



Bus Éireann
Irish Language Scheme
2019-2022

Under Section 11 of the
Official Languages Act 2003

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1. INTRODUCTION

This is the first Language Scheme prepared by Bus Éireann under section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003 ("the Act"), as part of the wider CIÉ Group Scheme.

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

- Through the medium of Irish
- Through the medium of English; and through
- The medium of Irish and English

And the measures to be adopted to ensure that certain services not provided by Bus Éireann through the medium of the Irish Language shall be so provided within an agreed timeframe.

2. Preparation for the Language Scheme

This scheme has been prepared at the request of the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht under Section 11 of the Act and, in accordance with the Guidelines under section 12 of the same Act.

In preparation for this scheme, an internal Irish Language Committee across the CIÉ Group was established to address the various areas of the scheme, taking into account what is achievable over the coming years.

Under section 13 of the Act, a public notice was published of our intention to prepare a draft scheme under the Official Languages Act, 2003. Fifteen submissions were received and examined, and these were reviewed in preparing this scheme.

3. The content of the Language Scheme

The Scheme aims to improve and enhance the service that Bus Éireann has offered in the Irish language. It contains an outline of the services currently available in Irish and plans to improve the provision of services over the course of this three year scheme.

4. Commencement Date of Scheme

The Scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The Scheme will commence with effect from 11 March 2019 and shall remain in force for a period of three years from that date or until a new Scheme is confirmed by the Minister, pursuant to Section 15 of the Act, whichever is the later.

5. Overview of Bus Éireann

Bus Éireann is a subsidiary of C.I.É. company register number 119570. Head Office is located at Broadstone, Dublin 7, Ireland.

Bus Éireann provides bus services throughout Ireland, with the exception of the local bus network in Dublin City and suburbs. The company has three main business entities which include our PSO (Public Service Obligation) route network operated on behalf of the State, the commercial Expressway inter-regional network and the School Transport Scheme - operated on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills.

We also operate the Eurolines coach service to Britain and Europe, along with private coach hire. Last year, over 78 million passenger journeys were made across our main networks.

Bus Éireann has seven board members, five of whom were appointed by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport and two members appointed by employees.

The current Board members are:

- Mr. Aidan Murphy (Chairman)
- Ms. Deirdre Ashe
- Mr Gerard Ryan
- Mr Stephen Hannan
- Mr Thomas O' Connor
- Mr Diarmuid Corry
- Mr Paul Mc Cann

The Board oversees the work of Bus Éireann and ratifies all funding decisions and all aspects of policy making and commercial development.

6. Commitment to service delivery in Irish

Bus Éireann supports the principles of Irish, English and language duality, as outlined in the Official Languages Act 2003. We are committed to facilitating and accommodating our customers who wish to conduct their business through Irish, to the greatest extent within our resources.

Bus Éireann endeavours to promote the Irish Language and to improve our services to the public through Irish, and welcomes the preparation of this scheme as an opportunity to formalise the services already offered through Irish and to expand on the availability of services through Irish.

Principal Means of Communication with the Public

Face to Face Contact

Telephone Services

Electronic Communication

Website

Social Media

Press/Publicity

Letter

Services currently provided by Bus Éireann through Irish

Correspondence

All letters, emails and media queries received in the Irish language are responded to in Irish.

Destination Scrolls

These are bilingual

On-board automated announcements

Safety notices and pre-recorded announcements are bi-lingual

Electronic Signage

This is almost all bi-lingual

Timetables

A limited number of timetables displayed at bus stops are bilingual

Services currently available through Irish & English

Annual Report

Customer Charter

Timetables at bus stops

Services currently available through English only

All other services are delivered through English only

7. Enhancement of service to be provided bilingually

Telephone Services - Customer Information

An Irish speaking agent to be available at all times during opening hours of customer service centre.

Timeframe for completion: within the first six months of this scheme

Bus Éireann Customer Care telephone number

The option to choose service through an automated Irish menu of options shall be made available.

Timeframe for completion: End of 2019

Correspondence

In addition to fulfilling its legal obligation to reply in Irish to correspondence received in Irish, Bus Éireann will endeavour to communicate in Irish when the opportunity arises.

Staff Training & Development

Irish language training courses will be provided for staff who wish to avail of same. The focus of these language training programmes will be relevant training to specifically increase the capability of Bus Éireann staff in dealing with Irish Language customer requests or for media interviews.

Timeframe for completion: End of 2019

- The commitments made by Bus Éireann in this Scheme will be brought to the attention of staff through internal communications.
- Bus Éireann proposes to enhance the celebration of certain public/cultural events in Irish such as St. Patrick's Day with a particular focus on celebrations through, and promotion of, the Irish Language. Bus Éireann will participate in Seachtain na Gaeilge where all staff will be encouraged to communicate in their daily tasks through the medium of Irish.

Publications

Major reports published by Bus Éireann such as the annual report shall be published bilingually. Specialised internal instruction manuals or documents of a technical, scientific and specialist nature, will be available in English only.

Press Releases

All press releases pertaining to social/cultural events shall be issued in English. Upon request by local and/or national media press releases shall be made available in Irish.

All press releases and statements connected with the issuing of bilingual reports (such as the annual report) will be issued bilingually.

Timeframe for completion: End of 2019

Communication

Upon request by local and/or national media, Bus Éireann will aim to ensure that an Irish speaking spokesperson, of sufficient authority, will be available for media interviews.

Timeframe for completion: End of 2019

Website

The Bus Éireann website is currently only available in English.

Monitoring and Review of the Scheme

The overall responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Scheme shall be assigned to the Business Development Department.

Annual updates on progress shall be reported to the Board of Bus Éireann.

It is intended that the operation of this scheme will be reviewed from 18 months of its commencement, and again at the end of the three year period to ensure delivery of agreed targets and adequate provision of services and initiatives through Irish, in line with present and future demand from the industry and the Official Languages Act 2003.

Publication of agreed scheme

The contents of the final approved scheme, along with the commitments and provisions of the scheme, shall be publicised to staff through our internal staff magazine.

A copy of the Scheme has been forwarded to the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga.