

Language Scheme

2018 – 2021

**Under Section 15 of the Official
Languages Act 2003**

Department of Transport, Tourism
and Sport

Introduction and Background

This Language Scheme is prepared by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport under section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003 (“the Act”).

Section 11 of that Act provides for the preparation by public bodies of a statutory scheme detailing the services they will provide

- Through the medium of Irish
- Through the medium of English
- Through the medium of Irish and English

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

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

1.1 Preparation of the Scheme

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

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

1.2 Commencement Date of Scheme

The Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs has confirmed this Scheme which will commence with effect from **02 February 2018**. It will remain in force for a period of 3 years from this date or until a new scheme has been confirmed by the Minister pursuant to Section 15 of the Act has confirmed a new Scheme, whichever is the later.

Overview of the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport

2.1 Mission and Goals

As a central Government Department, serving the Government and the people of Ireland, our mission is to shape the safe and sustainable development of transport, tourism, and sport, to support economic growth and social progress.

We have 5 High Level Goals across the different areas of our Departments. Our 5 High Level Goals can be seen in the table below.

Area of the Department	High Level Goal
Land Transport	To best serve the needs of society and the economy through safe, sustainable and competitive transport networks and services
Aviation	To maximise air transport connectivity with a safe, competitive, cost-effective and sustainable aviation sector
Maritime	To facilitate safe and sustainable maritime transport and the delivery of emergency management services.
Tourism	To support the tourism industry to grow in a sustainable way.
Sport	To contribute to a healthier and more active society by promoting sports participation and by supporting high performance and the provision of sport facilities.

Our corporate support services are key to the successful delivery of our mission and high level goals. They undertake a number of different roles, such as customer service, compliance oversight and internal service provision, for example Human Resources.

2.3 Structure of the Department

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

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

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

2.4 Functional Areas of Department

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

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

2.5 Our Customers Clients

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

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

2.6 Extent to which Services are already available through Irish

A staff survey carried out by the Department of Transport in 2010 identified a very low level of demand for services through Irish. A survey carried out by the Department of Arts, Sport and

Tourism similarly revealed a limited demand for services through Irish. Only 2 of 105 responses to our recent external customer survey were in Irish.

Another survey of this kind was carried out in 2015, the results of which did not suggest any further improvements to services in Irish were required.

The Department's main interface with the public is through the provision of the motor tax service and this service is available through Irish.

Enhancement of Services to be Provided Bilingually

3.1 Introduction

The main focus of the Department's Scheme will be to build on the range of written and electronic means of communication available bilingually and on developing the Irish language capabilities of staff. This means that, in practice, while the Department will be in a position to provide general information about the Department and its overall services, it will not be in a position to conduct full and detailed Irish provision across all its services.

This Chapter sets out the position in relation to the continuation of the provision of services through Irish by individual Divisions/Units within the Department. Planned improvements over the lifetime of the 2017-2020 Scheme are also identified.

3.2 Means of Communication with the Public / Information to the Public

The Department communicates with the public through:

- Written means, including electronic communication
- Interpersonal means

The following table outlines the various written means of communication together with the commitments the Department will continue to make, in relation to the development of an Irish language service policy.

3.2.1 Telephone Service and Reception

Current Commitments

From the date of commencement of the Scheme, switchboard and reception staff will continue to give the name of the Department in Irish and English.

An up to date list of staff members who have the ability to deal with the public in Irish will continue to be provided to the Switchboard operators and Reception staff. This list will continue to be used for putting members of the public in touch with officers who are proficient in Irish.

For an Irish call that cannot be responded to immediately in Irish, we will continue to offer to have the call returned within one working day. Suitable arrangements will be put in place so that they can put members of the public in touch without delay with whatever office of officer is responsible for offering the service through Irish

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

Oral Announcements by Telephone

Current Commitments

The oral announcement on the Department's main switch board will continue to be bilingual.

Individual voicemail messages will continue to be bilingual where the individual can provide a service through Irish.

The voicemail systems of the Department will continue to be fully capable of handling the Irish language and generic voicemail messages will continue to be bilingual on the system.

