

Tuarascáil Bhliantúil

Annual Report

2019

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Don Aire Cultúir, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta:

De réir alt 30 d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003, tá an Tuarascáil seo don bhliain 2019 á cur i láthair ag an gCoimisinéir Teanga.

Rónán Ó Domhnaill
An Coimisinéir Teanga
Feabhra 2020

To the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht:

In accordance with section 30 of the Official Languages Act 2003, this Report for 2019 is presented by An Coimisinéir Teanga.

Rónán Ó Domhnaill
An Coimisinéir Teanga
February 2020

RÁITEAS MISIN

“Ag cosaint cearta teanga”

Seirbhís neamhspleách ar ardchaighdeán a chur ar fáil i gcomhlíonadh ár ndualgas reachtúil le cinntiú go ndéanann an státchóras beart de réir a bhriathair maidir le cearta teanga.

Cothrom na Féinne a chinntiú do chách trí ghearáin maidir le deacrachtaí teacht ar sheirbhísí poiblí trí Ghaeilge a láimhseáil ar bhealach atá éifeachtach, gairmiúil agus neamhchlaonta.

Eolas soiléir, cruinn a chur ar fáil:

- don phobal maidir le cearta teanga, agus
- do chomhlachtaí poiblí maidir le dualgais teanga.

MISSION STATEMENT

“Protecting Language Rights”

To provide an independent quality service whilst fulfilling our statutory obligations to ensure state compliance in relation to language rights.

To ensure fairness for all by dealing in an efficient, professional and impartial manner with complaints regarding difficulties in accessing public services through the medium of Irish.

To provide clear and accurate information:

- to the public in relation to language rights, and
- to public bodies in relation to language obligations.

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ACHOIMRE AR AN mBLIAIN 2019



704
gearán

Ardú 11% ar
fhigiúr na bliana
seo caite (638)

Comhairle curtha ar chomhlachtaí poiblí ar

122 ócáid éagsúil



Tháinig

18%

de na gearáin ón
nGaeltacht



Tháinig

35.3%

de na gearáin ó Bhaile Átha Cliath




Imscrúdú déanta den

chéad uair

ar fhoráil den Acht um
Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2000



Imscrúduithe
tugtha chun críche ar

5

Chomhairle Contae

Foilsíodh an
chéad

**Tuarascáil
Faireacháin**

i mí Iúil



Faireachán

déanta ar chur i
bhfeidhm moltaí i gcás

7 n-imscrúdú



**Bille na
dTeangacha
Oifigiúla
(Leasú)**

foilsithe i mí na
Nollag



6 chéadscéim teanga

daingnithe
ag an Aire



‘Sceideal’ nua

de chomhlachtaí poiblí atá le
teacht faoi scáth an Achta foilsithe



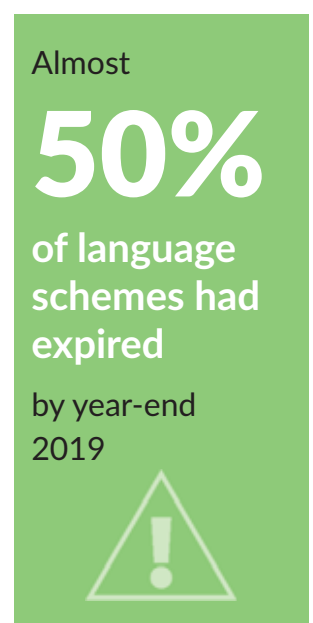
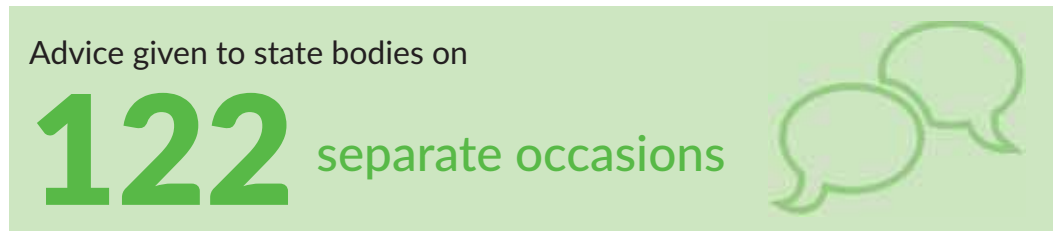
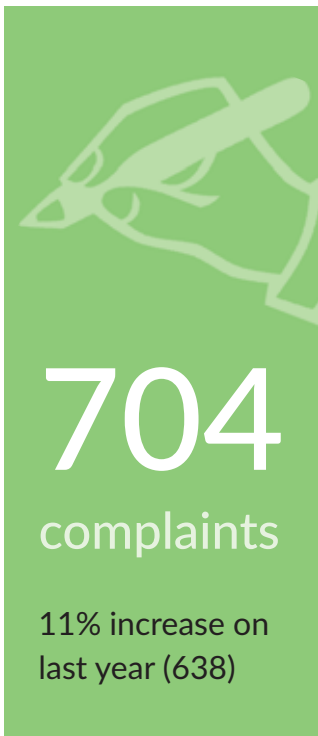
Ionann is

50%

de na
scéimeanna
teanga in éag
faoi dheireadh
2019



OVERVIEW OF 2019



RÉAMHRÁ

Tháinig ardú suntasach ar líon na ngearán chun na hOifige i mbliana. Cé go bhféadfaí breathnú air seo mar léiriú ar mhúinín an phobail san Oifig léiríonn sé freisin an deacracht leanúnach atá ag saoránaigh teacht ar sheirbhísí poiblí i nGaeilge. Faraor, ní raibh ar ár gcumas thart ar leath na ngearán a fhiosrú de bharr nár tháinig ábhar na ngearán sin, den chuid is mó, faoi chuimsiú Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla ná faoi chuimsiú aon achtachán eile a bhain le stádas nó le húsáid teanga oifigiúla.

Is seanscéal é ag an tráth seo, na deacrachtaí a bhíonn ag daoine seirbhísí, fiú uaireanta na seirbhísí is bunúsaí, a fháil ón Stát i nGaeilge. Tarlaíonn seo go minic de bharr easpa líon leordhóthanach foirne sa tseirbhís phoiblí le hinniúlacht sa Ghaeilge agus de thoradh reachtaíocht nach bhfuil cuimsitheach a dóthain nó, go deimhin, de thoradh easpa reachtaíochta. Is léir, mar sin, an suntas a bhaineann le foilsíú Bhille na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) ag deireadh na bliana. D'fháiltigh mé roimh fhoilsiú an Bhille ag an am, ach léirigh mé imní mar go raibh ag teip ar an mBille dul i ngleic mar ba chóir leis an easpa cinnteachta maidir le soláthar seirbhísí Stáit trí Ghaeilge sa Ghaeltacht agus an easpa sprioc-amanna do chúrsaí earcaíochta agus nithe eile.

Foilsíodh sceideal nua de chomhlachtaí poiblí atá le teacht faoi scáth Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla i mbliana. Bhí an nuashonrú seo ag teastáil go géar, agus os cionn 10 mbliana caite ó tugadh an sceideal cothrom le dáta. Más mall is mithid agus táim sásta go dtabharfar na comhlachtaí poiblí a bunaíodh ón mbliain 2006 i leith faoi scáth na reachtaíochta ag an tráth seo.

In 2019 chomh maith, d'fhoilsíomar ár gcéad Tuarascáil Faireacháin. Nuair a chinn mé deireadh a chur leis an ngrinnmhonatóireacht ar chóras fabhtach na Scéimeanna Teanga bhí mé diongbháilte go dtiocfadh córas monatóireachta nua ina áit a bheadh fiúntach agus a bheadh éifeachtach. Díríodh i dtuarascáil na bliana 2018 ar an líon foirne le hinniúlacht sa Ghaeilge i ranna rialtais, suíomhanna gréasáin na n-údarás áitiúil agus ar chomharthaíocht ag suíomhanna oidhreacht. Faoi láthair tá bailchríoch á cur againn ar obair faireacháin na bliana seo agus foilseoidimid ár ndara tuarascáil faireacháin i samhradh 2020.



FOREWORD

This year saw a substantial increase in the number of complaints received by the Office. Whilst this can be viewed as an expression of confidence in the Office from the public it also highlights the continued difficulties citizens experience accessing public services through Irish. Unfortunately, we were unable to investigate approximately half of the complaints we received, primarily as the matters raised weren't encompassed under the Official Languages Act or any other enactment relating to the use of an official language.

The difficulty people have securing services from the State, even the most basic of services on occasion, through Irish, is an old chestnut at this stage. This often occurs as a result of an insufficient number of personnel in the public service with competence in the Irish language and due to legislation that isn't comprehensive enough or, indeed, due to a complete lack of legislation. This highlights the significance of the publication of the Official Languages (Amendment) Bill at the end of the year. I welcomed the publication of the Bill at the time but referenced some concerns I have with its failure to adequately address the lack of certainty regarding State services through Irish in the Gaeltacht and the lack of deadlines in the Bill regarding recruitment and other areas.

This year also saw the publication of a new "Schedule" of public bodies who are to come under the Official Languages Act. Over 10 years have elapsed since the schedule was updated and it was much needed. It is better late than never and I welcome that public bodies, established since 2006, are now being brought under the scope of the legislation.

2019 also saw the publication of our inaugural Monitoring Report. Having discontinued the in-depth monitoring of the discredited language scheme system I was determined to ensure that a new system of monitoring would prove to be effective and worthwhile. This year's report focused on staff numbers in government departments competent in Irish, local authorities' websites, and signage at heritage sites. At present we are completing our monitoring work for the year and will publish our second monitoring report in summer 2020.

BILLE NA dTEANGACHA OIFIGIÚLA (LEASÚ)

Ba chéim thábhachtach é foilsiú Bhille na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) i mí na Nollag 2019, sa phróiseas a cuireadh ar bun le go mbeadh Acht Teanga níos láidre agus níos oiriúnaí dá fheidhm againn. D'fháiltigh mé roimh an deis atá cruthaithe anois anailís a dhéanamh ar na leasuithe atá molta ar an Acht agus a n-oiriúnacht don chreat reachtaíocht teanga atá de dhíth a mheas.

