheacht agus úsáid na Gaeilge a chomhtháthú go forleathan i Seirbhísí na Comhairle, in oibríochtaí agus ar ardáin na Comhairle;
- Oibriú i gcomhar le heagraíochtaí atá ann agus le Grúpaí Gaeilge nua chun freastal ar a riachtanais agus a gcuspóirí;
- Tacaíocht a thabhairt do riachtanais agus cuspóirí reatha agus nua atá ag Grúpaí Gaeilge, pobail agus líonraí;
- Ionadaíocht agus abhcóideacht a dhéanamh ar son Ghrúpaí Gaeilge agus eagraíochtaí áitiúla ar leibhéal áitiúil agus réigiúnach.

Geallann Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí oibriú i dtreo na gcoinníollacha agus na hacmhainne a chruthú a chuirfeadh ar a chumas do dhuine atá ag iarraidh seirbhís trí mheán na Gaeilge an caighdeán seirbhíse céanna a fháil agus a bheadh acu dá n-iarrfaidís í i mBéarla.

Reachtaíocht agus Treoir

Is freagra áitiúil é an Beartas ar éagsúlacht beartas agus tionscnamh réigiúnacha, náisiúnta agus idirnáisiúnta, agus comhlíonann sé oibleagáidí reachtúla na Comhairle, agus cuireann sé forbairt na Gaeilge chun cinn laistigh den Chomhairle agus sa Cheantar go ginearálta.

Cuireadh roinnt tionscnamh i bhfeidhm chun éagsúlacht theanga a chur chun cinn, a chosaint agus a fheabhsú. Ar an rud is tábhachtaí, i 2001 dhaingnigh Rialtas na Ríochta Aontaithe an Chairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh, agus ainmníodh an Ghaeilge mar theanga mhionlaigh i gcomhthéacs Thuaisceart Éireann.

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Commitment

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council will:

- Take an active role in encouraging and empowering communities to learn, share, celebrate and promote the Irish Language;
- Mainstream the visibility and use of the Irish Language throughout Council services, practices and platforms;
- Work in cooperation with existing organisations and new Irish Language groups towards meeting their needs and objectives;
- Support the existing and emerging needs and objectives of Irish Language groups, communities and networks;
- Represent and advocate on behalf of local Irish Language groups and organisations at a local and regional level.

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council commit to working towards creating the conditions and capacity where a person requesting a service through the medium of Irish is entitled to the same standard of service as they would receive were they to request it in English.

Legislation and Guidance

The Policy represents a local response to various regional, national and international policies and initiatives and meets Council's statutory obligations, while also promoting the Irish Language development within the Council and the District generally.

There have been a number of initiatives designed to help promote, protect and enhance linguistic diversity. Most significantly, in 2001 the UK Government ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, with Irish being designated as a minority language in the context of Northern Ireland.

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Leagann Cuid II den Chairt dualgas ar Rialtas na Ríochta Aontaithe an Ghaeilge a aithint mar theanga arb é an prionsabal ginearálta neamh-idirdhealaithe i leith a húsáide i dTuaisceart Éireann, agus baineann Cuid III leis an nGaeilge amháin. Síneann Cuid III den Chairt go dtí seirbhísí poiblí atá faoi smacht phoiblí. Saoráidítear in Airteagal 10 go gcaithfear go mbeadh seirbhísí ar fáil sa teanga sonraithe agus go gceadaítear d'úsáideoirí na teanga iarratais a chur isteach ar sheirbhísí sa teanga sin. Sonraíonn Airteagal 10 gur chóir d'údaráis phoiblí a bheith in ann aistriúchán agus ateangaireacht a chur ar fáil, úsáid fhoirmeacha traidisiúnta logainmneacha agus sloinnte a cheadú nó a spreagadh, cáipéisí a dhréachtú sa teanga sonraithe, iarratais ó bhéal agus i scríbhinn sa teanga seo a éascú, úsáid na teanga i ndíospóireachtaí a sholáthar, agus glacadh le hiarratais sa teanga sin.

I mí na Nollag 2022, tugadh Toiliú Ríoga don Acht um Fhéiniúlacht agus Teanga (Tuaisceart Éireann). Rinne an reachtaíocht seo stádas oifigiúil na Gaeilge i dTuaisceart Éireann a aithint agus bhunaigh sé ról an Choimisinéara Gaeilge, a bhfuil freagracht air úsáid na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn ag údaráis phoiblí agus caighdeáin dea-chleachtais a fhorbairt maidir le soláthar seirbhísí trí Ghaeilge. Tá ar údaráis phoiblí na caighdeáin seo a chur san áireamh agus iad ag déanamh a ndualgas. Soláthraíonn an tAcht um Fhéiniúlacht agus Teanga freisin cumhachtaí don Choimisinéir chun gearáin a bhaineann le comhlíonadh le caighdeáin dea-chleachtais a imscrúdú agus moltaí chun feabhsúcháin a mholadh. Chomh maith leis na caighdeáin teanga sin, bunaíonn an tAcht 2022 feidhmeanna dlíthiúla (78(L)(3)) chun "*comhairle, tacaíocht agus treoir a chur ar fáil d'údaráis phoiblí maidir le húsáid na Gaeilge…*". Luaitear san Acht freisin go gcaithfidh "údarás poiblí, agus é ag comhlíonadh a fheidhmeanna i ndáil le Tuaisceart Éireann, aird chuí a thabhairt ar na prionsabail féiniúlachta náisiúnta agus cultúrtha".
Is iad na prionsabail seo:

A. An phrionsabal go bhfuil gach duine i dTuaisceart Éireann saor chun:

- a bhféiniúlacht náisiúnta agus cultúrtha a roghnú, a dhearbhú, a chaomhnú agus a fhorbairt.

Part II of the Charter commits the UK Government to recognising Irish as a language to which the general principle of non-discrimination applies in Northern Ireland, with Part III applying only to Irish. Part III of the Charter extends to public services under public control. In Article 10, it states that services need to be able to be provided in the specified language and users of the language need to be able to submit requests for services in this language. Article 10 makes it clear that public authorities should have a capacity for translation and interpretation, allow or encourage the use of traditional forms of place names and family names, draft documents in the specified language, facilitate oral and written applications in this language, facilitate the use of the language in debates and allow people to submit requests in the language.

In December 2022, Royal Assent was given to the Identity & Language (Northern Ireland) Act. This legislation gave official recognition of the status of the Irish Language in Northern Ireland and established the role of an Irish language Commissioner, who has responsibility for promoting the use of Irish by public authorities and for developing best practice standards relating to the provision of services in Irish. Public authorities are required to have due regard to these standards when carrying out their functions. The Identity and Language Act also provides powers for the Commissioner to investigate complaints relating to compliance with best practice standards and to make recommendations for improvement. In addition to those language standards, the 2022 Act also creates legal functions (78(L)(3) for the Commissioner to provide "*advice, support and guidance to public authorities in relation to the use of the Irish language…*". The Act also states that "a public authority must, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, have due regard to the national and cultural identity principles".

These principles are:

A. The principle that everybody in Northern Ireland is free to:

- choose, affirm, maintain and develop their national and cultural identity.

- aitheantas a thabhairt don fhéiniúlacht sin agus í a cheiliúradh ar bhealach a chuireann san áireamh íogaireachtaí na ndaoine a bhfuil féiniúlachtaí náisiúnta agus cultúrtha éagsúla acu agus a thugann ómós do smacht reachta.

B. An phrionsabal gur chóir d'Údaráis phoiblí athmhuintearas, caoinfhulaingt agus idirphlé substaintiúil a spreagadh agus a chur chun cinn idir daoine le féiniúlachtaí náisiúnta agus cultúrtha éagsúla chun comhionannas meas, meas frithpháirteach, tuiscint agus comhar a chur chun cinn.

Áirítear san Beartas na Gaeilge seo tiomantas ó Chomhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí na caighdeáin dea-chleachtais agus na treoirlínte d'fhorais phoiblí a chur i bhfeidhm a fhorbróidh Oifig an Choimisinéara Gaeilge agus a aontóidh an Chéad-Aire agus an Leas-Chéad-Aire.

Oibreoidh Beartas na Gaeilge na Comhairle ar aon dul le spiorad, prionsabail agus cleachtais na reachtaíochta ábhartha ar fad (Féach Aguisín 1).

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- express and celebrate that identity in a manner that takes account of the sensitivities of those with different national and cultural identities and respects the rule of law.

B. The principle that public authorities should encourage and promote reconciliation, tolerance and meaningful dialogue between those with different national and cultural identities with a view to promoting parity of esteem, mutual respect and understanding, and cooperation.

This Irish Language policy takes this into account by committing Fermanagh and Omagh District Council to implement the best practice standards and guidance for public bodies when they are developed by the office of the Commissioner for the Irish Language and agreed by the First and Deputy First Ministers.

The Council's Irish Language Policy will operate in harmony with the spirit, principles and practice of all relevant legislation (See Appendix 1).

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Aidhm

Is é is aidhm don Bheartas seo na céimeanna sonracha a leagadh amach a dhéanfaidh Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí chun An Ghaeilge a éascú agus a chur chun cinn go hinmheánach agus ar fud an Cheantair, chomh maith le tacaíocht agus cothú a thabhairt don phobal Gaeilge atá ag fás sa Cheantar. Agus an beartas seo á ullmhú, tá sé mar sprioc ag Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí na coinníollacha agus an cumas a chruthú chun a chinntiú go mbeidh duine a iarrann seirbhís trí mheán na Gaeilge i dteideal an caighdeán seirbhíse céanna agus a gheobhadh sé/sí dá n-iarrfaí í i mBéarla. Tógann an beartas seo ar ghealltanais na Comhairle éagsúlacht teanga agus oidhreacht chomhroinnte a cheiliúradh agus comhionannas deiseanna a thabhairt do gach duine a bhaineann úsáid as Seirbhísí na Comhairle. Tá an Beartas seo bunaithe ar phrionsabal na “tairisceana gníomhaí”; is é sin, nuair a iarrann úsáideoir seirbhíse seirbhís nó doiciméad, cuirfear in iúl dóibh láithreach an bhfuil an tseirbhís nó an doiciméad atá uathu ar fáil trí Ghaeilge. Leagtar amach freisin sa Bheartas seo oibleagáidí reachtúla Chomhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí.