3.2.2 Publications

Corporate Publication – Current Commitments

The Department will ensure that its corporate publications, including its Annual Report, Statement of Strategy and Freedom of Information Section 15 and Section 16 Reference book, will continue to be published bilingually in accordance with the requirements of the Official Languages Act 2003.

Other publications

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

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

3.2.3 E-mail

Current Commitments

Standard messages on the Department's e-mail, such as disclaimers of responsibility will continue to be in both English and Irish.

Individual out of office messages will continue to be bilingual where the individual can provide a service through Irish.

A general Departmental queries e-mail address (gaeilge@dttas.ie) will continue to be available in Irish.

3.2.4 Computer Systems

Current Commitments

In the case of existing ICT systems (i.e. both computer and telephone systems), where an Irish language requirement has been previously identified and delivered, these will be maintained in the future.

Planned Improvements

In the course of ICT system upgrade/ replacement programmes or through the development of any new business applications the needs for an Irish language capability will be assessed. Irish language capability on systems whether hardware and/or software will be provided where there is a viable business case to provide same.

The Department will install Irish Language spellchecking software to work with its current industry applications on a case-by-case basis as required.

3.2.5 Websites/Interactive services

www.dttas.ie

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

www.motortax.ie

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

www.motortrans.ie

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

3.2.6 Speeches and or Statement

Speeches and/or statements, including those made in the Oireachtas, by the Minister or Minister of State, or speeches by senior officials, are and will continue to be made available in the language(s) in which they are delivered.

3.2.7 Press Releases

Planned improvement:

30% of Departmental press releases will be made available bilingually by the end of the scheme. Departmental press releases that are translated will be published simultaneously in both languages.

3.2.8 Application Forms

The Department will work to ensuring that all commonly used application forms will be produced bilingually. This is dependent however on the nature, size, or layout of the application form.

3.2.9 Information Leaflets

Many of the information leaflets in the Department relate to the Sports and Tourism sectors. These will be published in bilingual format. Transport leaflets relating to the Driver and Vehicle Computer Services Division, Road Traffic Operator Licensing Division and the National Sustainability Office will also be published bilingually.

3.2.10 One to One Service

Staff with an ability to provide inter-personal Irish language service will, with their agreement, continue to be identified in an appropriate way on telephone lists, at reception and on the organisation chart, and their e-mail addresses will be included under relevant sections on the web site. In addition, a dedicated help desk for callers through Irish will continue to be manned and a special e-mail address (gaeilge@transport.ie) for dealing with queries through Irish will continue to be made available.

Planned Improvements

The Department is committed to building on the existing levels of Irish language competency amongst our staff through training, development and promotion of the language. We will continue to review our ability to provide additional services through Irish within available resources.

3.2.11 The Department's Strategic/Business Plan

The needs of the Irish –speaking community will be taken into account in preparing Divisional Business Plans in the Department. The Department's Statement of Strategy will be available in both Irish and English.

Enhancement, Training and Support

General Commitment to Irish Language service development

The Department remains committed to encouraging the development of Irish language skills across all areas of the Department to meet the demand for such services.

The Department is, however, at a relatively low base in terms of both written and interpersonal Irish language service capability.

The provision of written communications in Irish and English is in the main an issue of time and cost. However, the development of Irish language skills within the Department to facilitate day-to-day interpersonal service delivery is more challenging. The Department is in a position to provide a certain level of interpersonal Irish language services based on the current availability of Irish language skills. However, it will take more time to increase the capability to deliver Irish language services on an interpersonal level.

It should be noted that the extent to which such interpersonal services can be developed will be a function of the actual demand for such services.

4.1 Enhancement

As part of the Public Service the Department is committed to enhancing the role of Irish and building on the levels of language competency amongst our existing staff. To this end an increasing emphasis will be placed on addressing the training needs of staff as set out in section 4.3.

In addition the Department will

- Continue to seek volunteers with a view to increasing the quantum of officers available to provide service through Irish
- Ensure that the organisation chart will indicate those who are willing and able to provide service through Irish
- Encourage the reactivation of a network of Irish Speakers as part of the Sosanna Tae/Ciorcail comhrá concept

4.2 Designated Irish Language Posts

Having regard to Government policy for enhanced provision of services in Irish, the Department will, by the end of year one of the scheme, identify if any posts for which Irish language competency is an essential requirement. Every effort will be made to fulfill these requirements by the end of this scheme having regard to recruitment, promotion and training policies, as appropriate. This will enable this Department to plan and prioritise the incremental improvement of services in Irish in a more strategic manner. This will be reviewed on annual basis.