Tá béim leagtha agam go rialta ar thrí phríomhleasú a fheictear dom a bheith riachtanach chun bonn níos láidre a chur faoin Acht. Baineann na leasuithe sin le soláthar seirbhísí an Stáit sa Ghaeltacht, le hathruithe ar pholasaithe earcaíochta an Stáit agus le bunú córais caighdeán teanga a leagfaidh dualgas níos soiléire ar chomhlachtaí poiblí maidir le freastal ar an bpobal i gcéadteanga oifigiúil na tíre.

Tá tagairt déanta sa Bhille nua do na nithe sin agus do roinnt forálacha tábhachtacha eile, ach táim den tuairim nach dtugann an Bille, mar atá sé faoi láthair, aghaidh ar bhealach críochnúil ar roinnt de na ceisteanna is tábhachtaí a bhaineann le soláthar seirbhísí poiblí trí Ghaeilge agus le cearta teanga an phobail a chosaint.

An Ghaeltacht

Is léir staid leochaileach na Gaeilge sna limistéir Ghaeltachta i dtorthaí an daonáirimh agus i saothair thaighde éagsúla le roinnt blianta. Tá sé ríthábhachtach, mar sin, go gcuirfí bonn reachtúil faoi sholáthar seirbhísí poiblí trí Ghaeilge sa Ghaeltacht agus go ndaingneofaí sa reachtaíocht cearta teanga phobal na Ghaeltachta. Faraor, ag an tráth seo, níl aon fhoráil dhaingean sa Bhille a chuirfeadh dualgas ar an Stát a chinntiú go bhfreastalófar ar phobal na Ghaeltachta ina dteanga dhúchais. Chomh fada siar le foilsiú thuarascáil Choimisiún na Ghaeltachta sa bhliain 1926, tagraíodh don riachtanas go gcuirfí seirbhísí Stáit ar fáil trí Ghaeilge sa Ghaeltacht. Níl an méid sin bainte amach go fóill agus ní théann na leasuithe atá molta sa Bhille seo i ngleic leis seo go críochnúil. Bheadh sé faillíoch ag an Stát, fiú ag an tráth seo, gan réimse seirbhísí tábhachtacha a chur ar fáil trí Ghaeilge sa Ghaeltacht mar cheart bunúsach. Gan bunús reachtúil, cuimsitheach ní bheidh aon chinnteacht go dtarlóidh an méid sin.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES (AMENDMENT) BILL

The publication of the Official Languages (Amendment) Bill in December 2019 was an important step in the process of bringing forth a stronger and more fit-for-purpose Language Act. I welcomed the opportunity that has now been created to analyse the proposed amendments to the Act and to assess their suitability for a necessary language rights framework.

I have continually emphasized three key reforms that I see as being necessary to strengthen the Act. These amendments relate to the provision of State services in the Gaeltacht, changes in State recruitment policies, and the establishment of a system of language standards placing a clearer obligation on public bodies to serve the public in the country's first official language.

Reference is made in the new Bill to these matters and to a number of other important provisions, but I am of the opinion that the Bill, as it currently stands, does not adequately address some of the most important issues relating to the provision of public services through Irish and protecting the language rights of the community.

The Gaeltacht

The fragile state of Irish in Gaeltacht areas is evident in the census results and in various pieces of research over the past number of years. It is therefore vital that the provision of public services through Irish in the Gaeltacht is placed on a statutory footing and that the language rights of the Gaeltacht community should be underpinned by the legislation. Unfortunately, at this stage, the Bill contains no firm provisions placing a duty upon the State to ensure that the Gaeltacht community is served in their native language. The requirement to provide State services through Irish in the Gaeltacht was referenced as far back as 1926 in a report by the Gaeltacht Commission. This has not yet been achieved and the proposed amendments to the Bill do not tackle this issue in a complete way. Even at this stage it would be remiss of the State not to provide a range of important services through Irish in the Gaeltacht as a basic right. Without a comprehensive legislative basis there can be no certainty that this will occur.

Earcaíocht

Tacaím leis an moladh go n-ullmhófaí plean reachtúil náisiúnta do sholáthar seirbhísí poiblí trí Ghaeilge agus aontaím gur chóir do pholasaithe agus cleachtais nua earcaíochta a bheith ina ndlúthchuid den phlean sin. Is cúis inní dom, áfach, nach bhfuil dóthain ionadaíochta á tabhairt do shaineolaithe seachtracha ná don phobal ar an gCoiste Comhairleach atá le bunú faoin Acht leasaithe chun an plean reachtúil a ullmhú. Is cúis inní dom freisin nach bhfuil sprioc-am luaite le foilsiú an phlean agus nach bhfuil dualgas reachtúil ann aon phlean a aontaítear a chur i bhfeidhm.

Córas Caighdeán

Ar cheann de mhórfhorálacha an Bhille tá an moladh go gcuirfí córas caighdeán teanga in áit chóras na scéimeanna teanga. Moladh fiúntach é seo, ach is deacair breithiúnas a thabhairt ar an tionchar a d'fhéadfadh a bheith ag an athrú seo gan na dréachtchaighdeáin a bheith ar fáil dúinn. Creidim go rachadh sé go mór chun sochair do phróiseas measúnaithe an Bhille dá gcuirfí na dréachtchaighdeáin sin ar fáil gan mhoill.

Is fada muid ag cásamh na laigí ar an reachtaíocht mar atá agus ba cheart aghaidh a thabhairt orthu seo ag an tráth seo. Deis chaillte a bheadh ann gan sin a dhéanamh. Le linn na díospóireachta sin, tá sé tábhachtach go bhféachfaí i gcónaí le freastal ar riachtanais phobal na teanga agus ar a gcearta, ag cur san áireamh stádas na Gaeilge mar theanga náisiúnta agus mar chéadteanga oifigiúil na tíre.

GEARÁIN

Rinneadh os cionn 700 gearán linn in 2019 le hais 634 anuraidh. Fearacht blianta eile, bhain roinnt de na gearáin sin leis na deacrachtaí a bhíonn ag daoine na síntí fada ina n-ainm nó ina seoladh a úsáid nuair a bhíonn na sonraí sin á dtaifeadadh ag comhlacht stáit. Tá iarracht déanta dul i ngleic leis seo i mBille na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) le foráil a bhaineann le *“Dualgas comhlachtaí poiblí maidir le hainmneacha, seoltaí agus teidil i nGaeilge”*.

Cuirim fáilte, dar ndóigh, roimh an iarracht dul i ngleic leis an bhfadhb ach is easnamh mór ar an bhforáil nach bhfuil sprioc-am luaite le teacht i bhfeidhm an chirt bhunúsach seo. Níl aon chinnteacht, faraor, maidir le cé hiad na

Recruitment

I support the recommendation that a national statutory plan for the provision of public services through Irish be prepared and I agree that new recruitment policies and practices should be an integral part of this plan. However, I am concerned that external experts and the public are not adequately represented on the Advisory Committee to be established under the amended Act to prepare the statutory plan. I am also concerned that there is no stated deadline for the publication of the plan and that there is no statutory obligation to implement any agreed plan.

System of Standards

One of the main provisions of the Bill is the proposal to replace the language scheme system with a system of language standards. This is a worthwhile proposal, but it is difficult to judge the possible impact of this change without sight of the draft standards. I believe that the timely production of these draft standards would greatly benefit the process of assessing the Bill.

The weaknesses in the existing legislation have long been highlighted and should be addressed at this juncture. To not do so would be a missed opportunity. In the course of this debate it is important that the needs of the language community and their rights continue to be addressed, considering the status of Irish as the national and first official language of the country.

COMPLAINTS

We received over 700 complaints in 2019 compared to 634 the previous year. As in other years a number of complaints related to difficulties people have using the *síneadh fada* in their names or addresses with state bodies or ensuring that their names in Irish are being properly recorded. There is an attempt to address this in the Official Languages (Amendment) Bill with a provision relating to the *“Duty of public bodies regarding names, addresses and titles in the Irish language”*.

The effort to address the problem is, of course, to be welcomed but the exclusion of a deadline for this basic right is a significant absence. Unfortunately, there is also no certainty regarding which public bodies the provision

comhlachtaí poiblí nó na córais ríomhaireachta a mbainfidh an dualgas reachtúil seo leo. Creidim go mbeadh sé i bhfad níos oiriúnaí dá socrófaí dáta cinnte faoina gcaithfeadh córais ríomhaireachta gach comhlachta poiblí cloí leis an riachtanas seo agus san idirlinn go mbainfeadh an dualgas le gach córas ríomhaireachta nua agus le gach córas ríomhaireachta athchóirithe.

IMSCRÚDUI THE

Tá sé spéisiúil gur faoi cheisteanna a bhain le húdaráis áitiúla a bhí na himscrúduithe ar fad a críochnaíodh in 2019. Ba dhíol spéise ar leith é, áfach, an t-imscrúdú a rinne mé ar Chomhairle Contae Chiarraí inar léiríodh nár cuireadh i bhfeidhm coinníoll teanga a cheangail an Bord Pleanála le cead pleanála a deonaíodh d'fhorbairt tithíochta i nGaeltacht Chorca Dhuibhne in 2004. Bhí suntas faoi leith ag baint leis an imscrúdú don Oifig seo mar ba é seo an chéad uair a thionscnaíomar imscrúdú ar fhoráil teanga den Acht um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2000.