Cuspóirí

Trí bheith ag obair de réir an Bheartais seo, beidh Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí:

- Ag obair chun an Ghaeilge a chosaint, a chaomhnú, a fhorbairt agus a fheabhsú;
- An Ghaeilge a phríomhshruthú agus a ionchorprú go hinmheánach ina bhfoirmeacha uile trí sholáthar seirbhísí na Comhairle, agus úsáid na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn agus a éascú i saol poiblí an cheantair;
- Úsáid agus infheictheacht na Gaeilge a mhéadú go cuimsitheach ar fud an Cheantair trí chomharthóireacht, margaíocht agus brandáil;
- Baill foirne, cónaitheoirí agus cuairteoirí a spreagadh agus a éascú ar mian leo an Ghaeilge a úsáid;
- Dearcthaí dearfacha i leith na Gaeilge a spreagadh laistigh den Cheantar trí cur chun cinn agus ceiliúradh ar a tábhacht in oidhreacht an Cheantair;

Aim

The policy aims to set out the specific steps Fermanagh and Omagh District Council will take to facilitate and promote the Irish Language internally and across the District, as well as to nurture and support the growing community of speakers within the District. In developing this policy, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council aims to create the conditions and capacity where a person requesting a service through the medium of Irish is entitled to the same standard of service as they would receive were they to request it in English. This policy builds on Council's commitments to celebrate linguistic diversity and shared heritage, and to deliver equality of opportunity for all who avail of Council services. This policy is underpinned by the principle of "active offer"; i.e. when a service user requests a service or document they will immediately be informed whether the service/document they seek is available through Irish. The policy also sets out Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's legislative obligations.

Objectives

By working in accordance with this Policy, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council will:

- Work to protect, preserve, develop and grow the Irish Language;
- Mainstream and embed the Irish Language, internally, in all its forms, through Council service delivery and promote and facilitate the use of Irish Language in civic life;
- Comprehensively increase the use and visibility of the Irish language throughout the District through signage, marketing and branding;
- Actively encourage and facilitate staff, residents and visitors who may wish to use Irish Language;
- Enhance positive attitudes towards the Irish Language within the District through promotion and celebrating its significance in the heritage of the District;
- Encourage a collaborative, partnership-focussed approach through regular engagement between Council staff, elected members and statutory and local community organisations and other public bodies;

- Cur chuige comhoibríoch dírithe ar chomhpháirtíocht a spreagadh trí rannpháirtíocht rialta idir foireann na Comhairle, comhaltaí tofa, eagraíochtaí reachtúla agus pobail áitiúla agus comhlachtaí poiblí eile;
- Neartú ár gcumas eagraíochtúil chun seirbhísí ardchaighdeáin a sholáthar trí mheán na Gaeilge go héifeachtach;
- Tacaíocht leordhóthanach a thabhairt do fhorbairt na Gaeilge ar leibhéal pobail;
- Oibriú lena chinntiú go mbeidh an Ghaeilge roinnte, á úinéireacht agus á meas ag gach ball den phobal.

Príomhthosaíochtaí

1. An Ghaeilge a phríomhshruthú, a fhorbairt agus a leathnú;

2. Infheictheacht, inrochtaineacht agus úsáid na Gaeilge a mhéadú;

3. Cumhachtú, tacaíocht agus cothú a thabhairt do Chainteoirí Gaeilge agus do phobail Ghaeilge;

4. An Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn agus a cheiliúradh go gníomhach sa Cheantar.

1. Príomhshruthú, forbairt agus leathnú na Gaeilge

Tá Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí tiomanta do chosaint, do chur chun cinn agus do fhorbairt na Gaeilge. Aithníonn an Chomhairle gur léiriú uathúil agus luachmhar ar chultúr agus ar fhéiniúlacht í an Ghaeilge agus go bhfuil gá lena forbairt chun í a threisiú.

D'fhonn é sin a chinntiú, déanfaidh an Chomhairle:

- Na treoirlínte dea-chleachtais a fhorbróidh agus a fhoilseoidh Oifig an Choimisinéara Gaeilge, agus a aontóidh an Chéad-Aire agus an Leas-Chéad-Aire ina dhiaidh sin, a chur i bhfeidhm;
- Lorgfar comhairle, tacaíocht agus treoir leanúnach ó Choimisinéir na Gaeilge maidir le cur i bhfeidhm agus athbhreithniú an Bheartais seo, agus maidir leis na bearta atá leagtha síos i Straitéis Gaeilge an Chomhairle;

- Strengthen our organisational capacity to effectively deliver high-quality services through the medium of Irish;
- Adequately support the development of the Irish language at community level;
- Work to ensure that the Irish Language is shared, owned and respected by all members of the community.

Key Priorities

1. **Mainstream, develop and grow the Irish Language;**
2. **Increase the visibility, accessibility and use of the Irish Language;**
3. **Empower, support and foster the development of Irish Language speakers and communities;**
4. **Actively promote and celebrate the Irish Language in the District.**

1. Mainstream, develop and grow the Irish Language

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is committed to the protection, promotion and development of the Irish Language. The Council recognises that the Irish Language is a unique and valuable expression of culture and identity and there is a need for the Council to develop the Irish Language in order to strengthen it.
To ensure this the Council will:

- Implement the best practice guidelines to be developed and published by the Office of the Commissioner for the Irish Language and subsequently agreed by the First and Deputy First Ministers;
- Seek ongoing “advice, support and guidance” from the Irish Language Commissioner regarding the implementation and review of this policy, and measures contained within the Council’s Irish Language Strategy;
- Develop and implement a strategy for the Irish Language, detailing the actions that the Council will take and how targets will be set, monitored and evaluated. It will also recognise the contribution that the Irish Language can make to society within the District. The Strategy will identify opportunities to protect, develop, share, promote and grow the language by facilitating and leading networking, capacity building and opportunities for collaboration

- Forbrófar agus cuirfear i bhfeidhm Straitéis don Ghaeilge ina leagfar amach na gníomhartha a dhéanfaidh an Chomhairle agus an chaoi a socrófar, a dhéanfar monatóireacht agus a mheasfar na spriocanna. Aithneoidh an straitéis freisin an méid is féidir leis an nGaeilge a chur le sochaí an Cheantair. Aithneoidh sí na deiseanna chun an teanga a chosaint, a fhorbairt, a chur chun cinn, a roinnt agus a leathnú trí líonrú, tógáil acmhainne agus deiseanna comhoibrithe a chothú idir na hearnálacha poiblí, príobháideacha, Pobal na Gaeilge agus an earnáil dheonach;
- Ceannróidh an Chomhairle, i gcomhar le comhlachtaí poiblí eile agus le heagraíochtaí de chuid Phobal na Gaeilge, scrúdú ar an soláthar d'oideachas trí mheán na Gaeilge agus seirbhísí eile atá lasmuigh de ghnáth-shainchúram na Comhairle.

2. Déanfar infheictheacht, inrochtaineacht agus úsáid na Gaeilge a mhéadú

Beidh féiniúlacht chorparáideach na Comhairle dhátheangach i mBéarla agus i nGaeilge.
Tabharfaidh Comhairle Ceantair Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí urraim do cheart na bhfostaithe an Ghaeilge a úsáid laistigh den ionad oibre. Cuirfidh an beartas ar chumas Gaeilgeoirí cumarsáid a dhéanamh leis an gComhairle trí mheán na Gaeilge.

Chun é seo a chur i gcrích déanfaidh an Chomhairle:

- Spreagfaidh agus cuirfidh an Chomhairle fáilte roimh chomhfhreagras ar an bhfón, sa phost, trí r-phost agus trí cheisteanna ar na meáin shóisialta i nGaeilge, m.sh. tabharfar freagra ar aon chomhfhreagras a fhaightear i nGaeilge trí mheán na Gaeilge. Déanfar cinnte go mbeidh litríocht agus foirmeacha na Comhairle ar fáil don phobal i nGaeilge ar iarratas. Déanfaidh an Chomhairle cinnte go bhféadfaidh úsáideoirí na Gaeilge cumarsáid bhéil nó scríofa a chur isteach i nGaeilge, lena n-áirítear freagraí ar chomhairliúcháin.

- between the public, private and the Irish Language community and voluntary sectors;
- Lead, in liaison with other public bodies and Irish Language community organisations, an examination of provision for Irish Language medium educational and other services that are outside the normal Council remit.

2. Increase the visibility, accessibility and use of the Irish language

The Council's corporate identity will be dual language in English and Irish. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council will respect the right of employees to use Irish within the workplace. The policy will facilitate Irish speakers to communicate with the Council through the medium of Irish.

To deliver this the Council will:

- Encourage and welcome correspondence by phone, post, email and social media queries in Irish e.g. Any correspondence received in Irish will be responded to in Irish. Ensure that Council literature and forms are made available to the public in Irish on request. The Council will ensure that users of Irish Language may submit oral or written communications in Irish including responses to consultations.
- Adopt a dual language approach to key publications and relevant documents in both digital and printed formats;

- Develop and implement a plan for branding and signage in English and Irish across Council owned administrative buildings, facilities and corporate assets, including vehicles, uniforms, digital platforms, marketing campaigns and other Council resources;

- Upon requesting a document or service from the Council, members of the public will immediately be informed whether that document is available in Irish. If that document is not currently available, the Council will have it translated and made available as soon as possible;

- Glacfaidh an Chomhairle le cur chuige dhátheangach i leith príomhfhoilseachán agus doiciméad ábhartha, i bhformáidí digiteacha agus clóite araon;

- Forbróidh agus cuirfidh an Chomhairle i bhfeidhm plean maidir le brandaáil agus comharthóireacht i mBéarla agus i nGaeilge i bhfoirgnimh riaracháin, áiseanna agus sócmhainní corparáideacha atá faoi úinéireacht na Comhairle, lena n-áirítear feithiclí, éide, ardáin dhigiteacha, feachtais mhargaíochta agus acmhainní eile de chuid na Comhairle;

- Agus cáipéis nó seirbhís á hiarraidh ón gComhairle ag ball den phobal, cuirfear in iúl láithreach an bhfuil an cháipéis sin ar fáil i nGaeilge. Mura bhfuil sí ar fáil faoi láthair, aistreofar agus cuirfear ar fáil í chomh luath agus is féidir;

- I gcás ina n-iarrtar seirbhís i nGaeilge agus nach bhfuil rogha ‘béal le béal’ trí Ghaeilge ar fáil láithreach, déanfaidh An Chomhairle socruithe cuí chun an tseirbhís a chur ar fáil i nGaeilge laistigh de 1-2 lá oibre, nó cuirfidh sí seirbhís ghutháin ar fáil an lá céanna;

- Coinneofar taifead ar sheirbhísí a iarrtar trí Ghaeilge nach bhfuil ar fáil agus forbrófar cumas chun na seirbhísí sin a chur ar fáil dá réir;

- Spreagfar comhaltaí tofa úsáid na Gaeilge i gcruinnithe na Comhairle agus féin-ateangaireacht a dhéanamh;

- Cruthófar deiseanna le haghaidh tumadh na Gaeilge laistigh de cheantar na Comhairle, m.sh. úsáid na Gaeilge chun láithreáin áineasa, turasóireacht, gnó agus gníomhaíochtaí a chur chun cinn. Geallann An Chomhairle ábhar rialta dhátheangach Béarla/Gaeilge a fhoilsiú ar phríomh-ardáin meán sóisialta na Comhairle, lena n-áirítear postálacha faisnéise, tionscnaimh mhargaíochta agus fógraí pobail/seirbhíse;

- Cuirfidh An Chomhairle comharthóireacht shráide agus bhóthair dhátheangach ar fáil trí Bheartas Ainmnithe agus Uimhrithe Sráide agus

- Upon requesting a service in Irish where an Irish language ‘face-to-face’ option is not immediately available, the Council will offer to make suitable arrangements for the service to be provided in Irish within 1-2 working days, or offer a telephone service the same day;

- A record will be kept of services requested through Irish that are not available and capacity will be developed to provide those services accordingly;

- Elected members will be encouraged to use Irish in Council meetings and provide self-interpretation;

- Create opportunities for the Irish Language immersion within the Council district, e.g. use of Irish Language to promote recreational sites, tourism, business and activities. The Council commits to publishing regular bilingual English / Irish content across all main Council social media platforms including information posts, marketing initiatives, community / service announcements;

- The Council will facilitate dual language street and road signage through the Street Naming and Numbering Policy and will keep this Policy under review and in keeping with existing and emerging best practice;

- The Council will work towards the development and maintenance of a functioning dual language (Irish/English) website.

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- coinneoidh sí an Beartas seo faoi athbhreithniú de réir dea-chleachtais reatha agus atá ag teacht chun cinn;

- Oibreoidh an Chomhairle i dtreo forbairt agus cothabháil láithreáin ghréasáin dhátheangaí (Gaeilge/Béarla) atá feidhmiúil.

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3. Cumhachtóidh, tacóidh agus cothóidh an Chomhairle forbairt cainteoirí Gaeilge agus phobail na Gaeilge.

- Cuirfear feasacht ar an nGaeilge agus oiliúint teanga ar fáil do chomhaltaí tofa agus d'fhoireann na Comhairle. Leanfaidh an Chomhairle deiseanna foghlama agus forbartha gairmiúla a chur ar fáil do chomhaltaí foirne agus do chomhaltaí tofa atá ag iarraidh a gcuid eolais agus úsáid na Gaeilge a mhéadú;

- Aithneoidh an Chomhairle comhaltaí foirne atá inniúil sa Ghaeilge agus spreagfar iad siúd atá tar éis gradam Fáinne a bhaint amach lena gCúpla Focal, Fáinne Airgid nó Fáinne Óir a chaitheamh san ionad oibre;

- Leanfaidh an Chomhairle de thacaíocht a thabhairt do dheiseanna do dhaoine an Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim agus a chleachtadh ar fud an cheantair trí chlár imeachtaí, féilte agus gníomhaíochtaí gach bliain chun saibhreas na Gaeilge a cheiliúradh agus cinnteoidh sé go mbeidh úsáid na Gaeilge chun tosaigh ag imeachtaí na Comhairle;

- Éascóidh an Chomhairle fóram páirtithe leasmhara, lena n-áirítear Dáil na Gaeilge agus deiseanna eile le haghaidh páirtíochta le páirtithe leasmhara, chun dea-chleachtas a roinnt, faisnéis a mhalartú faoi imeachtaí, forbairtí agus deiseanna maoinithe, agus chun plé a éascú ar chur i bhfeidhm agus ar thionchar an Bheartais;

- Cuirfidh An Chomhairle ar chumas agus spreagfaidh sí grúpaí pobail a oibríonn trí úsáid na Gaeilge chun rochtain a fháil ar gach glao ar chúnamh airgeadais.

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3. Empower, support and foster the development of Irish Language speakers and communities

- Irish Language awareness and language training will be delivered to elected members and staff. The Council will continue to offer professional learning and development opportunities to those members of staff and elected members who wish to increase their knowledge and use of the Irish Language;

- Council staff who are competent in Irish will be identified, those who have achieved a Fáinne award will be encouraged to wear their Cúpla Focal, Fáinne Airgid or Fáinne Óir in the workplace;

- The Council will continue to support opportunities for people to learn and practice the language across the district through a programme of events, festivals and activities each year to celebrate the richness of the Irish Language and will ensure that the use of the Irish Language is to the fore at Council events;

- The Council will facilitate a stakeholder forum, including Dáil na Gaeilge and other stakeholder engagement opportunities, to share best practice, exchange information on events, developments and funding opportunities, and support discussion on the implementation and impact of the policy;

- The Council will facilitate and encourage community groups that operate through the Irish Language to access all financial assistance calls.

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4. Déanfaidh An Chomhairle gníomhú chun An Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn agus a cheiliúradh sa Cheantar

Déanfaidh An Chomhairle:

- Déanfaidh sí cinnte go mbeidh clár imeachtaí, féilte agus gníomhaíochtaí ann gach bliain chun saibhreas na Gaeilge a cheiliúradh agus cinnteoidh sí go mbeidh úsáid na Gaeilge lárnach ag Imeachtaí na Comhairle;

- Cuirfidh An Chomhairle An Ghaeilge chun cinn agus ardóidh sí feasacht ar an Ghaeilge mar chuid de thraidisiún teanga agus cultúrtha níos leithne an Cheantair;
- Cuirfidh An Chomhairle An Ghaeilge chun cinn agus a ceiliúradh sa cheantar trí thábhacht na teanga i gcomh-oidhreacht, stair agus cultúr an cheantair a aibhsiú;

- Oibreoidh sí chun a chinntiú go bhfuil an Ghaeilge roinnte, faoi úinéireacht agus faoi mheas ag gach duine sa phobal.

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4. Actively promote and celebrate the Irish Language in the District

The Council will:

- Ensure there is a programme of events, festivals and activities each year to celebrate the richness of the Irish Language and will ensure that the use of the Irish Language is to the fore at Council events;

- Promote Irish and raise awareness of Irish as part of the District's broader linguistic and cultural heritage;
- Promote and celebrate the Irish Language within the district through promotion and celebrating its significance in shared heritage, history and culture;

- Work to ensure that Irish Language is shared, owned and respected by all members of the community.

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Róil agus Freagrachtaí

Beidh ionadaithe tofa freagrach as monatóireacht iomlán a dhéanamh ar an mBeartas, chomh maith le moltaí a dhéanamh faoi fheabhsúcháin agus leasuithe féideartha.

Tá an fhreagracht iomlán ar an Phríomhfheidhmeannach as cur i bhfeidhm an Bheartais. Táthar ag súil go leanfaidh gach fostaí an Beartas agus go ngníomhóidh siad ar shlí chuí chun spriocanna agus cuspóirí an Bheartais a bhaint amach.

Beidh Stiúrthóirí agus Ceannairí na Seirbhíse freagrach as cur i bhfeidhm an Bheartais ina ranna faoi seach, agus déanfaidh siad monatóireacht ar chur i bhfeidhm agus ar sheachadadh an Bheartais ina ranna.

Cuirfidh Oifigigh ábhartha treoir agus tacaíocht ar fáil maidir leis an mBeartas agus cuirfidh siad i gcrích Straitéis Gaeilge an Chomhairle agus an Plean Gníomhaíochta a chinntíonn go gcuirfear an Beartas i bhfeidhm go héifeachtach.

Monatóireacht

Déanfaidh an Chomhairle monatóireacht ar chur i bhfeidhm an Bheartais ag eatraimh rialta agus freagróidh sí d'athruithe réigiúnacha agus áitiúla nó d'aon tionscnaimh nua. Coinneoidh an Chomhairle teagmháil rialta leis an Oifig Coimisinéir na Gaeilge agus le Conradh na Gaeilge maidir le dea-chleachtas agus nuashonruithe ar bheartais atá ag teacht chun cinn.

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Roles and Responsibilities

Elected Representatives will be responsible for the overall monitoring of the Policy, as well as suggesting possible improvements and amendments.

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Policy. All employees are expected to follow the Policy and to take appropriate action to meet its aims and objectives.

Directors and Heads of Service will be responsible for the implementation of the Policy within their respective Departments, and they will monitor the delivery and implementation of the Policy within their Departments.

Relevant Officers will provide guidance and support in relation to the Policy and deliver against the Irish Language Strategy and Action Plan which will ensure the effective implementation of the Policy.

Monitoring

The Council will monitor the implementation of the Policy at regular intervals and will respond to both regional and local changes in circumstance or new initiatives. The Council will keep in regular contact with both the Office of the Irish Language Commissioner and Conradh na Gaeilge relating to best practice and emerging policy updates.

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Naisc

Soláthraíonn an Beartas an creat chun cleachtas na Comhairle maidir leis an nGaeilge a threorú. Oibríonn an Beartas i gcomhréir le Plean Corparáideach na Comhairle, a nascann é le gach plean agus straitéis eile atá á gcur i bhfeidhm ag an gComhairle. Tá sé nasctha freisin le Beartas agus Nósanna Imeachta Corparáideacha Seirbhísí do Chustaiméirí, agus le Scéim Chomhionannais na Comhairle. Ba chóir don Bheartas eolas agus treoir a chur ar fáil maidir le forbairt Straitéis Gaeilge an Chomhairle.

