

20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010 - 2030

Progress Report: 2010 - 2015

Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources

During the period covered by this report, the Department has adhered to its commitments set out in its implementation plan under the Strategy and in accordance with the Broadcasting Act 2009.

In 2009, with the enactment of the Broadcasting Act 2009, the allocation of licence fee money to the Broadcasting Funding Scheme, of which TG4 is one of the main beneficiaries, was increased from 5% to 7%.

The Good Friday Agreement provided that the British Government would work with the relevant British and Irish broadcasting authorities to make TG4 more widely available in Northern Ireland. Following the switchover to digital television in 2012, TG4's coverage has reached 94% in Northern Ireland. RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta is also being provided on the Northern Ireland Freeview DTT network.

In autumn 2014, TG4 launched an upgraded/redesigned TG4 website with major new features for national and global users. An IOS app for iPad and iPhone and a Smart TV app, available for download to all major platforms, was also launched. This ensures access to Irish language programming via multiple devices for a worldwide audience.

With the launch in October 2015 of a book and app based on the television series *Saol faoi Shráid*, TG4 has delivered a multi-platform Irish language puppet series for children. In addition to these formats, TG4 has provided extended children's access to the series with a live puppet show, which toured nationwide and featured in Baboró Kids Festival 2015.

In September 2014, RTÉ announced that the RTÉ.ie news website and the RTÉ News Now app would for the first time feature national, international and regional news in Irish. As a result of a joint initiative between Nuacht RTÉ and the RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta newsrooms, online operations are now based in Nuacht RTÉ's centre in Baile na hAbhann, Connemara, with content

produced by both Nuacht RTÉ and RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta journalists. The expansion of online output has provided an enhanced service to Gaeltacht and Irish language communities and has been welcomed by the diaspora and Irish language students across the world. RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta in Casla, Connemara is the main production centre for national and international Irish language news on radio and the station now provides all 32 Irish language bulletins across RTÉ Radio 1, RTÉ Lyric FM and RTÉ 2FM, in addition to its own news service which it provides throughout the day.

In addition to complying with its statutory obligations under the Broadcasting Act 2009 in respect of services in Irish, RTÉ appointed a Grúpcheannasaí Gaeilge or Group Head of Irish Language in September 2014.

In September 2015, RTÉ launched its strategic 5-year action plan for the Irish Language entitled *Action Plan 2015-2019*. The plan, which addresses a range of policy recommendations for Irish language output across all of RTÉ's platforms and services, was published in response to the wide-ranging 2013 report compiled by a special working group. Informed by a public consultation process which involved 120 submissions, the plan, which aims to integrate Irish into everything that RTÉ does, includes the following commitments:

- Bilingual bulletins on RTÉ 2FM
- A new youth-orientated Irish language radio service
- Innovative content for language learners
- A centre of excellence in Irish language media training
- Increased use of Irish in television promos, continuity and weather bulletins
- Next version of the RTÉ Player to include Irish language option for the navigational user interface
- Advertisers and advertising agencies will be incentivised and supported to provide advertising in Irish on television, radio and digital platforms.

In September 2015, RTÉ launched its Irish Language Scheme 2015-2018 under the Official Languages Act 2003.

Measures for Irish in the Public Service

The Department recognises the importance of having a number of staff fluent in and capable of providing services to the public through Irish. Two new staff members with specific Irish language qualifications were recruited in 2015. In accordance with Government policy, future language schemes of the Department under the Official Languages Act will specify the posts that have an Irish language competency requirement.

RTÉ's Irish Language Scheme 2015-2018 provides that, from the commencement of the scheme, RTÉ will identify those positions for which fluency in Irish is a prerequisite. In addition, in any recruitment of front office staff (receptionists, telephonists, information office staff), the ability to communicate in Irish will be prioritised.