San Acht um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2000, leagtar dualgas ar aon Chomhairle Contae a bhfuil limistéar Gaeltachta faoina cúram cuspóirí faoi leith a leagan síos ina Plean Forbartha Contae chun oidhreacht teanga agus chultúrtha na Gaeltachta a chosaint, lena n-áirítear an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn mar theanga an phobail. Tá dualgas uirthi, chomh maith, na cuspóirí atá sa Phlean Forbartha Contae a chur i bhfeidhm. Chinn an Bord Pleanála sa chás seo coinníoll a cheangal leis an gcead pleanála go mba ghá d'úinéirí nó do thionóntaí fadtéarmacha líofacht sa Ghaeilge a bheith taispeánta acu i gcás 75% de na tithe nua. Nuair a rinneadh gearán liom nár cuireadh an coinníoll sin i bhfeidhm riamh, chinn mé go raibh “foráil d’achtachán a bhaineann le stádas nó le húsáid teanga oifigiúla” i gceist agus go bhféadfainn, agus gur chóir, tabhairt faoi imscrúdú.

Sainaithníodh sa *Staidéar Cuimsitheach Teangeolaíochta ar Úsáid na Gaeilge sa Ghaeltacht*, a foilsíodh in 2007, gur gné an-lárnach den phleanáil teanga atá sa phleanáil fhisiciúil agus gur féidir le gluaiseachtaí déimeagrafacha ar nós daoine nua ag bogadh isteach sa Ghaeltacht tionchar a imirt ar chúrsaí teanga de bharr na n-athruithe a dhéantar ar an gcothromaíocht teanga i measc an phobail.

could apply to or as to the computer systems concerned. It would be more appropriate, I believe, if a specific date was agreed whereby the computer systems of all public bodies would have to comply with this provision and in the interim period that the provision would apply to all new or updated computer systems.

INVESTIGATIONS

Interestingly all the investigations completed in 2019 involved local authorities. Of particular interest was the investigation I carried out in the case of Kerry County Council which demonstrated that a linguistic condition attached by An Bord Pleanála to planning permission for a housing development in the Corca Dhuibhne Gaeltacht in 2004 was never implemented. This investigation was especially significant for our Office as it was the first time that we conducted an investigation relating to a language provision of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

The Planning and Development Act 2000, requires any County Council which has a Gaeltacht area under its remit to include objectives in its County Development Plan for the protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht, including the promotion of Irish as the community language. It is also required to implement the objectives contained in the County Development Plan. An Bord Pleanála had decided to attach a condition to the planning permission whereby the owners or long-term tenants of 75% of the new houses were required to demonstrate their fluency in the Irish language. When I received a complaint that this condition had never been implemented, I decided that a provision of an enactment “relating to status or use of an official language” was involved and that I could and should investigate the matter.

It was recognised in the *Comprehensive Linguistic Study of the Use of Irish in the Gaeltacht* in 2007 that physical planning is a very central aspect of language planning and that demographic movements such as new people settling in the Gaeltacht can influence the use of languages due to the consequent change to the language balance within the community.

Má tá rath le bheith ar an bpleanáil teanga sa Gaeltacht a shamhlaítear le hAcht na Gaeltachta, 2012, níor mhiste féachaint chuige go dtugtar feidhm d'fhorálacha reachtúla eile arb í cosaint theanga na Gaeltachta is bunús leo.

Tá sonraí an imscrúdaithe ar leathanaigh 20–24.

Rinne mé ceithre imscrúdú eile ar údaráis áitiúla éagsúla toisc, go príomha, nár fhreagair na húdaráis áitiúla sin go sásúil, nó in aon chor, gearáin a d'fhiosraigh m'Oifig leo. Bhain gearáin faoi chomharthaí leo ar fad cé go raibh ábhair eile i gceist le Comhairle Contae Lú chomh maith. Bheifí ag súil, faoin tráth seo, go mbeadh córais éifeachtacha i bhfeidhm in údaráis áitiúla a chinnteodh go mbíonn a gcuid comharthaí nua dátheangach agus i gcomhréir leis na ceanglais teanga eile agus nach mbeadh comharthaí i mBéarla amháin fós á gcur in airde acu. Bheifí ag súil, chomh maith, go mbeadh sé ar chumas na n-údarás áitiúil freagra a chur ar fáil do m'Oifig laistigh d'achar réasúnta ama nuair a tharraingítear gearán anuas leo.

RTÉ

Luadh níos luaithe gur fhoilsíomar ár gcéad tuarascáil faireacháin riamh i mí na Bealtaine 2019. Leanamar orainn chomh maith le faireachán ar mholtaí a bhí déanta in imscrúduithe reachtúla. Bhain an ceann ba shuntasáí díobh seo leis an gcraoltóir náisiúnta RTÉ agus moltaí a d'eascair as imscrúdú a tugadh chun críche le linn na bliana 2018, an chéad imscrúdú foirmiúil maidir leis na dualgais teanga atá san Acht Craolacháin, 2009. Léiríodh san imscrúdú nach raibh RTÉ ag craoladh réimse cuimsitheach clár i nGaeilge ar chainéil teilifíse an stáisiúin mar atá éilithe ag an reachtaíocht.

Ba é príomh-mholadh an imscrúdaithe maidir le RTÉ agus comhlíonadh forálacha teanga de chuid an Achta Craolacháin, 2009 *“Go n-ullmhódh RTÉ plean feidhmithe...chun réimse cuimsitheach clár teilifíse i nGaeilge agus cláir theilifíse cúrsaí reatha i nGaeilge a chur ar fáil.”*

Chuir RTÉ an plean feidhmithe sin faoi mo bhráid i mí an Mheithimh 2019. Ina dhiaidh sin chuir an eagraíocht tuilleadh soiléirithe a bhí lorgtha faoi mo bhráid agus réachtáladh cruinniú le baill shinsearach de chuid RTÉ i dtreo dheireadh na bliana.

If the language planning process envisaged in the Gaeltacht Act 2012 is to be successful, it has to be ensured that other statutory provisions designed to defend the linguistic status of the Gaeltacht are implemented.

Details of the investigation are on pages 20–24.

I carried out four other investigations on various local authorities, principally because these local authorities had not responded satisfactorily, or not responded at all, to complaints raised by my Office. Complaints concerning signs were involved in all these investigations, while other matters were investigated in the case of Louth County Council also. One would have expected at this stage that local authorities would have effective systems in place to ensure that new signs were bilingual and in accordance with the other language requirements. One would have also expected that when my Office raises a complaint with a local authority, it would be able to provide a response within a reasonable period.

RTÉ

As referenced earlier we published our first monitoring report in May 2019. We also continued our monitoring of the implementation of recommendations resulting from formal investigations. The most significant of these relates to the national broadcaster RTÉ and recommendations stemming from an investigation completed in 2018, the first formal investigation regarding the language requirements of the Broadcasting Act 2009. The investigation concluded that RTÉ wasn't broadcasting a comprehensive range of programmes in Irish on its television schedule as required by the legislation.

The primary recommendation in the investigation into RTÉ regarding adherence to language provisions in the Broadcasting Act 2009 was *“That RTÉ prepare an implementation plan...to provide a comprehensive range of television programmes in Irish and current affairs television programmes in Irish.”*

RTÉ presented an implementation plan to me in June 2019. Following that, upon my request, the organisation provided some more clarification regarding the plan and a meeting took place with senior figures in RTÉ towards the end of the year.

Sa chruinniú sin rinne RTÉ cur síos ar an ardú atá beartaithe acu ar líon agus réimse na gclár Gaeilge a chraolfar ar chainéil teilifíse an stáisiúin an bhliain seo chugainn. Tá ardú suntasach á bheartú ag RTÉ ar líon uaireanta na gclár Gaeilge ó 123 sa bhliain 2017 go dtí íosmhéid 533 sa bhliain 2020.

Baineann an t-ardú is suntasaí le craoladh na gclár nuachta agus cúrsaí reatha (cothrom le 58% den ardú in 2020) ar an gcainéal RTÉ News Now agus clár do leanaí agus do dhaoine óga (cothrom le 28% den ardú in 2020) ar RTÉ JNR. Ina theannta sin tá comhfhiontar á chruthú le TG4 chun breis clár de chuid an chraoltóra sin a chur ar fáil ar RTÉ. Beidh Rannóg na gClár Gaeilge ar ais i mbun obair lánaimseartha arís agus beartaithe ag RTÉ tuilleadh clár nua a chraoladh i nGaeilge.

Is léir dom go bhfuil borradh breise faoi sholáthar uaireanta craolacháin agus clár Gaeilge ar RTÉ. Ní féidir a dhearbhu ag an tráth seo, áfach, go bhfuil réimse cuimsitheach clár á chur ar fáil mar a éilíonn an reachtaíocht. Mar sin féin, aithním go bhféadfaí sin a bhaint amach sna blianta amach romhainn má leantar leis an bhforbairt atá beartaithe ar an réimse clár a chuirtear ar fáil.

Chuipe sin, tá iarrtha agam ar RTÉ cuntas a thabhairt sa dara leath de 2020 ar an méid a bheidh curtha i gcrích an tráth sin mar aon le líon agus réimse na gclár atá beartaithe do 2021.

CUMARSÁID & EILE

Bíonn d'onóir agam mar Choimisinéir Teanga bualadh le grúpaí, le heagraíochtaí agus le daoine aonair a bhíonn ag obair go dian dícheallach ar mhaithe leis an nGaeilge agus teangacha eile a chur chun cinn, ní hamháin in Éirinn ach freisin i ndlínsí eile. I mí Eanáir, thug mé fianaise os comhair an Choiste Cultúir, Breatnaise agus Cumarsáide sa Tionól Náisiúnta in Caerdydd. Bhí an Coiste i mbun fiosruithe maidir le comhthéacs reachtúil, beartas agus gnéithe níos leithne a bhaineann leis an mBreatnais. Labhair mé chomh maith ag comhdháil de chuid Chomhairle na hEorpa in Caerdydd maidir le hoideachas dátheangach agus cosaint do theangacha a bhíonn á labhairt ag mionlaigh.

In that meeting RTÉ detailed the increase in the amount and range of Irish language programmes to be broadcast on the station's television channels next year. RTÉ intends to substantially increase the amount of Irish language programmes from 123 hours in 2017 to 533 hours, at a minimum, in 2020.

The most significant increase relates to the broadcasting of news and current affairs programmes on RTÉ News Now (representing 58% of the increase in 2020) and programmes for children and young people on RTÉ JNR (representing 28% of the increase in 2020). A joint approach is also being developed with TG4 to broadcast more of the station's programmes on RTÉ. Rannóg na gClár Gaeilge in RTÉ will also operate on a full-time basis again, with an increase in newly-produced Irish language programmes due to be broadcast on RTÉ.

It is clear that there is greater momentum behind the provision of the number of hours and range of programmes in Irish on RTÉ. I can't confirm at this point, however, that a comprehensive range of programmes is being provided for as required by the legislation. Nevertheless, I recognise that this could be achieved in the years ahead if the range of programmes provided continues to be developed.

With that in mind I have requested RTÉ to provide an update in the second half of 2020 in relation to what has been implemented at that stage and the extent and range of Irish language programming intended for 2021.

COMMUNICATIONS & OTHER MATTERS

As Coimisinéir Teanga it is always an honour to have the opportunity to meet with groups, organisations and individuals who work tirelessly and diligently to promote and protect the Irish language and other languages not only in Ireland but also in other jurisdictions. I gave evidence in January to the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee at the National Assembly for Wales in Cardiff. The committee was examining the statutory policy and wider issues relating to the use of the Welsh language. I also spoke at a Council of Europe conference in Cardiff regarding bilingual education and the protection of minority languages.

B'onóir mhór a bhí ann dom ionadaíocht a dhéanamh thar ceann na tíre seo, mar chathaoirleach ar Chumann Idirnáisiúnta na gCoimisinéirí Teanga, ag comhdháil agus cruinniú bliantúil an chumainn in Toronto i mí an Mheithimh.

I gcaitheamh na bliana, thug mé óráidí agus rinne mé cur i láthair ar théamaí a bhain le cearta teanga ag cuid mhaith ócáidí poiblí. Rinne mé roinnt láithreoireachtaí do chomhlachtaí poiblí ar na riachtanais a bhaineann le feidhmiú an Achta agus mar is ceart freastal ar phobal a dteastaíonn uathu a gcuid gnó a dhéanamh leis an státchóras trí Ghaeilge.

Táim buíoch den iriseoir, Áine Ní Chiaráin, agus den saineolaí airgeadais, Páidí Ó Dálaigh, as an obair a dhéanann siad go deonach mar bhaill luachmhara de Choiste Iniúchóireachta Inmheánaí agus Riosca na hOifige.

Ba mhaith liom an deis seo a thapú freisin chun buíochas a ghlacadh leis an bhfoireann oibre anseo in Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga as a ndúthracht agus a ndíograis.

CRÍOCH

Ar deireadh, ba mhaith liom mo bhuíochas a chur in iúl don Aire Stáit do Ghnóthaí Gaeltachta, Seán Kyne, TD, a chomhairligh don Rialtas go n-athcheapfaí mé mar Choimisinéir Teanga. Ghlac an Rialtas leis an moladh sin agus le linn mhí na Nollag ritheadh rún ag moladh m'athcheapacháin i nDáil Éireann agus i Seanad Éireann. I gcomhréir le forálacha an Achta is faoi Uachtarán na hÉireann atá sé duine a cheapadh mar Choimisinéir Teanga ar chomhairle an Rialtais tar éis do Dháil Éireann agus do Sheanad Éireann rún a rith ag moladh an cheapacháin.

It was also a huge honour to represent this country as chair of the International Association of Language Commissioners in Toronto at our annual conference and AGM in June.

I gave speeches and presentations relating to language rights at many events throughout Ireland. I made presentations to public bodies regarding obligations under the Act and how best to serve members of the public who want to conduct their business through Irish with the state sector.

I would like to thank the journalist, Áine Ní Chiaráin, and the financial expert, Páidí Ó Dálaigh, for their voluntary work as valuable members of the Office's Internal Audit and Risk Committee.

I would also like to avail of this opportunity to thank the diligent and hard-working staff in the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga.

CONCLUSION

Finally, I would like to thank the Minister of State for Gaeltacht Affairs, Seán Kyne, TD, for recommending to the Government that I be re-appointed as An Coimisinéir Teanga. This was accepted by Government and a resolution recommending my reappointment was subsequently passed by Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann in December. An Coimisinéir Teanga is appointed by the President of Ireland on the advice of Government following a resolution passed by Dáil Éireann and by Seanad Éireann recommending the appointment, in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

Seoladh an leabhráin 'Oifigí Ombudsman in Éirinn' leis an gCeann Comhairle, Seán Ó Fearghail, T.D.
Launch of booklet 'Ombudsman Offices in Ireland' by the Ceann Comhairle, Seán Ó Fearghail, T.D.



SEIRBHÍSÍ EOLAIS AGUS CUMARSÁIDE

Is cuid lárnach dár gcuid oibre é go roinnfí eolas maidir le gníomhaíochtaí na heagraíochta leis an bpobal, le comhlachtaí poiblí, le coistí Oireachtais, leis na meáin chumarsáide agus le páirtithe leasmhara eile. Fearacht blianta eile, bhí an Oifig gníomhach sa réimse seo le linn na bliana.

COMHAIRLE DO CHOMHLACHTAÍ POIBLÍ

Fáiltíonn an Oifig i gcónaí roimh an deis comhairle a chur ar chomhlachtaí poiblí maidir lena gcuid freagrachtaí faoin Acht agus fágann an nuashonrú a rinneadh ar na comhlachtaí poiblí a thagann faoi scáth an Achta go mbeidh tuilleadh oibre le déanamh sa réimse seo an bhliain seo chugainn.

Rinne oifigigh ó chomhlachtaí poiblí teagmháil le hOifig an Choimisinéara Teanga ar 122 ócáid éagsúil, ardú 6% ón mbliain seo caite. Bhain formhór na bhfiosrúcháin sin, nach mór 40%, le comhairle i dtaca le dualgais teanga a bhaineann le comharthaíocht, stáiseanáireacht agus fógairtí taifeadta béil. Is comhairle faoi dhualgais a bhí le comhlíonadh de thoradh gealltanais i scéimeanna teanga a bhain 22% de na fiosrúcháin agus bhain 13% le dualgais i dtaca le foilseacháin a thagann faoi chuimsiú alt 10 den Acht.

Bíonn an Oifig réamhghníomhach ina cuid iarrachtaí go dtuigfeadh comhlachtaí poiblí gur féidir teagmháil a dhéanamh linn más mian leo aon soiléirú a fháil faoi na dualgais atá le comhlíonadh faoin Acht. Le linn na bliana d'fhreastail baill foirne de chuid na hOifige ar chruinnithe aonaracha le comhlachtaí poiblí éagsúla chun plé a dhéanamh ar na dualgais ghinearálta faoin Acht nó ábharthacht an Achta i dtaca le tionscnaimh áirithe a bhí beartaithe nó idir lámha.

Tá sé intuigthe go gcuidíonn comhairle agus eolas cruinn le comhlachtaí poiblí a gcuid dualgas faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla a chomhlíonadh ar bhealach níos éifeachtaí.

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

The sharing of information regarding the organisation's activities with the public, public bodies, Oireachtas committees, the media and other stakeholders is an integral part of our work. As in previous years, the Office was active in this sphere during the past year.

ADVICE TO PUBLIC BODIES

The Office always welcomes the opportunity to offer advice to public bodies regarding their obligations under the Act. The recent updating of the list of public bodies covered by the Act will result in further work in this area next year.

Officials from public bodies contacted the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga on 122 separate occasions, an increase of 6% on the previous year. Most of these enquiries, almost 40%, related to requests for advice on the language requirements associated with signage, stationery and recorded oral announcements. A further 22% of enquiries related to compliance with commitments provided in language schemes, with 13% of enquiries relating to publications under section 10 of the Act.

The Office strives to be proactive in its efforts to ensure that public bodies understand the value of contacting us if they wish to receive any clarification on the obligations to be complied with under the Act. During the year officials from this Office attended separate meetings with different public bodies to discuss the general obligations under the Act or its application in relation to proposed projects or projects currently underway.

It goes without saying that accurate advice and information assists public bodies to more effectively comply with their obligations under the Official Languages Act.

ÓCÁIDÍ POIBLÍ

ÓRÁIDÍ & LÁITHREOIREACHTAÍ

- An Coiste Cultúir, Breatnaise agus Cumarsáide, Tionól Náisiúnta na Breataine Bige
- Cur i láthair do Bhord Foras na Gaeilge
- Comhdháil Chomhairle na hEorpa, Caerdydd
- Cur i láthair do Choláiste Chilllain, Cluain Dolcáin
- Bronnadh Ghradaim Gaelchultúr
- Comhdháil um Chearta Daonna & Cearta Teanga i gcomhpháirtíocht leis na Náisiúin Aontaithe agus Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh
- Fóram Réigiúnach na hEorpa, an Bhruiséil
- Bronnadh phaimfléad eolais Fhóram na nOmbudsman, Teach Laighean
- Coiste na Gaeilge, na Gaeltachta agus na nOileán, Teach Laighean
- Comhdháil Chumann Idirnáisiúnta na gCoimisinéirí Teanga, Toronto
- Cur i láthair d'Ollscoil Luimnigh
- Cur i láthair do Choláiste na hOllscoile, Corcaigh

ÓCÁIDÍ EILE

- Lá Gairme, Scoil Chuimsitheach Chiaráin, An Cheathrú Rua
- Seoladh Sheachtain na Gaeilge
- Insealbhú Uachtarán an Oireachtais
- Ard-Fheis Chonradh na Gaeilge
- Sult na Sollán, Cill Dara
- Léacht Dáil100, Teach Laighean
- Údaráis Áitiúla, Dualgais & an Ghaeilge, Béal Feirste
- Fóram ar Bheartas Teanga agus Oideachais na Gaeilge & na Gaeltachta, Coláiste na Tríonóide
- Comhdháil Oileáin na hÉireann, Inis Meáin
- Gradam Sheosaimh Uí Ógartaigh, Gaillimh le Gaeilge
- Seoladh Thuarascáil Chomhchoiste na Gaeilge, na Gaeltachta & na nOileán, Teach Laighean

PUBLIC EVENTS

SPEECHES & PRESENTATIONS

- Culture, Welsh Language & Communications Committee, National Assembly for Wales
- Presentation for the Board of Foras na Gaeilge
- Council of Europe Conference, Cardiff
- Presentation for Coláiste Chilllain, Clondalkin
- Awards Presentation for Gaelchultúr
- Conference on Human Rights & Language Rights in partnership with the United Nations and the National University of Ireland, Galway
- European Regional Forum, Brussels
- Presentation of Information Pamphlet for Irish Ombudsman Forum, Leinster House
- Committee on the Irish Language, the Gaeltacht & the Islands, Leinster House
- IALC (International Association of Language Commissioners) Conference, Toronto
- Presentation for the University of Limerick
- Presentation for University College Cork

OTHER EVENTS

- Careers Day, Scoil Chuimsitheach Chiaráin, An Cheathrú Rua
- Seachtain na Gaeilge Launch Event
- Inauguration of Uachtarán an Oireachtais
- Ard-Fheis of Conradh na Gaeilge
- Sult na Sollán, Kildare
- Dáil100 Lecture, Leinster House
- Local Authorities, Obligations & the Irish Language, Belfast
- Irish & Gaeltacht Education Forum on Language Policy, Trinity College
- Comhdháil Oileáin na hÉireann/Irish Islands Federation, Inis Meáin
- Gradam Sheosaimh Uí Ógartaigh, Gaillimh le Gaeilge
- Launch of report by the Committee on the Irish Language, the Gaeltacht & the Islands, Leinster House

- Seoladh Sealbhú – Lárionad Taighde, Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath
- Seoladh GTeic, Tithe an Rialtais
- Seoladh GTeic, An Spidéal
- Seoladh Phlean Teanga na Ceathrún Rua
- Oireachtas na Samhna, Baile Átha Cliath
- Comhdháil Bhliantúil Gaeloideachas, Corcaigh

Ach oiread le blianta eile, d'fhreastail baill foirne de chuid na hOifige seo ar ócáidí éagsúla le linn na bliana agus thug siad cur i láthair ag ceardlann pleanála teanga a d'eagraigh Údarás na Gaeltachta agus ag seimineár a d'eagraigh Cumann na nOifigeach Forbartha Gaeilge.

NA MEÁIN CHUMARSÁIDE

Bhí cuid mhaith teagmhála agam leis na meáin chumarsáide le linn 2019. Déanaim gach uile iarracht i gcónaí freastal ar gach aon iarratas ó na meáin nuair a bhaineann an t-iarratas sin le reachtaíocht teanga a thagann faoi mo dhlínse. Creidim go bhfuil ról ríthábhachtach ag na meáin ag cur an phobail ar an eolas faoin obair a thagann faoi scáth eagraíochtaí mar Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga. Is bealach é chomh maith le cinntiú go bhfuilimid freagrach don phobal. Sa chomhthéacs sin, ba mhaith liom buíochas a ghlacadh leis na hiriseoirí a bhí i dteagmháil leis an Oifig i rith na bliana.

- Launch of Sealbhú Central Research Centre, Dublin City University
- Launch of GTeic, Government Buildings
- Launch of GTeic, An Spidéal
- Launch of Language Plan for An Cheathrú Rua
- Oireachtas na Samhna, Dublin
- Annual Conference, Gaeloideachas, Cork

Similar to other years, staff members from this Office attended various events during the year and made presentations at a language planning workshop organised by Údarás na Gaeltachta and a seminar held by Cumann na nOifigeach Forbartha Gaeilge.

MEDIA

I had a considerable amount of contact with the media during 2019. I always make every effort to accommodate all media requests relating to matters concerning Irish language legislation under my remit. I believe the media plays a vital role in informing the public of the work that organisations like the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga undertake and it is also a way of ensuring we are accountable to the public. I would like to thank the journalists who were in contact with the Office during the year in that regard.

Ócáid Trasna na dTonnta
Trasna na dTonnta event



CUMAINN

CUMANN IDIRNÁISIÚNTA NA gCOIMISINÉIRÍ TEANGA

Tá an cumann seo ar an bhfód anois le 6 bliana agus feidhmíonn sé mar ghréasán luachmhar do Choimisinéirí Teanga ar fud na cruinne. Tá 11 Choimisinéir Teanga nó Ombudsman ina mbaill den Chumann faoin tráth seo le ballraíocht ó Éirinn, ó Cheanada, ón mBreatain Bheag, ó Thír na mBascach, ón gCatalóin, ón gCosaiv agus ón mBeilg. Cé go bhfuil éagsúlacht mhór sa timpeallacht ina bhfeidhmíonn na heagraíochtaí éagsúla, is minic a bhíonn go leor de na dúshláin teanga chéanna ag baint lenár gcuid oibre.

I gcaitheamh na bliana, bhí cruinnithe rialta againn ar líne. Tá roinnt fochoistí ag feidhmiú faoi scáth an Chumainn agus tugann sé seo deis do bhaill foirne ábhair atá i bpáirt acu ina gcuid oibre a phlé mar aon le deiseanna foghlama a chur ar fáil. Chomh maith leis sin eagraítear roinnt seisiúin eolais ó am go chéile inar féidir le baill foirne ó na hoifigí éagsúla léargas a fháil ar an obair a bhíonn ar siúl i ndlínsí eile.

Is in Toronto a bhí comhdháil bhliantúil na heagraíochta ar siúl agus d'fhreastail mé féin agus beirt bhall foirne ar an gcomhdháil a raibh *"Mionlaigh Theanga a Chosaint, Sochaithe Níos Láidre a Chothú"* mar théama leis. Is faoi stiúir Oifig Ombudsman Ontario a reáchtáladh an chomhdháil agus cruinniú cinn bhliana an Chumainn. Tugann an chomhdháil deis luachmhar do lucht cleachtais agus lucht acadúil teacht le chéile chun ábhair a bhaineann le cearta teanga a phlé. Ag comhdháil na bliana seo, seoladh leabhar de chuid an Chumainn *"Constitutional Pioneers"* ina raibh ailt ó na hoifigí éagsúla agus ón saol acadúil ar théamaí a bhaineann le hobair ár n-eagraíochtaí agus le cearta teanga.

Tháinig deireadh le mo thréimhse mar Chathaoirleach ar an gCumann ag cruinniú cinn bhliana na heagraíochta agus guím gach rath ar Raymond Thériège, Coimisinéir na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, Ceanada, atá ceaptha anois mar Chathaoirleach. Tá sé tráthúil go mbeadh Raymond ag glacadh leis an gcathaoirleacht cothrom 50 bliain an ama ar tháinig Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla i bhfeidhm i gCeanada den chéad uair. Tá aistriú déanta chomh maith ar an

ASSOCIATIONS

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LANGUAGE COMMISSIONERS

This organisation was established 6 years ago and it operates as a valuable network for the Language Commissioners operating in various parts of the world. Currently the Association has a membership of 11 Language Commissioners or Ombudsmen with members from Ireland, Canada, Wales, the Basque Country, Catalonia, Kosovo and Belgium. Although the various organisations operate in very distinct environments, we face many of the same linguistic challenges in our area of work.

During the year we held regular meetings online. A number of subcommittees operate within the Association and this affords our staff an opportunity to discuss matters that are common to their work as well as presenting learning opportunities. Information sessions are also organised from time to time whereby staff from the various offices receive an insight into the work being performed in other jurisdictions.

The organisation's annual conference was held in Toronto and was attended by myself and two members of staff. The theme of the conference was *"Protecting Linguistic Minorities, Building Stronger Societies"*. The conference and the annual general meeting was organised by the Office of the Ontarian Ombudsman. The conference affords practitioners and academics a valuable opportunity to come together to discuss matters relating to language rights. This year's conference included the launch of the Association's book *"Constitutional Pioneers"* containing articles from the various offices and from academia on themes relating to our organisations' work and language rights.

My term as the Association's Chairman came to an end at this year's annual general meeting and I would like to wish Raymond Thériège, Official Languages Commissioner, Canada every success as he takes over the role of Chairman. It is appropriate that Raymond be appointed Chairman as we mark the 50th anniversary of the Official Languages Act in Canada. The

ról rúnaíochta a bhí á dhéanamh ag m'Oifig le bliain anuas. Creidim go bhfuil ról an-tábhachtach ag an gCumann agus tá sé i gceist agam a bheith gníomhach i gcónaí san eagraíocht seo atá ag dul ó neart go neart.

Tháinig roinnt athruithe ar na Coimisinéirí Teanga sna tíortha éagsúla le linn na bliana. Gar do bhaile ceapadh Aled Roberts mar Choimisinéir Teanga sa Bhreatain Bheag i mí an Mhárta 2019. Tagann sé i gcomharbacht ar Meri Huws a bhí sa ról sin ó bunaíodh an Oifig sa bhliain 2012. Tá mé ag súil go mór leanúint amach anseo leis an gcomhoibriú atá cruthaithe idir ár gcuid oifigí. I mo cháil mar chathaoirleach ar Chumann Idirnáisiúnta na gCoimisinéirí Teanga, thug mé fianaise os comhair Choiste Cultúir, Breatnaise agus Cumarsáide Thionól Náisiúnta na Breataine Bige agus iad i mbun plé ar an mBille Breatnaise. Le linn na bliana, d'fhógair rialtas na Breataine Bige nach raibh i gceist leanúint leis an mBille beartaithe agus go bhfágfaí ról an Choimisinéara Teanga mar a bhí.

CUMANN NA nOMBUDSMAN

Is cumann de na hOifigí Ombudsman ar fad in Éirinn agus sa Bhreatain Mhór atá san eagraíocht seo. Tá an Oifig seo ina ball gníomhach den Chumann agus tá mé i mo bhall de Bhord Feidhmiúcháin na heagraíochta ó 2017. Beirt as Éirinn atá ar an mbord, ar a bhfuil ochtar ball ina iomláine. Casann an bord le chéile cúig huaire sa bhliain chun gnóthaí Chumann na nOmbudsman a riaradh agus a phlé le Stiúrthóir an Chumainn.

FÓRAM OMBUDSMAN NA hÉIREANN

Is fochoiste de chuid Chumann na nOmbudsman é an Fóram agus é comhdhéanta d'oifigí Ombudsman de chuid na tíre seo. Ceapadh mé i mo Chathaoirleach ar an bhFóram sa bhliain 2017. Bíonn cruinnithe ag Fóram Ombudsman na hÉireann, ina bhfuil seachtar ball, uair sa ráithe. Le linn na bliana seo foilsíodh paimfléad dátheangach ina dtugtar eolas maidir le ról na n-oifigí ombudsman éagsúla atá ag feidhmiú sa tír seo. Bronnadh cóip den phaimfléad sin ar an gCeann Comhairle ag ócáid a eagraíodh i dTeach Laighean. Is iad baill eile an Fhórait an tOmbudsman, an tOmbudsman Seirbhísí Airgeadais agus Pinsean, an tOmbudsman do

secretarial role performed by my Office for the last year has also been transferred. I believe that the Association performs a very important role and I intend to remain active in the organisation as it goes from strength to strength.

During the year there were some changes to the Language Commissioners in the various countries. Close to home, Aled Roberts was appointed as Language Commissioner in Wales in March 2019. He succeeds Meri Huws who performed that role since the Office was formed in 2012. I look forward to continuing the close relationship between our offices in the future. As chairman of the International Association of Language Commissioners, I gave evidence before the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee in the National Assembly for Wales as part of its deliberations on the Welsh Language Bill. During the year, the Welsh Government announced that it did not intend to continue with the proposed Bill and that the role of the Language Commissioner would be unchanged.

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

This is an association of all the Ombudsman Offices in Ireland and Great Britain. This Office is an active member of the Association and I've been a member of the Executive Board of the organisation since 2017. There are two members from Ireland on the board which comprises eight members in total. The board meets five times a year to administer and discuss the affairs of the Association with the Association's Director.

IRISH OMBUDSMAN FORUM

This Forum is a subcommittee of the Ombudsman Association with membership from Ombudsman offices in this country. I was appointed Chairman of the Forum in 2017. The Irish Ombudsman Forum, of which there are seven members, meets on a quarterly basis. During this year, a bilingual pamphlet was published providing information on the role of the various Ombudsman offices that operate in this country. A copy of the pamphlet was presented to the Ceann Comhairle at an event held in Leinster House. The other members of the Forum are the Ombudsman, the Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman, the

Leanaí, Ombudsman an Phreasa, an tOmbudsman d'Óglaigh na hÉireann, agus Coimisiún Ombudsman an Gharda Síochána. Is i mBaile Átha Cliath a bhí na cruinnithe sin ar fad le linn 2019.

Ombudsman for Children, the Press Ombudsman, the Defence Forces Ombudsman, and the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission. All of the meetings in 2019 were held in Dublin.

An Coimisinéir Teanga,
Cathaoirleach Chumann
Idirnáisiúnta na
gCoimisinéirí Teanga, ag
oscailt chomhdháil 2019
*An Coimisinéir Teanga,
Chairman of the
International Association of
Language Commissioners,
opening the 2019
conference*



Cumann Idirnáisiúnta na
gCoimisinéirí Teanga
*International Association of
Language Commissioners*



IMSCRÚDUI THE

Den chéad uair i stair na hOifige rinneadh imscrúdú ar fhoráil a bhain leis an Acht um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2000. Bhí tábhacht faoi leith ag baint leis an imscrúdú. Bhain sé le cosaint na Gaeilge sa phróiseas pleanála tithíochta i gceantar Gaeltachta, tráth a bhfuil béim faoi leith á leagan ar chosaint na teanga sa Ghaeltacht tríd an bpróiseas pleanála teanga. Is ar Chomhairle Contae Chiarraí a rinneadh an t-imscrúdú a bhain le cur i bhfeidhm coinníll teanga a cheangail an Bord Pleanála le cead pleanála a deonaíodh d'fhorbairt tithíochta sa Ghaeltacht. Ceanglaíodh an coinníoll sin i gcomhréir le cuspóirí de chuid an Phlean Forbartha Contae a bhaineann le cosaint na Gaeltachta agus a dhaingnítear faoin Acht um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2000.

Bhí sé suntasach gur ar údarais áitiúla a bhí na himscrúduithe ar fad a críochnaíodh in 2019. Tionscnaíodh na cinn eile, seachas an ceann thuasluaite, toisc nár fhreagair na húdarais áitiúla go sásúil nó in aon chor gearáin faoi chomharthaí a d'fhiosraigh m'Oifig leo.

Toisc a iomadúla agus a bhíonn comharthaí á gcur in airde ag údarais áitiúla, ní hannamh gearáin á bhfáil agam ón bpobal faoi chomharthaí dá gcuid. Fiosraítear na gearáin sin leo ar bhonn neamhfhoirmiúil mar chéad chéim. Nuair nach gcuirtear freagra sásúil, nó freagra ar bith in amanna, ar fáil dom, ní bhíonn de rogha agam ach imscrúdú foirmiúil a thionscnamh.

Is deacair éalú ón gconclúid nach dtugtar an tosaíocht chuí d'fhiosruithe gearán agus nach n-aithnítear an tábhacht a bhaineann le freagraí iomlána a chur ar fáil taobh istigh d'achar réasúnta. Fiú i gcás na n-imscrúduithe foirmiúla féin, b'éigean do m'Oifig scríobh arís chuig Comhairle Contae Lú agus Comhairle Contae Cheatharlach chun an dualgas reachtúil comhoibriú leis an imscrúdú a chur i gcuimhne dóibh, sular chuir siad freagra ar fáil.

Rinne mé moltaí i dtuarascálacha na gceithre imscrúdú sin go ndaingneodh an Chomhairle Contae cleachtais oibre chun plé go cuí agus go tráthúil le gearáin faoi shárúithe ar reachtaíocht teanga. Mhol mé freisin go mbunófaí córais riaracháin san eagraíocht ionas go gcloifí feasta

INVESTIGATIONS

For the first time in the Office's history we investigated a provision of the Planning and Development Act 2000. Particular importance was attached to the investigation. It related to the protection of the Irish language in the housing planning process of a Gaeltacht region at a time when much emphasis is being placed on the protection of the language in the Gaeltacht through the language planning process. The investigation involved Kerry County Council and the implementation of a language condition attached by An Bord Pleanála to a planning permission granted for a housing development in the Gaeltacht. That condition was attached in accordance with the objectives of the County Development Plan relating to the protection of the Gaeltacht as set out in the Planning and Development Act 2000.

It is significant that all the investigations carried out in 2019 were of local authorities. The other investigations, except the one mentioned above, were initiated because the local authorities in question failed to reply satisfactorily, or to reply at all, to complaints concerning signage that were raised by my Office.

As local authorities erect a great many signs, I frequently receive complaints from members of the public concerning local authority signage. These complaints are investigated on an informal basis as a first step. If an unsatisfactory response, or at times no response at all, is provided I have very little option but to initiate a formal investigation.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that the appropriate priority is not given to enquiries concerning complaints nor is the importance of providing full replies within a reasonable time-frame recognised. Even in the case of the formal investigations, my Office had to remind Louth and Carlow County Councils of their statutory obligation to cooperate with investigations, before a reply was forthcoming.

I made recommendations in the reports of these four investigations that the County Council establish work practices whereby complaints concerning breaches of language legislation are dealt with in an appropriate and timely fashion. I also recommended that administrative systems are set in place within the organisation to ensure

leis na forálacha reachtúla teanga faoi chomharthaí atá daingnithe sna Rialacháin faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla agus sna rialacháin agus na hordacháin atá déanta faoin Acht um Thrácht ar Bhóithre, 1961.

that they adhere to the statutory language provisions with regard to signs as confirmed in the regulations made under the Official Languages Act and in the regulations and orders made under the Road Traffic Act 1961.

ACHOIMRE AR IMSCRÚDITHE

SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATIONS

Comhairle Contae Chiarraí

Kerry County Council



Léirigh imscrúdú nár chuir Comhairle Contae Chiarraí i bhfeidhm coinníoll teanga a cheangail an Bord Pleanála le cead pleanála a deonaíodh d'fhorbairt tithíochta i mBaile an Fheirtéaraigh i nGaeltacht Chorca Dhuibhne. Rinneadh fionnachtain dá bharr gur sháraigh an Chomhairle Contae forálacha teanga de chuid an Achta um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2000.

An investigation demonstrated that Kerry County Council did not implement a language condition An Bord Pleanála attached to planning permission granted in respect of a housing development in Baile an Fheirtéaraigh in the Corca Dhuibhne Gaeltacht. As a result, findings were made that the County Council breached language provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

“*Ba shárú thar a bheith tromchúiseach é seo, is léir.*”

“*This was obviously a very serious breach.*”

Is imscrúdú rithábhachtach atá anseo mar gheall ar an gceangal idir todhchaí na Gaeilge mar theanga an phobail sa Ghaeltacht agus an tionchar a d'fhéadfadh a bheith ag fás ar dhaonra nach cainteoirí Gaeilge iad ar chosaint na teanga. Léirigh an t-imscrúdú nár chuir Comhairle Contae Chiarraí an fhoráil teanga ábhartha i bhfeidhm – foráil teanga a bhí daingnithe le dlí chun úsáid na Gaeilge sa Ghaeltacht a chosaint. Ba shárú thar a bheith tromchúiseach é seo, is léir.

This is a very important investigation due to the link between the future of the Irish language as a community language in the Gaeltacht and the impact that an increase of non-Irish speakers could have on the protection of the language. The investigation demonstrated that Kerry County Council did not implement the relevant language provision – a language provision confirmed by law to protect the use of Irish in the Gaeltacht. This was obviously a very serious breach.