Athbhreithniú

Déanfar Beartas na Gaeilge a athbhreithniú go foirmiúil gach trí bliana, de ghnáth. Beidh an Beartas faoi réir grinnscrúdaithe bliantúla agus, ó am go chéile, déanfar nuashonruithe agus atheisiúintí a chur i gcúrsaíocht.

Déanfar athbhreithniú níos luaithe ar an mBeartas dá dtarlódh aon cheann amháin nó níos mó díobh seo a leanas:

- Má aibhsítear teip nó laige sa Bheartas.
- Má tharlaíonn athruithe ar riachtanais reachtúla.
- Má tharlaíonn athruithe ar threoracha nó ar riachtanais ón Rialtas, ón gComhairle nó ó údaráis eile.

Déanfar athbhreithnithe i gcomhar le “comhairle, tacaíocht agus treoir” ó Oifig Choimisinéir na Gaeilge.

Déanfaidh an Chomhairle suirbhé gach 24 mí le páirtithe leasmhara agus grúpaí pobail chun a dtuairimí faoin tacaíocht don teanga a bhailiú, agus cuirfear an t-eolas seo san áireamh san athbhreithniú ar an mBeartas.

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Linkages

The Policy provides the framework to guide the Council's practice in relation to Irish. The Policy operates in accordance with the Council's Corporate Plan which links it with all other plans and strategies carried out by the Council. It also links into the Corporate Customer Services Policy and Procedures, and the Council's Equality Scheme. The Policy should inform and direct the development of the Council's Irish Language Strategy.

Review

The Irish Language Policy, under normal circumstances, will be formally reviewed every three years. The Policy will also be subject to annual scrutiny and, from time to time, updates and re-issues will be circulated.

The Policy will be reviewed sooner in the event of any one or more of the following:

- A failure or weakness in the Policy is highlighted.
- Changes in legislative requirements.
- Changes in Government/Council or other directives and requirements.

Reviews will be carried out in conjunction with "advice, support and guidance" from the office of the Irish Language Commissioner.

The Council will carry out a survey every 24 months with stakeholders and community groups collecting their opinions on how the language is supported, this will feed into the Policy review.

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Duaiseanna Gaeilge agus Údaráis Phoiblí i dTuaisceart Éireann

Nóta eolais a leagann amach na hoibleagáidí dlíthiúla, gealltanais bheartais, dualgais údaráis phoiblí agus breithnithe Dea-Chaidrimh i ndáil leis an nGaeilge.

Achoimre:

- Tá an Ghaeilge á cosaint trí mheascán d'oibleagáidí conartha idirnáisiúnta, comhaontuithe polaitiúla baile, gealltanais reachtúla agus moltaí beartais.

- Táthar ag súil go n-éascóidh údaráis phoiblí, lena n-áirítear Comhairlí áitiúla, úsáid phraiticiúil na Gaeilge in riarachán, cultúr, seirbhísí, comharthóireacht agus cumarsáid phoiblí i gcásanna inar infheidhme na hoibleagáidí cuí.

- Ba cheart bearta chun an Ghaeilge a chosaint agus a chur chun cinn a thuiscint mar bhearta comhionannais agus cuimsithe, agus ní mar idirdhealú i gcoinne cainteoirí teangacha níos forleithne.

- Níor chóir Dea-Chaidreamh a úsáid mar bhunús ginearálta le soláthar dleathach na Gaeilge a shrianadh, go háirithe más rud é go ndéanfadh a leithéid cearta teanga mhionlaigh a chur ó mhaith.

Cuspóir agus Comhthéacs

Tugann an aguisín seo le chéile na príomhfhoinsí dlí agus beartais atá ábhartha don Ghaeilge i dTuaisceart Éireann. Is é a chuspóir ná léiriú a thabhairt ar an gcaoi a dtacaíonn oibleagáidí idirnáisiúnta, comhaontuithe baile, prionsabail chearta daonna agus moltaí comhairleacha le chéile le cur chun cinn, cosaint agus normalú na Gaeilge sa saol poiblí.

Tá an t-ábhar seo go háirithe ábhartha d'údaráis phoiblí, lena n-áirítear Comhairlí áitiúla, toisc go mbaineann go leor de na dualgais agus moltaí le seirbhísí riaracháin, soláthar cultúrtha, comharthóireacht, doiciméid phoiblí agus rannpháirtíocht le húsáideoirí Gaeilge.

Irish Language Duties and Public Authorities in Northern Ireland

A briefing note setting out the legal obligations, policy commitments, public authority duties and good relations considerations with regard to the Irish Language.

Summary:

- The Irish Language is protected through a combination of international treaty obligations, domestic political agreements, statutory commitments, and policy recommendations.

- Public authorities, including local Councils, are expected to facilitate the practical use of Irish in administration, culture, services, signage, and public-facing communications where relevant obligations apply.

- Measures designed to protect and promote Irish should be understood as equality and inclusion measures, not as discrimination against speakers of more widely used languages.

- Good relations considerations should not be used as a general reason to restrict lawful Irish Language provision, particularly where such restriction would undermine minority language rights.

Purpose and Context

This appendix brings together the principal legal and policy sources relevant to the Irish Language in Northern Ireland. Its purpose is to show how international obligations, domestic agreements, human rights principles, and advisory recommendations collectively support the promotion, protection, and normalisation of Irish in public life.

The material is particularly relevant to public authorities, including local Councils, because many of the duties and recommendations concern administrative services, cultural provision, signage, public documents, and engagement with Irish Language users.

Oibleagáidí Dlí Idirnáisiúnta

Cairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh (1992)

Is Conradh de chuid Chomhairle na hEorpa í an Cairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh, a glacadh in 1992 chun teangacha réigiúnacha nó mionlaigh a chosaint agus a chur chun cinn. Rinne an Ríocht Aontaithe an Chairt a dhaingniú in 2001 agus chláraigh sí an Ghaeilge faoi Chuid III, in éineacht leis an nGàidhlig Albanach agus an Bhreatnais. Éilíonn Cuid III gealltanais shonracha i réimsí amhail oideachas, údaráis riaracháin, meáin, cultúr, saol eacnamaíoch agus sóisialta, agus malartuithe trasteorann.

Tá tábhacht ar leith le hAirteagal 10 do rialtas áitiúil toisc go mbaineann sé le húdaráis riaracháin. Go praiticiúil, tacaíonn an Chairt le húsáid na Gaeilge i dteagmhálacha le húdaráis phoiblí, i suíomhanna daonlathacha áitiúla, i gcáipéisí oifigiúla agus i logainmneacha traidisiúnta.

- Ba cheart go mbeadh ar chumas úsáideoirí Gaeilge iarratais ó bhéal nó i scríbhinn a chur isteach i nGaeilge chuig údaráis riaracháin.
- Ba cheart go mbeifí in ann doiciméid a dhréachtú i nGaeilge ag leibhéal na n-údarás riaracháin.
- Féadfar an Ghaeilge a úsáid i ndíospóireachtaí i tionóil phoiblí, gan úsáid na teanga oifigiúla nó na dteangacha oifigiúla eile sa Stát a chur as an áireamh.
- Féadfar foirmeacha Gaeilge traidisiúnta agus cearta de logainmneacha a úsáid nó a ghlacadh, más gá, taobh le foirm na teanga oifigiúla.
- Ba chóir go mbeadh ar chumas Úsáideoirí Gaeilge seirbhísí poiblí a iarraidh trí Ghaeilge.
- Ba chóir go gceadófaí foirmeacha Gaeilge de shloinnte ar iarratas.
- Ba chóir go gcuirfí aistriúchán nó ateangaireacht ar fáil de réir mar is gá chun na hoibleagáidí seo a chur i gcrích.

Déanann Airteagal 12 plé ar ghníomhaíochtaí cultúrtha agus áiseanna, lena n-áirítear leabharlanna, ionaid chultúrtha, músaeim, cartlanna, amharclanna, pictiúrlanna, obair liteartha, léiriúchán scannán, féilte agus tionscail chultúrtha.

International Legal Obligations

European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992)

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages is a Council of Europe Treaty adopted in 1992 to protect and promote regional and minority languages. The United Kingdom ratified the Charter in 2001 and registered Irish under Part III, alongside Scottish Gaelic and Welsh. Part III requires specific undertakings across areas including education, administrative authorities, media, culture, economic and social life, and trans-frontier exchanges.

Article 10 is especially significant for local government because it concerns administrative authorities. In practical terms, the Charter supports the use of Irish in dealings with public authorities, in local democratic settings, in official documents, and in traditional place names.

- Users of Irish should be able to submit oral or written applications in Irish to administrative authorities.
- Administrative authorities should be permitted to draft documents in Irish.
- Irish may be used in debates in public assemblies, while not excluding the use of the official language or languages of the State.
- Traditional and correct Irish forms of place names may be used or adopted where necessary alongside the official language form.
- Users of Irish should be able to request public services in Irish.
- Irish forms of family names should be permitted upon request.
- Translation or interpretation should be provided where required to make these obligations effective.

Article 12 addresses cultural activities and facilities, including libraries, cultural centres, museums, archives, theatres, cinemas, literary work, film production, festivals, and the cultural industries. Where public authorities are competent or play a role in these fields, they are expected to support access to Irish-language cultural expression and participation.

I gcás go bhfuil Údaráis phoiblí inniúil nó go bhfuil ról acu sna réimsí seo, táthar ag súil go dtacóidh siad le rochtain agus rannpháirtíocht i léiriú cultúrtha trí Ghaeilge.

- Spreag cineálacha léirithe agus tionscnaimh ar leith do theangacha réigiúnacha nó mionlaigh.
- Cothaigh rochtain ar shaothair a táirgeadh i nGaeilge agus i dteangacha eile atá faoi chosaint.
- Déan cinnte go dtugann na comhlachtaí a eagraíonn nó a thacaíonn le gníomhaíochtaí cultúrtha aitheantas cuí don Ghaeilge agus do sholáthar cultúrtha.
- Cuir bearta chun cinn lena chinntiú go mbeidh rochtain ag comhlachtaí cultúrtha ábhartha ar fhoireann a bhfuil cumas acu sa Ghaeilge agus i dteanga nó i dteangacha an phobail níos leithne.
- Spreag rannpháirtíocht dhíreach Úsáideoirí Gaeilge i bpleanáil áiseanna agus gníomhaíochtaí cultúrtha.

Tá an Chairt bunaithe ar neamh-idirdhealú. Ní mheastar bearta speisialta a dearadh chun tacú le teangacha réigiúnacha nó mionlaigh mar idirdhealú i gcoinne cainteoirí na dteangacha is mó úsáid, más é a gcuspóir comhionannas a chur chun cinn agus dálaí sonracha úsáideoirí teanga mionlaigh a chur san áireamh.

> “Geallann na Páirtithe deireadh a chur, mura bhfuil sé déanta acu cheana féin, le haon idirdhealú, eisiamh, srianadh nó tosaíocht nach bhfuil údar leo maidir le húsáid teanga réigiúnach nó teanga mhionlaigh, agus atá dírithe ar chaomhnú nó ar fhorbairt na teanga sin a chur i mbaol nó a chosc. Ní mheastar go bhfuil bearta speisialta a nglactar leo ar son teangacha réigiúnacha nó mionlaigh, atá dírithe ar chomhionannas a chur chun cinn idir úsáideoirí na dteangacha sin agus an chuid eile den daonra nó a chuireann dálaí speisialta úsáideoirí na dteangacha sin san áireamh, ina ngníomh idirdhealaithe i gcoinne úsáideoirí na dteangacha is mó úsáid” (tuarascáil COMEX chuig an gComhairle Eorpach ar an gCairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha agus teangacha mionlaigh(ECRML) 2004).

- Encourage forms of expression and initiative specific to regional or minority languages.
- Foster access to works produced in Irish and other protected languages.
- Ensure that bodies organising or supporting cultural activities make appropriate allowance for Irish Language and cultural provision.
- Promote measures so that relevant cultural bodies have access to staff with command of Irish and of the language or languages of the wider population.
- Encourage direct participation by Irish Language users in planning facilities and cultural activities.

The Charter is grounded in non-discrimination. Special measures designed to support regional or minority languages are not treated as discrimination against speakers of more widely used languages where they aim to promote equality and take account of the specific conditions faced by minority language users.

> "The Parties undertake to eliminate, if they have not yet done so, any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of a regional or minority language and intended to discourage or endanger the maintenance or development of it. The adoption of special measures in favour of regional or minority languages aimed at promoting equality between the users of these languages and the rest of the population or which take due account of their specific conditions is not considered to be an act of discrimination against the users of more widely-used languages" (COMEX report to CoE on European Charter for Regional Minority Languages **(**ECRML) 2004).

As the Charter states, parties undertake to eliminate unjustified distinctions, exclusions, restrictions, or preferences relating to the use of a regional or minority language where these would discourage or endanger the maintenance or development of that language.

Mar a leagtar síos sa Chairt, geallann na Páirtithe deireadh a chur le haon idirdhealú, eisiamh, srianadh nó tosaíocht nach bhfuil údar leo maidir le húsáid teanga réigiúnach nó teanga mhionlaigh, i gcás gur mhaithe le cosc nó bagairt ar chaomhnú nó ar fhorbairt na teanga sin a bheadh na bearta sin.

Déanann Coiste Saineolaithe na Comhairle na hEorpa (COMEX) tuarascálacha monatóireachta tréimhsiúla ar pháirtithe stáit agus tá siad tar éis cáineadh leanúnach a dhéanamh ar an Rialtas na Ríochta Aontaithe as neamhchomhlíonadh le príomhghnéithe na Cairte, agus moltar go dtabharfaí cosaintí reachtúla agus beartais bhreise do Ghaeilge. Mar chuid de chúigiú Tuarascáil Mhonatóireachta an Choiste Saineolaithe maidir le Comhlíonadh na Ríochta Aontaithe ar ghealltanais na Ríochta Aontaithe faoin ECRML, leagadh amach na moltaí seo a leanas:

> *h. A chinntiú go bhféadfaidh úsáideoirí na Gaeilge iarratais bhéil nó i scríbhinn a chur isteach i nGaeilge chuig brainsí áitiúla de na húdaráis náisiúnta, údaráis Thuaisceart Éireann, Comhairlí áitiúla agus soláthraithe seirbhísí poiblí… Aistriúchán comhuaineach a thabhairt isteach chun úsáid iomlán na Gaeilge a éascú sa Tionól Thuaisceart Éireann agus i gComhairlí áitiúla.*
>
> *k. Éascaíocht a thabhairt d'údaráis áitiúla agus réigiúnacha, chomh maith le soláthraithe seirbhísí poiblí, logainmneacha i nGaeilge a ghlacadh agus a úsáid.*

Fanann formhór mór na moltaí seo fós neamhchomhlíonta nó gan réiteach; trí Bhéartas na Gaeilge forásach a ghlacadh, tá deis ag An Chomhairle dul i dteagmháil leis na moltaí a leag saineolaithe idirnáisiúnta amach.

The Council of Europe Committee of Experts (COMEX) carry out periodical monitoring reports of state parties and have consistently criticised the UK Government for non-compliance with core elements of the Charter and recommending additional legislative and policy based protections for Irish. As part of the Committee of Experts 5th Monitoring Report on UK Compliance with UK undertakings of ECRML, the following recommendations were made:

> *h. Ensure that users of Irish may submit oral or written applications in Irish to local branches of the national authorities, the authorities of Northern Ireland, local authorities and public service providers… Introduce simultaneous translation facilitating the full use of Irish in the Northern Ireland Assembly and in local councils.*
>
> *k. Facilitate the adoption and use, by local and regional authorities as well as public service providers, of place names in Irish.*

The vast majority of these recommendations remain unfulfilled or unresolved; through the adoption of a progressive, Irish Language Policy, the Council has a chance to align with recommendations set out by international experts.

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Coinbhinsiún Creatlaí um Chosaint Mionlach Náisiúnta

Is Conradh de chuid Chomhairle na hEorpa é an Coinbhinsiún Creatlaí um Chosaint Mionlach Náisiúnta (CCCMN) a bhfuil sé mar aidhm aige cearta mionlach a chosaint. Is sínitheoir í an Ríocht Aontaithe agus dhaingnigh sí an CCCMN i 1998. Aithníonn Airteagal 10 an ceart atá ag mionlaigh náisiúnta a dteanga a úsáid go príobháideach agus go poiblí, agus éilíonn Airteagal 11 éascaíocht ainmneacha traidisiúnta áitiúla, ainmneacha sráide, agus táscairí topagrafacha eile sa teanga mhionlaigh.

Tá An Coiste Comhairleach atá ag maoirsiú an Choinbhinsiúin Creatlaí tar éis cáineadh arís agus arís eile a dhéanamh ar chur chuige a chuireann cur chun cinn na Gaeilge i láthair mar idirdhealaitheach nó a chuireann srian ar an soláthar dátheangach ar bhonn leathan Dea-Chaidrimh. Neartaíonn sé seo an seasamh gur cheart go ndéanfaí bearta Gaeilge a mheas mar sholáthar atá dírithe ar chearta agus ar chomhionannas.

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Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCPNM) is a Council of Europe Treaty aimed at protecting minority rights. The United Kingdom is a signatory ratifying the FCPNM in 1998. Article 10 recognises the right of national minorities to use their language in private and in public, while Article 11 requires facilitation of traditional local names, street names, and other topographical indications in the minority language.

The Advisory Committee monitoring the Framework Convention has repeatedly criticised approaches that treat Irish Language promotion as discriminatory or that restrict bilingual provision on broad good relations grounds. This strengthens the position that Irish Language measures should be evaluated as a rights-based and equality-focused provision.

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Gealltanais Pholaitiúla Intíre

Comhaontú Bhéal Feirste/Caibidlíocht Aoine an Chéasta agus Acht Thuaisceart Éireann 1998

Aithníonn Sruth a Trí de Chomhaontú Bhéal Feirste/Caibidlíocht Aoine an Chéasta an tábhacht a bhaineann le meas, tuiscint agus caoinfhulaingt i ndáil le héagsúlacht theangeolaíoch. Áirítear leis seo an Ghaeilge, Ultais, agus teangacha na bpobal eitneach, atá go léir curtha síos orthu mar chuid de shaibhreas cultúrtha oileán na hÉireann.

Geallann an Comhaontú go ndéanfaidh Rialtas na Ríochta Aontaithe “gníomh diongbháilte” chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn, chun a húsáid sa chaint agus i scríbhneoireacht i saol poiblí agus príobháideach a éascú agus a spreagadh nuair is cuí an t-éileamh, agus chun srianta a bhaint a bheadh ina gconstaic ar chothabháil agus ar fhorbairt na teanga.

Soláthraíonn an tiomantas seo bunús polaitiúil intíre tábhachtach maidir le soláthar praiticiúil na Gaeilge ag údaráis phoiblí. Leagann sé an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn mar chuid lárnach den réiteach síochána níos leithne agus mar ábhar meas agus cuimsithe cultúrtha.

DRÉACHT

Domestic Political Commitments

Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and the Northern Ireland Act 1998

Strand Three of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement recognises the importance of respect, understanding, and tolerance in relation to linguistic diversity. This includes Irish, Ulster Scots, and the languages of ethnic communities, all of which are described as part of the cultural wealth of the island of Ireland.

The Agreement commits the UK Government to take “resolute action” to promote Irish, to facilitate and encourage its use in speech and writing in public and private life where there is appropriate demand, and to remove restrictions that would work against the maintenance and development of the language.

This commitment provides an important domestic political foundation for practical Irish Language provision by public authorities. It frames promotion of the Irish Language as part of the broader peace settlement and as a matter of cultural respect and inclusion.

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Comhaontú Shliabh Anndrais 2006

Áiríodh sa Chomhaontú Shliabh Anndrais tiomantas d'Acht na Gaeilge bunaithe ar eispéireas na Breataine Bige. Cé gur cuireadh moill le tabhairt isteach a leithéid de reachtaíocht, d'fhan an tiomantas sin tábhachtach agus léiríodh é níos déanaí i gComhaontú Cur Chuige Nua, Ré Nua agus sa Acht na Gaeilge a rith Parlaimint Westminster in 2022.

Is é an tábhacht phraiticiúil a bhaineann leis an tiomantas seo ná gur aithníodh cosaint na Gaeilge arís agus arís eile sna comhaontuithe polaitiúla a thacaíonn leis an rialtas aistrithe i dTuaisceart Éireann. Ina theannta sin, chuir an Comhaontú Shliabh Anndrais an dualgas dlíthiúil tosaigh ar an Fheidhmeannas Straitéis na Gaeilge a ghlacadh. Cuireadh an fhoráil sin san áireamh trí leasú ar Acht Thuaisceart Éireann 1998 tríd Airteagal 28d leis an éifeacht chéanna.

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St Andrews Agreement 2006

The St Andrews Agreement included a commitment to an Irish Language Act based on the experience of Wales. Although the introduction of such legislation was delayed, the commitment remained significant and was later reflected in the New Decade, New Approach Agreement and the Act finally passed in Westminster in 2022.

The practical importance of this commitment is that Irish Language protection has been repeatedly recognised in the political agreements underpinning devolved government in Northern Ireland. Additionally, the St Andrews Agreement brought forward the original legal duty on the Executive to adopt an Irish Language Strategy. That provision was reflected through an amendment in the 1998 NI Act via Article 28d to the same effect.

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Cur Chuige Nua, Deich mBliana Nua 2020

D'athbhunaigh Cur Chuige Nua, Deich mBliana Nua na hinstitiúidí comhroinnte cumhachta in 2020 agus cuireadh gealltanas ann go ndéanfaí cosaint reachta a thabhairt don Ghaeilge. Príomhghné den chur chuige seo ab ea foráil do Choimisinéir na Gaeilge, a fhorbróidh caighdeáin teanga dea-chleachtais d'údaráis phoiblí maidir le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge agus úsáid na Gaeilge i seirbhísí, lena n-áirítear sna cúirteanna.

Bogann an fhoráil maidir le hAn Ghaeilge seo thar aitheantas cultúrtha ginearálta go dtí caighdeáin oibríochtúla d'údaráis phoiblí. Maidir le Comhairlí agus údaráis eile, is é atá i gceist ná go mbeidh gá dearadh seirbhíse, cumarsáid, comharthóireacht agus féiniúlacht chorparáideach a mheas i bhfianaise na gcaighdeán nua nó molta don Ghaeilge.

An tAcht Teanga & Féiniúlachta (Tuaisceart Éireann) 2022

I mí na Nollag 2022, tugadh Toiliú Ríoga don Acht Féiniúlachta & Teanga (Tuaisceart Éireann). Tugann an reachtaíocht seo aitheantas oifigiúil don stádas atá ag An Ghaeilge i dTuaisceart Éireann. Deir an tAcht gur chóir ***"do údarás poiblí, agus é ag comhlíonadh a fheidhmeanna i ndáil le Tuaisceart Éireann, aird chuí a thabhairt ar na prionsabail féiniúlachta náisiúnta agus cultúrtha."*** *Is iad na prionsabail seo:*

A. An phrionsabal go bhfuil gach duine i dTuaisceart Éireann saor chun:

- a bhféiniúlacht náisiúnta agus cultúrtha a roghnú, a dhearbhú, a chothabháil agus a fhorbairt.

- aitheantas a thabhairt don fhéiniúlacht sin agus í a cheiliúradh ar bhealach a chuireann san áireamh íogaireachtaí na ndaoine a bhfuil féiniúlachtaí náisiúnta agus cultúrtha éagsúla acu agus a thugann ómós do smacht reachta.

New Decade, New Approach 2020

New Decade, New Approach restored power-sharing institutions in 2020 and included a commitment to bring forward legislative protection for Irish. A key element was provision of an Irish Language Commissioner, who would develop best-practice language standards for public authorities concerning the promotion of Irish and the use of Irish in services, including in courts.

This moves Irish Language provision beyond general cultural recognition and toward operational standards for public bodies. For Councils and other authorities, the implication is that service design, communications, signage, and corporate identity will need to be assessed against emerging or recommended Irish Language standards.

The Language & Identity (Northern Ireland) Act 2022

In December 2022, Royal Assent was given to the Identity & Language (Northern Ireland) Act. This legislation gives official recognition of the status of the Irish Language in Northern Ireland. The Act states that ***"a public authority must, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, have due regard to the national and cultural identity principles".*** These principles are:

B. The principle that everybody in Northern Ireland is free to:

- choose, affirm, maintain, and develop their national and cultural identity.

- express and celebrate that identity in a manner that takes account of the sensitivities of those with different national and cultural identities and respects the rule of law.

The principle that public authorities should encourage and promote reconciliation, tolerance and meaningful dialogue between those with different national and

B. An phrionsabal go gcuirfidh údaráis phoiblí athmhuintearas, caoinfhulaingt agus idirphlé substaintiúil chun cinn idir daoine le féiniúlachtaí náisiúnta agus cultúrtha éagsúla, d'fhonn comhionannas meas, meas frithpháirteach, tuiscint agus comhar a chur chun cinn.

Aithníonn an tAcht bunú Oifig an Fhéinúlachta agus Léirithe Cultúrtha, Oifig an Choimisinéara Gaeilge, agus Oifig an Choimisinéara Ultais agus Thraidisiúin Ultaigh Bhriotanaí.

Is iad príomhchuspóirí Oifig an Fhéinúlachta agus Léirithe Cultúrtha:

- ildánacht chultúrtha agus meas ar éagsúlacht a chur chun cinn,
- comhtháthú sóisialta agus athmhuintearas a chothú idir daoine le féiniúlachtaí náisiúnta agus cultúrtha éagsúla,
- acmhainn agus athléimneacht daoine chun dul i ngleic le ceisteanna a bhaineann le difríochtaí i bhféiniúlacht náisiúnta agus cultúrtha a mhéadú, agus
- tacaíocht agus ardú céime a thabhairt do cheiliúradh oidhreachta cultúrtha agus teanga gach duine atá ag cur fúthu anseo.

Is é príomhchuspóir Choimisinéir na Gaeilge an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn agus a chosaint trí údaráis phoiblí i soláthar seirbhísí don phobal nó do chuid den phobal.

Is í an phríomhchuspóir atá ag an gCoimisinéir don Ultais agus don Traidisiún Briotanach Uladh ná forbairt agus feabhsú na teanga, na n-ealaíon agus na litríochta a bhaineann leis an Ultais agus leis an Traidisiún Briotanach Uladh a chur chun cinn.

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cultural identities with a view to promoting parity of esteem, mutual respect and understanding, and cooperation.

The Act provides for the establishment of the Office of Identity and Cultural Expression, the Office of the Commissioner for the Irish Language, and the Office of the Commissioner for Ulster Scots and The Ulster British Tradition.

The principal aims of the Office of identity and Cultural Expression are:

- to promote cultural pluralism and respect for diversity,
- to promote social cohesion and reconciliation between those of different national and cultural identities,
- to increase the capacity and resilience of people to address issues related to differences in national and cultural identity, and
- to support and promote the celebration of the cultural and linguistic heritage of all people living here.

The principal aim of the Irish Language Commissioner is to enhance and protect the use of the Irish Language by public authorities in the provision of services to the public or a section of the public.

The principal aim of the Commissioner for the Ulster Scots and the Ulster British tradition is to enhance and develop the language, arts and literature associated with the Ulster Scots and the Ulster British tradition

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Duaiseanna Údaráis Phoiblí agus Soláthar Seirbhísí

Moltaí an Phainéil Chomhairligh Shaineolaithe do Straitéis na Gaeilge (2022)

Rinne Cur Chuige Nua gealltanas arís freisin maidir le forbairt Straitéis na Gaeilge, ar leith ó reachtaíocht. Is é aidhm na Straitéise forbairt na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn agus a chosaint thar thréimhse fiche bliain.
Rinne An Painéal Comhairleach Saineolaithe, a d'fhoilsigh An Roinn Pobail in 2022, sraith moltaí maidir le húsáid na Gaeilge i seirbhísí poiblí. Tugann na moltaí seo le fios an cineál bearta praiticiúla ar cheart d'údaráis phoiblí a mheas agus soláthar na Gaeilge atá inrochtana, infheicthe agus suntasach á phleanáil acu.

- Ba chóir go mbeadh Gaeilgeoirí in ann seirbhísí rialtais a rochtain trí Ghaeilge, agus ba chóir go mbeadh na seirbhísí sin ar aonchaighdeán le seirbhísí a chuirtear ar fáil trí Bhéarla.
- Ba chóir d'údaráis phoiblí gníomh cinntitheach a dhéanamh chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn go hinmheánach agus chun na seirbhísí atá ar fáil trí Ghaeilge a uasmhéadú.
- Ba cheart go mbeadh foirmeacha poiblí ar fáil i nGaeilge.
- Ba cheart do chomhlachtaí poiblí féiniúlacht chorparáideach dhátheangach Gaeilge/Béarla a úsáid.
- Ba cheart go mbeadh comharthóireacht dhátheangach Gaeilge/Béarla ar fhoirgnimh phoiblí, laistigh agus lasmuigh den fhoirgneamh.
- Ba cheart príomhdhoiciméid chorparáideacha a chur ar fáil i nGaeilge.

Maidir le Comhairlí áitiúla, tugann na moltaí seo le fios modh seirbhíse comhtháite: féiniúlacht dhátheangach shoiléir, foirmeacha agus doiciméid Ghaeilge atá inrochtana, cumas na foirne, agus caighdeán seirbhíse nach dtiteann faoi bhun an leibhéil a sholáthraítear i mBéarla.

Public Authority Duties and Service Provision

Expert Advisory Panel Recommendations for an Irish Language Strategy (2022)

New Decade, New Approach also recommitted to the development of an Irish Language Strategy, distinct from legislation. The aim of the Strategy is to enhance and protect the development of Irish over a twenty-year period.
The Expert Advisory Panel, published by the Department for Communities in 2022, made a series of recommendations concerning Irish Language use in public services. These recommendations indicate the type of practical measures that public bodies should consider when planning accessible, visible, and meaningful Irish Language provision.