4.3 Training and Development

The Training Unit/Irish Language Unit will continue to

- Support the provision of appropriate Irish language training courses for staff
- Promote the refund of fees scheme as a mechanism for encouraging Irish language training conditional upon these staff being available to provide services through Irish subject to available resources
- Provide advice to staff on the range of high-quality Irish language classes available outside office hours (e.g., third-level diploma in Irish, Gael Chultúr, Gael-Linn, etc.)
- Provide information and advice on the Official Languages Act 2003 on the Departments Staff Intranet Site
- Include language awareness as part of both induction and customer service training courses so as to ensure that staff
 - understand why the Department is developing an Irish language service policy
 - understand the context and background to the policy
 - are fully informed about how the policy will affect their work
- Assess all courses, including Irish language courses and courses delivered through Irish, on a regular basis to ascertain how effectively they meet the Department's goals

- Put in place arrangements for the marking, in an appropriate way, of the annual Seachtain na Gaeilge event within the Department
- Explore opportunities to encourage
 - the provision of further Departmental Services through Irish
 - development of Irish language skills amongst staff through informal activities (e.g. Ciorcail comhrá)

4.4 Role of the Irish Language Unit

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

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

4.5 Translation Services

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

4.6 Language Resources

All staff will have access to Irish Language Spelling Check which will assist them in their work. In addition guidance material will be available electronically to all staff.

4.7 Gaeltacht Placenames

The official Placenames of Gaeltacht areas as specified in the Placenames (Ceantair Ghaeltachta) Order 2004, will be used by the Department for official purposes.

Monitoring and Review

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

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

Publicising of Agreed Scheme

The contents of this scheme will be publicised by means of:

- Circulation to all staff in the Department
- Press Release
- Advertisement of availability of scheme on the Department's website and a permanent link to the Scheme on the homepage of the Department's website
- Notification to appropriate bodies

Other means to publicise the scheme may also be used.

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

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

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

Appendix – Departmental Locations and Contact Details

Head office		
Postal address	Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport Leeson Lane Dublin 2 D02TR60	
Website:	www.dttas.ie	
Email:	info@dtas.ie	
Phone	01-670 7444	or LoCall 0761 001601
Please note that the rates you will be charged for using the 0761 number may vary among different phone service providers and will be considerably more if you use a mobile phone.		
Opening hours:	Monday to Thursday	9.15am to 5.30pm
	Friday	9.15am to 5.15pm

Motor Tax, Vehicle Registration Certificates and Change of Vehicle Ownership		
Postal address:	Driver and Vehicle Computer Services Division Shannon Town Centre Shannon Co Clare V14P298	
Website:	www.motortax.ie	
Email:	Motortax@dtas.ie	
Fax:	061-365 053	
Phone:	0818-411 412	or +353 818-411412 (outside Ireland)
Please note that the rates you will be charged for using the 0818 number may vary among different phone service providers and will be considerably more if you use a mobile phone.		
Opening hours:	Monday to Thursday	9.15am to 12.30pm, 2.15pm to 4.00pm
	Friday	9.15am to 12.30pm, 2.15pm to 4.00pm

Road Transport Operator Licensing Unit

Postal Address: Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
Clonfert House
Bride Street
Loughrea
Co Galway
H62ET93

Website: www.rtol.ie

Email: rtol@dttas.ie

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

Please note that the rates you will be charged for using the 0761 number may vary among different phone service providers and will be considerably more if you use a mobile phone.

Opening hours: Monday to Thursday 9.15am to 5.30pm
Friday 9.15am to 5.15pm

Tourism and Sport Divisions

Postal address: Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
New Road,
Killarney
Co. Kerry
V93 A49X

Website: www.dttas.ie

Phone: LoCall 1890 273000 or +353 64 6627300 (outside Ireland)

Please note that the rates charged for the use of the 1890 number may vary among different service providers and will be considerably more from a mobile phone.)