In 2004, rinneadh achomharc chuig an mBord Pleanála i gcoinne cead pleanála a dheonaigh Comhairle Contae Chiarraí d'fhorbairt 20 teach cónaithe ar na Cluainte, Baile an Fheirtéaraigh toisc nach raibh aon choinníoll maidir le húsáid na Gaeilge ceangailte leis an gcead sin. Chinn an Bord Pleanála in 2005 an fhorbairt a laghdú go

In 2004, an appeal was made to An Bord Pleanála against the granting of planning permission by Kerry County Council for a development of 20 dwelling houses in Na Cluainte, Baile an Fheirtéaraigh. The appeal was made because no condition concerning the use of the Irish language was attached to the Planning Permission. An Bord Pleanála decided in 2005 to reduce the development to 16 houses

dtí 16 theach agus coinníoll a cheangal leis an gcead pleanála a deonaíodh *“chun oidhreacht teanga agus cultúrtha an limistéir Ghaeltachta seo a chosaint”* i gcomhréir le cuspóir de chuid Phlean Forbartha Contae Chiarraí, 2003-2009.

De réir an choinníll a ceanglaíodh leis an gcead pleanála, chaithfeadh an forbróir comhaontú a dhéanamh le Comhairle Contae Chiarraí faoi alt 47 den Acht um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2000 sula dtosófaí ag tógáil na dtithe. Faoin gcomhaontú sin, chinnteofaí go mbeadh 75% nó 12 de na tithe á thógfaí *“curtha ar fáil dóibh siúd amháin a bhfuil líofacht sásúil i dteanga na Gaeilge taispeánta don údarás pleanála acu.”* Bhainfeadh an coinníoll leis an dá theach déag sin go ceann fiche bliain agus *“le teaghlaigh atá in áitíocht na dtithe, pé mar úinéara, léasaithe nó tionóntaithe, taobh amuigh de ligean saoire ar feadh tréimhsí mí amháin nó níos lú.”*

In 2017, rinne duine den phobal gearán liom inar líomhnaíodh nár chuir Comhairle Contae Chiarraí i bhfeidhm (nó nár fhéach sí chuige gur cuireadh i bhfeidhm) an coinníoll teanga sin.

Réimse Feidhme an Choimisinéara Teanga

“Ba ghá dom mé féin a shásamh go raibh d’údarás agam an gearán a fhiosrú.

Ní raibh aon imscrúdú déanta cheana ag m’Oifig ar ghearán den chineál seo. Ba ghá dom mé féin a shásamh go raibh d’údarás agam an gearán a fhiosrú. Is de thoradh ceanglas a bhí ar an gComhairle Contae faoin bPlean Forbartha Contae, 2003-2009 a shocraigh an Bord Pleanála gur chóir coinníoll teanga a chur ar an bhforbairt seo. Faoin Acht um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2000, caithfidh comhairle contae a bhfuil limistéir Ghaeltachta faoina cúram cuspóirí faoi leith a leagan síos ina Plean Forbartha Contae chun oidhreacht teanga agus chultúrtha na Gaeltachta a chosaint. Faoin Acht céanna, tá de dhualgas ar an údarás pleanála an plean forbartha a chur i bhfeidhm.

Tar éis na fiosrúcháin chuí a dhéanamh, ba léir dom gurbh ábhar é seo a tháinig faoi mo dhlinse ó tharla gur bhain sé le líomhain go bhféadfadh gur sáraíodh foráil d’achtachán a bhain le stádas nó húsáid teanga oifigiúla, sa chás seo, an tAcht um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2000.

and to attach a condition to the planning permission granted *“in order to protect the language and cultural heritage of this Gaeltacht area”*, in accordance with an objective of Kerry County Development Plan 2003-2009.

The condition attached to the planning permission required the developer to enter into an agreement with Kerry County Council under section 47 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 before the building work commenced. Under this agreement it was to be ensured that 75% or 12 of houses to be built were provided to *“persons who have demonstrated to the planning authority a reasonable fluency in the Irish language.”* This condition would pertain to the twelve houses for a period of twenty years and *“apply to households who occupy these dwellings whether as owners, lessees or tenants, other than holiday lettings for periods of one month or less.”*

In 2017, a member of the public made a complaint in which it was alleged that Kerry County Council did not implement this language condition or ensure it was implemented.

Jurisdiction of An Coimisinéir Teanga

“I needed to satisfy myself that the matter came within my authority to investigate.

My Office had not previously investigated such a complaint and I needed to satisfy myself that the matter came within my authority to investigate. It was as a consequence of a requirement on the County Council under the County Development Plan 2003-2009 that An Bord Pleanála decided to attach a language condition to this development. The Planning and Development Act required any county council with Gaeltacht areas within its area to include specific objectives within its County Development plan for the protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht. The same Act requires the planning authority to implement the development plan.

Having investigated this issue, I concluded that this was a matter that came under my jurisdiction as it concerned an allegation that a provision of an enactment that pertained to the status or use of an official language had possibly been breached, in this case, the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Ábhar an ghearáin á tharraingt anuas le Comhairle Contae Chiarraí

Sheol mé an t-imscrúdú foirmiúil ar an 6 Iúil 2018 nuair nach raibh aon toradh sásúil ar an bpróiseas neamhfhoirmiúil gearáin a fheidhmíonn m'Oifig mar chéad chéim. B'ábhar míshásaimh dom an mhoill a bhain leis na taifid iomlána ábhartha a chur faoi mo bhráid cé gur ghá a aithint go raibh gné stairiúil ag baint leis an imscrúdú seo a d'fhág go bhféadfadh go raibh sé níos dúshlánaí na taifid sin a sholáthar. Bhain an chuid ba mhó de na taifid a cuireadh ar fáil dom le comhfhreagrú le páirtithe éagsúla ach níor cuireadh aon taifead ar fáil a thabharfadh cuntas ar chinntí nó ar threoracha inmheánacha laistigh den Chomhairle Contae.

Comhaontú faoi Alt 47 den Acht um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2000

Bhí sé ar cheann de chinntí an Bhoird Pleanála go ndéanfaí na socruithe a bhain le cur i bhfeidhm an choinníll teanga i gcomhaontú a bhí le déanamh idir an Chomhairle Contae agus an forbróir faoi alt 47 den Acht um Pleanáil agus Forbairt sula dtosófaí ar an obair thógála. Cuireadh cóip den chomhaontú sin ar fáil dom. Shínigh an dá pháirtí é ar an 16 Bealtaine 2006. Thug mé suntas go raibh tús le cur leis an bhforbairt féin roinnt míonna roimhe sin, ar an 6 Feabhra 2006, de réir fógra tosaithe a bhí tugtha ag an bhforbróir don Chomhairle Contae i mí Eanáir na bliana sin.

“...mheas mé go raibh lochtanna bunúsacha ar an gcomhaontú a d'fhág nach raibh sé oiriúnach dá fheidhm.

In ainneoin go raibh an coinníoll teanga dearbhaithe sa chomhaontú agus go raibh socruithe don tástáil inniúlachta teanga luaite ann, mheas mé go raibh lochtanna bunúsacha ar an gcomhaontú a d'fhág nach raibh sé oiriúnach dá fheidhm. Ní raibh aon socruithe sonraíthe sa chomhaontú faoin mbealach a dtabharfaí feidhm don cheanglas teanga nuair a bhí sé beartaithe úinéireacht a aistriú nó úsáid a athrú. Ba locht bunúsach é seo a d'fhág nach raibh aon

The complaint is raised with Kerry County Council

As the informal complaint process that my Office operates had not led to any successful conclusion in this case, I launched the formal investigation on 6 July 2018. The delay in providing the relevant and complete records was unsatisfactory, although it should be acknowledged that there was an historical aspect to the investigation and that the provision of those records was possibly more challenging. The bulk of the records provided to me consisted of correspondence with various parties but no records were provided that would give any account of internal decisions made or directions given within the County Council.

An Agreement under Section 47 of the Planning and Development Act 2000

One of the decisions made by An Bord Pleanála was that the arrangements for the implementation of the language condition would be set out in an agreement made between the County Council and the developer under section 47 of the Planning and Development Act before the building work commenced. A copy of the agreement was provided to me. It was signed by the two parties on 16 May 2006. I noticed that the development had commenced several months previously, on 6 February 2006, according to the commencement notice provided by the developer to the County Council in January of the same year.

“...it appeared to me that there were fundamental faults in this agreement that rendered it not fit for purpose.

Although the language condition was affirmed in the agreement and reference was made to arrangements for the assessment of language competency, it appeared to me that there were fundamental faults in this agreement that rendered it not fit for purpose. No arrangements were specified in the agreement concerning the way the language requirement was to be implemented when ownership was being transferred or in the case of a change of use. This was a fundamental fault resulting in no legal or practical arrangements being in place to

socrúithe dlíthiúla ná praiticiúla déanta faoina gcuirfí an Chomhairle Contae ar an eolas go raibh úinéireacht á haistriú ná faoina ndéanfaí measúnú ar inniúlacht teanga an tráth sin.

Sonraí na gCeannaitheoirí

Idir na blianta 2006 agus 2008, scríobh an Chomhairle Contae chuig dlíodóir an fhorbróra faoi dhó ag iarraidh sonraí an ghníomhaire eastáit agus trí huaire ag iarraidh sonraí cheannaitheoirí na dtithe. Ní léir gur chuir an dlíodóir an t-eolas ar fáil riamh bíodh is gur bhagair an Chomhairle Contae imeachtaí dlí. D'éirigh an Chomhairle Contae as an hiarrachtaí sin in 2008.