- Irish speakers should be able to access government services through Irish, and those services should be of the same standard as services provided in English.
- Public bodies should take resolute action to promote Irish internally and maximise the services available through Irish.
- Publicly available forms should be available in Irish.
- Public bodies should use bilingual Irish/English corporate identity.
- Public buildings should have bilingual Irish/English signage inside and outside the building.
- Key corporate documents should be made available in Irish.

For local authorities, these recommendations point toward a coherent service model: visible bilingual identity, accessible Irish Language forms and documents, staff capacity, and service quality that does not fall below the standard available in English.

DRÉACHT Gaeilge DRÉACHT

Doiciméad Treorach ón Roinn Pobail do na hÚdaráis Áitiúla maidir le cur i bhfeidhm na Cairte Eorpaí do Theangacha Réigiúnacha agus teangacha mionlaigh (2016)

> *"Ní mheastar gur idirdhealú i gcoinne úsáideoirí na dteangacha is forleithne é glacadh le bearta speisialta ar son teangacha réigiúnacha nó mionlaigh chun comhionannas a chur chun cinn idir úsáideoirí na dteangacha sin agus an chuid eile den phobal, nó bearta a thugann aird ar a gcoinníollacha sainiúla."*

Doiciméad Treorach ó Fhoras na Gaeilge
Seirbhísí Gaeilge sna Comhairlí nua

I bhfianaise an athbhreithnithe ar an riarachán poiblí, d'fhoilsigh Foras na Gaeilge i 2014 doiciméad treorach do na Comhairlí áitiúla nua maidir le dea-chleachtas i soláthar agus i gcosaint na Gaeilge. Mhol an cháipéis na réimsí gníomhaíochta seo a leanas chun go mbeadh Comhairlí ag teacht le dea-chleachtas idirnáisiúnta:

- Brandáil
- Cáipéisí
- Foireann na Comhairle (iniúchadh, oiliúint agus feasacht)
- Comhfhreagras
- Seirbhísí do mheáin na Gaeilge
- Meáin shóisialta
- Suíomhanna gréasáin na Comhairle
- Seirbhísí aistriúcháin agus ateangaireachta
- Comharthóireacht
- Tacaíocht do scoileanna
- Tacaíocht don phobal
- Forbairt Bheartais na Gaeilge

DRÉACHT

Department for Communities Guidance Document for Local Authorities on the implementation of the European Charter for Regional Minority Languages (2016)

> *"The adoption of special measures in favour of regional or minority languages aimed at promoting equality between the users of these languages and the rest of the population or which take due account of their specific conditions is not considered to be an act of discrimination against the users of more widely-used languages."*

Foras na Gaeilge Guidance Document
Irish Languages services in the new Councils

In light of the review of public administration, in 2014 Foras na Gaeilge published a guidance document for the new local Councils relating to best-practice in Irish Language provision and protection. The document suggested the following areas of action in order for Councils to be in line with international best practice:

- Branding
- Documents
- Council staff (audit and training and awareness)
- Correspondence
- Services for Irish Language media
- Social media
- Council websites
- Translation and interpretation services
- Signage
- Support for schools
- Support for the public
- Development of an Irish Language Policy

DRÉACHT

Cearta an Duine, Neamh-idirdhealú agus Dea-Chaidreamh

Achoimre ó Choimisiún um Chearta an Duine Thuaisceart Éireann (2010) *'*Cearta Teanga Mionlaigh: An Ghaeilge agus Ultais, páipéar eolais ar na himpleachtaí a bhaineann leis an gCairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh, Coinbhinsiún na hEorpa ar Chearta an Duine agus ionstraimí eile'

Leag Coimisiún um Chearta an Duine Thuaisceart Éireann béim nach bhfuil aon "cheart ginearálta cur as a bheith ort" ann maidir le páirtí eile ag feidhmiú a cheart. I gcomhthéacs na Gaeilge, tá an prionsabal seo ceangailte le saoirse tuairimí a chur in iúl faoi Airteagal 10 de Choinbhinsiún na hEorpa ar Chearta an Duine, á léamh i dteannta Airteagal 14 maidir le neamh-idirdhealú, lena n-áirítear idirdhealú ar bhonn teanga.

Is é seasamh an Choimisiúin nach mbeadh sé ag teacht le saoirse tuairimí a chur in iúl úsáid ná cur chun cinn na Gaeilge a shrianadh d'fhonn íogaireachtaí daoine eile a chur san áireamh. Tá sé seo tábhachtach toisc go leagann sé teorainn leis an méid gur féidir míchompord nó cur i gcoinne a úsáid mar údar le hinfheictheacht nó seirbhísí na Gaeilge a shrianadh.

> *"... Tharraing an Coimisiún aird ar an bhfíric nach bhfuil aon 'cheart masla a dhéanamh' ag duine amháin nuair a bhíonn páirtí eile ag baint feidhme as ceart. Is prionsabal ginearálta de shaoirse tuairimí a chur in iúl é seo (Coinbhinsiún na hEorpa ar Chearta an Duine — Airteagal 10, lena léitear Airteagal 14 maidir le neamh-idirdhealú ar bhonn teanga san áireamh). Tá an Coimisiún ar an eolas go bhfuil argóintí ann maidir le 'íogaireachtaí' i ndáil leis an nGaeilge. De ghnáth, bheadh úsáid nó cur chun cinn na Gaeilge a shrianadh d'fhonn 'íogaireachtaí' daoine eile a chur san áireamh ag teacht salach ar shaoirse tuairimí a chur in iúl."*

Human Rights, Non-Discrimination, and Good Relations

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission Briefing (2010)
'Minority Language Rights: The Irish Language and Ulster Scots, Briefing paper on the implications of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, European Convention on Human Rights and other instruments'

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission has emphasised that there is no general "right to be offended" by another party exercising a right. In the context of Irish, this principle is linked to freedom of expression under Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, read alongside Article 14 on non-discrimination, including discrimination on grounds of language.

The Commission's position is that restricting the use or promotion of Irish merely to accommodate the sensitivities of others would generally be incompatible with freedom of expression. This is important because it limits the extent to which discomfort or opposition can justify restricting Irish Language visibility or services.

> *"... the Commission has drawn attention to the fact that there is no "right to be (sic) offended" by another party exercising a right. This is a general principle of freedom of expression (European Convention on Human Rights - ECHR Article 10, which must be read in conjunction with ECHR Article 14 on non-discrimination on grounds that include language). The Commission is aware of arguments that there are 'sensitivities' regarding the Irish language. In general restricting use or promotion of Irish to accommodate the 'sensitivities' of others would be incompatible with freedom of expression."*

Rapóirtéir Speisialta na Náisiún Aontaithe um cheisteanna mionlach
Cearta Teanga Mionlach Teanga: Treoir Phraiticiúil le haghaidh Cur i bhFeidhm (2017).

[Leathanach 5]: "D'aithin sí agus phléigh sí naoi réimse imní: (1) bagairtí ar bheith ann do theangacha mionlaigh agus do mhionlaigh theanga; (2) aitheantas do theangacha mionlaigh agus do chearta teanga; (3) úsáid teangacha mionlaigh sa saol poiblí; (4) teangacha mionlaigh san oideachas; (5) teangacha mionlaigh sna meáin; (6) teangacha mionlaigh i réimsí an riaracháin phoiblí agus i réimsí breithiúnacha; (7) úsáid teanga mionlaigh in ainmneacha, logainmneacha agus comharthaí poiblí; (8) rannpháirtíocht sa saol eacnamaíoch agus polaitiúil; agus (9) soláthar faisnéise agus seirbhísí i dteangacha mionlaigh. Is é cuspóir an Treoir seo cabhrú tuilleadh le lucht déanta beartais agus le sealbhóirí cearta chun an raon iomlán cearta teanga do mhionlaigh theanga a thuiscint lena gcur i bhfeidhm sa chleachtas."

[Leathanach 27]:4.4 Teangacha Mionlaigh agus Féiniúlacht - Cad is ceart a dhéanamh?
Ní mór do na húdaráis stáit féiniúlacht duine, i bhfoirm a ainm nó a shloinne i dteanga mionlaigh, a urramú, a aithint agus a úsáid. I gcás inar indéanta, ba chóir úsáid teangacha mionlaigh ar chomharthaí sráide agus ar ainmneacha topagrafacha a chur leis freisin, go háirithe má tá tábhacht stairiúil leo nó má tá díriú mionlach ann.

[Leathanach 28]: Tá ainmneacha sráide agus áite agus táscairí topagrafacha atá dírithe ar an bpobal tábhachtach mar tháscairí ar chéannacht shóisialta, cultúr agus stair. Is cur chuige maith agus praiticiúil atá glactha i bhformhór na dtíortha go soláthraíonn na húdaráis reachtaíocht nó próisis shoiléire a shásaíonn ceadú comharthóireachta dhátheangacha nó fiú trítheangacha, de ghnáth de réir phrionsabal na cóimheá, nuair a bhíonn dóthain comhdhlúthaithe nó éilimh ann do chomharthóireacht i dteangacha mionlaigh… Ní mór critéir do chomharthaí i dteangacha mionlaigh a bheith bunaithe go soiléir agus go neamhchinnte sa reachtaíocht chun cur i bhfeidhm éifeachtach a áirithiú.

United Nations Special Rapporteur on minority issues
Language Rights of Linguistic Minorities: A Practical Guide for Implementation (2017).

[Page 5]: "She identified and discussed nine areas of concern: (1) threats to the existence of minority languages and linguistic minorities; (2) recognition of minority languages and linguistic rights; (3) the use of minority languages in public life; (4) minority languages in education; (5) minority languages in the media; (6) minority languages in public administration and judicial fields; (7) minority language use in names, place names and public signs; (8) participation in economic and political life; and (9) the provision of information and services in minority languages. The purpose of this Guide is to further assist policymakers and rights holders to understand the full scope of linguistic rights of linguistic minorities for their practical implementation."
[Page 27]:4.4 Minority Languages and Identity - What should be done?
A person's own identity, in the form of one's own name or surname in a minority language, must be respected, recognized and used by the state authorities. Where practicable, the use of minority languages on street signs and topographical designations should also be added, particularly where they have historical significance or where minorities are concentrated.

