

20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010 - 2030

Progress Report: 2010 - 2015

Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation

Over the last five years, the Department's agencies have been engaging with Government bodies/agencies in the Gaeltacht with a view to encouraging entrepreneurship and economic activity among the Irish language speaking community.

In June 2013, a formal mechanism for cooperation was agreed between Enterprise Ireland and Údarás na Gaeltachta. This mechanism is working well and provides a framework for Enterprise Ireland and Údarás na Gaeltachta to cooperate on a number of policy areas which continue to be of benefit to enterprise development in the Gaeltacht. In accordance with this mechanism, Enterprise Ireland facilitates access for Údarás na Gaeltachta clients to a number of its support programmes and the enquiries desk in Enterprise Ireland is staffed by a member of staff who is proficient in both Irish and English.

Enterprise Ireland is currently developing a protocol with Údarás na Gaeltachta on behalf of the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs). The aim of this protocol is to ensure equal opportunities for entrepreneurs and businesses with regard to Government supports. Údarás na Gaeltachta and the LEOs have a good working relationship at local level. This protocol will build on that relationship and ensure that Údarás na Gaeltachta clients have access to the extensive expertise of the LEOs through their training and mentoring programmes.

IDA Ireland and Údarás na Gaeltachta have regular interaction on relevant multinational client engagement and the marketing of the Údarás na Gaeltachta property portfolio. In addition, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Údarás na Gaeltachta and the Local Enterprise Offices have been working together and will continue to work together on the development of the relevant Regional Action Plans for Jobs.

Measures for Irish in the Public Service

The Department's second Irish Language Scheme, which covers the period 2015-2018, came into effect on 28 September 2015. The new scheme, which builds on the Department's first scheme, sets out the extent to which services are currently available through Irish and identifies areas for future enhancement.

The scheme outlines the Department's commitment to assess on an ongoing basis the level of demand for services through Irish to ensure that the Department continues to meet this demand in a planned, coherent and accessible way. In particular, it includes a commitment to identify, by the end of year one of the scheme, the posts for which Irish language competency is an essential requirement and to make every effort to fulfil these requirements by the end of the scheme, having regard to recruitment, promotion and training policies, as appropriate.

The scheme also reflects the Department's approach to Irish language training in that courses will be offered to staff who agree to assist the Department to conduct its business through Irish, as the need arises. Following a review of training needs earlier this year, a cohort of officers who wish to participate in training on this basis has been identified. Such a group of trained officers will provide the Department with greater capability and flexibility in meeting its business needs through Irish.

The commitments made in the scheme are being monitored by a Cross-Divisional Committee which was established in late 2014 to monitor the implementation of commitments made by the Department in relation to the provision of customer services generally and services through Irish.