[Page 28]: Street and locality names and topographical indicators intended for the public are important as markers of social identity, culture and history. A good, practical approach adopted in most countries is for the authorities to provide transparent legislation or procedures to allow bilingual or even trilingual signs, usually following the proportionality principle where there is a sufficient concentration or demand for such signs in minority languages… The criteria for the display of signs in minority languages must be given a clear and unambiguous legislative basis for it to be effectively implemented.

Bilingual or multilingual signs used by public authorities demonstrate inclusiveness, and that various population groups share a locality in harmony and mutual respect.

Dea-Chaidreamh agus Comharthóireacht Dhátheangach

Tá an Coiste Comhairleach faoi choimirce an Choinbhinsiúin Creatlaí tar éis cáineadh a dhéanamh ar an tuairim go mbíonn cur chun cinn na Gaeilge idirdhealaitheach i leith an phobail mhóir. Ardaíodh imní chomh maith nuair a úsáideadh dea-chaidreamh mar údar nár cuireadh bearta amhail comharthaí dhátheangacha i bhfeidhm.

I dtríú Tuarascáil Mhaoirseachta Chomhairle na hEorpa ar chur i bhfeidhm ag an Ríocht Aontaithe ar an gCoinbhinsiún Creatlaí um Chosaint Mionlach Náisiúnta, moladh:

> *(Alt 147) - "Bhí díomá ar an gCoiste Comhairleach nuair a chuala sé go measann roinnt ionadaithe de chuid na n-údarás go bhfuil an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn idirdhealaitheach i leith daoine den phobal tromlaigh. Níl a leithéid de ráitis ag teacht le prionsabail an Choinbhinsiúin Creatlaí... Athdhearbhaíonn sé freisin nach ceart go mbeadh cur i bhfeidhm chearta mionlach atá cosanta faoin gCoinbhinsiún Creatlaí á mheas mar idirdhealú i leith daoine eile."*
>
> *(Ailt 126 & 158) - "Cuireadh an Coiste Comhairleach ar an eolas go n-úsáidtear, i gcásanna áirithe, gá le dea-chaidreamh mar údar gan forálacha a chur i bhfeidhm ar mhaithe le daoine a bhaineann le mionlaigh, amhail comharthaí dhátheangacha a chur suas... Ina theannta sin, breathnaítear air mar fhadhb go bhfuil sé mar bheartas oifigiúil teorainn a chur le cur suas comharthaí den sórt sin do cheantair áirithe nach gcuirfeadh an cheist isteach ar phlé ar bith. Tá imní ar an gCoiste Comhairleach nach bhfuil an cur chuige seo ag teacht le spiorad an Choinbhinsiúin Creatlaí... arb é is aidhm dó úsáid na dteangacha mionlaigh a chur i réim... d'fhonn caoinfhulaingt agus idirphlé idirchultúrtha níos fearr a chothú sa tsochaí."*

Good Relations and Bilingual Signage

The Advisory Committee under the Framework Convention has criticised the view that promoting Irish discriminates against the majority population. It has also raised concern where good relations have been used to justify not implementing measures such as bilingual signs.

In Council of Europe's 3rd Monitoring Report on the UK's implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities it was recommended:

> *(Paragraph 147) - "The Advisory Committee was disconcerted to hear that some representatives of the authorities consider that promoting the use of the Irish language is discriminating against persons belonging to the majority population. Such statements are not in line with the principles of the Framework Convention... It also reiterates that… implementation of minority rights protected under the Framework Convention [is] not be considered as discriminating against other persons."*
>
> *(Paragraph 126 & 158) - "The Advisory Committee has been informed that, in some instances, the need for keeping good relations has been used as justification for not implementing provisions in favour of persons belonging to minorities, such as the erection of bilingual signs... Additionally, it finds it problematic that the official policy is to limit the erection of such signs to certain areas where the issue would not raise controversies. The Advisory Committee is concerned that this approach is not in line with the spirit of the Framework Convention... the aim of which is to value the use of minority languages... with a view to promoting more tolerance and intercultural dialogue in society."*

Ina thuarascáil faireacháin 2013, luaigh an Coiste Comhairleach nach raibh na dearcadh seo ag teacht le prionsabail an Choinbhinsiúin Creatlaí. D'aithin sé freisin go raibh teorannú comharthíochta dhátheangaí do cheantair nach mbeadh sí conspóideach fadhbach, toisc go bhféadfadh sé sin aidhm an Choinbhinsiúin meas ar theangacha mionlaigh a chur chun cinn agus caoinfhulaingt agus idirphlé idirchultúrtha a chothú a lagú.

Sa gcúigiú timthriall faireacháin in 2022, d'áitigh an Coiste Comhairleach tuilleadh go gcaithfí dhátheangachas in comharthóireacht a chur chun cinn. Déanann sé seo daingniú ar an tuairim nach siombalach amháin í comharthóireacht dhátheangach; is cuid dhílis de sho-aitheantas praiticiúil agus infheictheacht chearta teangacha mionlaigh í.

An Coimisiún Comhionannais
'Comhshaol Oibre Maith agus Comhchuí a Chothú' (2009)

> **"Ní bheidh úsáid teangacha eile seachas an Béarla, mar shampla i lógónna corparáideacha agus i gcumarsáid, ina shárú, go ginearálta, ar chomhshaol oibre maith agus comhchuí." [lch 9].**
>
> **"...Ba cheart freisin go gcomhlíonfaidís an riachtanas agus prionsabail an chomhionannais deiseanna. D'fhéadfadh tionchar a bheith ag forálacha na Cairte Eorpaí do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh ar chinnteoirí den sórt sin freisin."**

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In its 2013 monitoring report, the Advisory Committee stated that such views were not in line with the principles of the Framework Convention. It also found it problematic to limit bilingual signage to areas where it would not raise controversy, because this approach may undermine the Convention's purpose of valuing minority languages and promoting tolerance and intercultural dialogue.

In its fifth monitoring cycle in 2022, the Advisory Committee further stated that bilingualism in signposts should be promoted. This reinforces the view that bilingual signage is not merely symbolic; it is part of the practical visibility and recognition of minority-language rights.

Equality Commission
'Promoting a Good & Harmonious Working Environment' (2009)

> **"The use of languages other than English, for example in corporate logos and communications, will not, in general, constitute an infringement of a good and harmonious working environment." [pg 9].**
>
> **"...They should also be compliant with the requirement and principles of equality of opportunity. Such decisions may also be affected by the terms of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages." [pg. 9]"**

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An Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta (RCEF): Tuarascáil ar Chomhairliúchán do Dhréacht-Acht na Gaeilge (2015)

"Measúnú ar thionchar ar chomhionannas"

4.4 Léiríonn an fhianaise atá ar fáil go mbíonn seans níos mó go bhfuil Gaeilge ag daoine a bhfuil siad Caitliceach, náisiúnach, óga, gan míchumas, le cleithiúnaithe, agus singil. Níor breathnaíodh aon éagsúlacht i dtaca le hinscne ná le grúpa ciníoch. Níl aon sonraí ar fáil maidir le claonadh gnéis.

4.5 Measann an RCEF go mbeidh tionchar dearfach ag bunú reachtaíochta i leith na Gaeilge ar Ghaeilgeoirí agus dá bharr sin, go hindíreach, ar Chaitlicigh, ar náisiúnaithe, ar dhaoine singil, ar dhaoine óga, ar dhaoine gan míchumas agus ar dhaoine le cleithiúnaithe. I dtuairim na RCEF, níl aon tionchar idirdhealaitheach ná diúltach ann.

Measúnú ar Thionchar ar Dhea-Chaidreamh

4.6 Mhothaigh an RCEF go bhféadfadh tabhairt isteach Bhille Gaeilge an dea-chaidreamh a fheabhsú, ós rud é go gcuirfidh sé ardán comhionannais agus inrochtana níos fearr ar fáil don Ghaeilge do gach roinn den phobal."

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Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL): Report on Consultation for Draft Irish Language Act (2015)

"Assessment of impact on equality"

4.4 The available evidence suggests that those speaking and possessing some knowledge of Irish are more likely to be Catholic, nationalist, young, without a disability, with dependants and single. There were no differences in relation to gender and racial group. No data is available in relation to sexual orientation.

4.5 DCAL's view that establishing Irish language legislation will have a positive impact on Irish speakers and therefore indirectly on Catholics, nationalists, single people, younger people, people without a disability and people with dependants. In DCAL's view there are no discriminatory or adverse impacts.

Assessment of Impact on Good Relations

4.6 DCAL considered that the introduction of an Irish Language Bill has the potential to improve good relations, as it will give the Irish language a more equality and accessibility platform for all sections of the community."

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Conclúid

Nuair a chuirtear an Cairt, an Coinbhinsiún Creatlaí, Comhaontú Bhéal Feirste/Caibidlíocht Aoine an Chéasta, Sliabh Anndrais, Cur Chuige Nua, an tAcht Teanga & Féiniúlachta, prionsabail chearta daonna, agus moltaí an Phainéil Chomhairligh Shaineolaithe le chéile, cruthaítear bonn láidir do sholáthar gníomhach na Gaeilge ag údaráis phoiblí i dTuaisceart Éireann.

Is é an tátal lárnach ná gur chóir bearta maidir leis an nGaeilge a mheas mar bhearta dlisteanacha comhionannais, cultúrtha agus riaracháin. Ba chóir d'Údaráis phoiblí dá bhrí sin soláthar na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn trí bheartas soiléir, caighdeáin chomhsheasmhacha, rochtain shuntasach ar sheirbhísí, féiniúlacht dhátheangach infheicthe, agus trí shrianta a sheachaint go cúramach i gcás go bhfuil siad bunaithe ar chonspóid nó ar íogaireachtaí a bhraithtear amháin.

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Conclusion

Taken together, the Charter, the Framework Convention, the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, St Andrews, New Decade, New Approach, the Language & Identity Act, human rights principles, and the Expert Advisory Panel recommendations create a strong basis for proactive Irish Language provision by public authorities in Northern Ireland.

The central implication is that Irish Language measures should be treated as legitimate equality, cultural, and administrative measures. Public authorities should therefore approach Irish Language provision through clear policy, consistent standards, meaningful access to services, visible bilingual identity, and careful avoidance of restrictions based solely on controversy or perceived sensitivities.

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