In éagmais taifid ábhartha, ní bhfuarthas aon léargas cruinn ar dhearcadh na Comhairle Contae i leith chur i bhfeidhm an choinníll sin le linn na tréimhse sin 2005-2008 ná faoi na céimeanna a pleanáladh chun é a chur i bhfeidhm. Bunaithe ar an bhfianaise a cuireadh ar fáil don imscrúdú, ba léir dom an méid seo a leanas i dtaca leis na hiarrachtaí a rinneadh:

1. Is cosúil gur tosaíodh an fhorbairt sula ndearnadh comhaontú faoi alt 47 leis an bhforbróir.
2. Ní raibh forálacha an chomhaontaithe oiriúnach, i mo thuairimse, chun a chuspóir a chur i gcrích.
3. Bhí doiléire, moill agus patuaire ag baint leis na gníomhartha a rinneadh chun an comhaontú sin a chur i bhfeidhm agus ní raibh aon toradh orthu.
4. Éiríodh as na hiarrachtaí sin ar fad in 2008.

Ba léir freisin nár cuireadh agallamh Gaeilge ar aon áititheoir fadtéarmach agus nach ndeachthas i dteagmháil le ceannaitheoir aon cheann de na tithe a raibh an ceanglas Gaeilge ag baint leo, d'fhonn a chinntiú go gcuirfí an ceanglas sin i bhfeidhm.

Rinneadh fionnachtain gur theip ar Chomhairle Contae Chiarraí cuspóir Sg-2-2 de Phlean Forbartha Contae Chiarraí, 2003-2009 a chur i gcrích.

Príomh-mholtaí an Imscrúdaithe

Mhol mé go n-ullmhódh agus go mbunódh Comhairle Contae Chiarraí nósanna imeachta chun mo shástachta a bheidh le leanúint in aon

ensure that the County Council was informed when ownership was being transferred and whereby language competence would be assessed at this stage.

Purchasers' details

Between 2006 and 2008, the County Council wrote to the developer's solicitor on two occasions requesting the details of the estate agent and three times requesting details of the purchasers of the houses. It appears that the solicitor never furnished this information even though the County Council threatened legal action. The County Council abandoned these efforts in 2008.

In the absence of any relevant evidence, no accurate insight was available into the attitude of the County Council to the implementation of this condition during the period between 2005 and 2008 or into the steps that were planned to implement it. Based on the evidence that was provided to the investigation, the following was clear to me concerning the efforts made:

1. It appears that the development commenced before an agreement was made with the developer under section 47.
2. The provisions of the agreement were not appropriate, in my opinion, to achieve its objective.
3. The actions taken to implement the agreement demonstrated a lack of clarity, procrastination and a lack of commitment and they were ineffective.
4. These efforts were completely abandoned in 2008.

It was also clear that no long-term occupier was ever interviewed to determine their ability in Irish nor was any purchaser of any of the houses that had an Irish-language requirement attached to it ever contacted for the purpose of ensuring that this requirement was fulfilled.

A finding was made that Kerry County Council failed to implement objective Sg-2-2 of the Kerry County Development Plan 2003-2009.

Main Recommendations of the Investigation

I recommended that Kerry County Council prepare and establish, to my satisfaction, procedures to be followed in any case where a

chás ina leagtar coinníoll teanga ar chead pleanála ar fhorbairt tithíochta sa Ghaeltacht chun feidhm éifeachtach a thabhairt don choinníoll sin.

Mhol mé, chomh maith, go gcuirfeadh Comhairle Contae Chiarraí an Oifig seo ar an eolas maidir le haon chead pleanála a dheonófar i nGaeltacht Chiarraí go ceann cúig bliana i dtaca le hiarratais mhóra phleanála nó iarratais i leith forbairt breis agus trí theach cónaithe. D'áireofaí freisin an tslí ar comhlíonadh na cuspóirí ábhartha de chuid Phlean Forbartha Contae Chiarraí a bhaineann leis an nGaeilge nuair a bhí an t-iarratas pleanála sin á mheas. Sa chás go gceanglófaí coinníoll le cead pleanála a bhaineann le húsáid na Gaeilge, ba ghá faisnéis a thabhairt don Oifig seo i dtaobh na socruithe a chuirfear i bhfeidhm chun comhlíonadh an choinníll sin a dheimhniú.

Imscrúdú seolta: 6 Iúil 2018

Tuarascáil eisithe: 21 Márta 2019

language requirement is attached to planning permission for a housing development in the Gaeltacht, in order to ensure that the language requirement is implemented effectively.

I also recommended that the County Council inform my Office, for the next five years, of any planning permission granted in the Kerry Gaeltacht for large planning applications or applications in respect of three dwellings or more. This should include information relating to the way the relevant objectives in Kerry County Development Plan concerning the use of the Irish language were fulfilled when the application was considered. Where a condition concerning the use of the Irish language was attached to a planning permission I also required that information be provided about the arrangements put in place to confirm that the condition is fulfilled.

Investigation launched: 6 July 2018

Report issued: 21 March 2019

Comhairle Contae na Mí



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

Léirigh imscrúdú gur sháraigh Comhairle Contae na Mí na dualgais reachtúla teanga atá daingnithe sna rialacháin i dtaca le comharthaíocht faoi fho-alt 9(1) d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003 agus dualgais reachtúla teanga maidir le comharthaí tráchta.

Ó thús na bliana 2015 rinneadh 28 gearán le m'Oifig faoi chomharthaí de chuid Chomhairle Contae na Mí a fiosraíodh leis an gComhairle Contae ar bhonn neamhfhoirmiúil. Bhain moill fhada le freagra a chur ar fáil i gcás cuid shuntasach de na gearáin sin ach rinneadh dul chun cinn le linn na bliana 2018. Freagraíodh formhór na ngearán sin agus ceartaíodh nó

“*B'ábhar díomá dom gur lig an Chomhairle Contae fiosruithe a bhain le gearáin bhailí dul ar aghaidh chomh fada sin.*

Meath County Council



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

An investigation found that Meath County Council breached the statutory language obligations regarding signs in the regulations made under section 9(1) of the Official Languages Act 2003 and the statutory language obligations concerning traffic signs.

Since the beginning of 2015, 28 complaints were made to my Office concerning signs erected by Meath County Council. These were raised with the County Council on an informal basis. There were long delays in answering a substantial

“*It was disappointing that the County Council should allow inquiries into legitimate complaints to drag on for so long.*

athraíodh na comharthaí sin de réir mar ba ghá. Mar sin féin, i mí Feabhra 2019 bhí seacht gcinn de na gearáin sin nach bhfuarthas freagra críochnúil orthu go fóill agus roinnt díobh a bhí á bhfiosrú le fada.

B'ábhar díomá dom gur lig an Chomhairle Contae fiosruithe a bhain le gearáin bhailí dul ar aghaidh chomh fada sin. Bhí na gearánaigh i dteideal freagra a fháil agus na botúin a bheith ceartaithe. Caitheadh go leor d'acmhainn m'Oifige ag plé leis na gearáin seo, gearáin ar cheart é a bheith éasca go maith iad a réiteach. Leis an moill dho-ghlactha a bhí ar an gComhairle déileáil leis an bhfadhb, ní raibh an dara rogha agam ach imscrúdú a thionscnamh i gcás na seacht ngearán nár réitíodh go fóill.

Formhór na gcomharthaí sin ba i mBéarla amháin a bhí an téacs orthu ach áiríodh comhartha dátheangach amháin a raibh earráid sa téacs i nGaeilge air agus ar a raibh an téacs i nGaeilge ní ba lú ná an téacs i mBéarla.

Sa fhreagra a chuir Comhairle Contae na Mí ar fáil, aithníodh go raibh na comharthaí ar neamhréir leis an reachtaíocht ábhartha teanga. Míníodh freisin gur tugadh tosaíocht do réiteach cheist na gcomharthaí d'fhonn an obair sin a thabhairt chun críche a luaithe agus ab fhéidir.

Cuireadh tuairisc ar fáil don imscrúdú maidir leis an staid reatha a bhain le gach comhartha. Bhí comharthaí nua deartha nó curtha á ndearadh, bhí comharthaí neamhghéilliúla á mbaint anuas agus bhí comhartha nua curtha in airde faoin tráth sin i gcás ceann amháin díobh.

Ghlac an Chomhairle Contae leithscéal as an moill mhíchuí a bhain le réiteach ábhar na ngearán agus dheimhnigh sí a tiomantas leanúint leis an obair chun cáilíocht na comharthaíochta a fheabhsú sa todhchaí.

Príomh-mholtaí an Imscrúdaithe

Mhol mé don Chomhairle Contae na comharthaí a áiríodh san imscrúdú a cheartú nó a athrú, go gcloífi feasta leis na forálacha reachtúla teanga nuair a bheadh comharthaí á gcur in airde agus go ndaingneofaí nósanna imeachta le plé go cuí agus go tráthuíl le gearáin faoi sháruithe ar reachtaíocht teanga.

Imscrúdú seolta: 8 Feabhra 2019
Tuarascáil eisithe: 28 Bealtaine 2019

number of these complaints but progress was made during 2018. Nonetheless, by February 2019, seven complaints remained unresolved, some of which had been pursued for a very long time.

It was disappointing that the County Council should allow inquiries into legitimate complaints to drag on for so long. The complainants were entitled to a reply and to have mistakes corrected. A considerable amount of my Office's resources was expended in pursuing these complaints that could have been easily resolved. In view of the unacceptable delay in dealing with this difficulty I had no choice but to initiate an investigation in the case of the seven unresolved complaints.

The majority of the signs were in English only but one bilingual sign was included where there was an error in the Irish-language text and where the Irish-language text was smaller than the text in English.

It was acknowledged, in the reply from Meath County Council, that the signs were not in accordance with the relevant language legislation. It was also explained that the question of the signs had been given priority with a view to completing the work as soon as possible.

A report was provided to the investigation of the current situation regarding each sign. New signs were designed or being designed, noncompliant signs were being removed and, in the case of one of these, a new sign had already been erected.

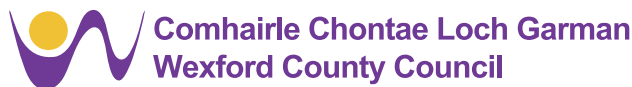
The County Council apologised for the inordinate delay in resolving these complaints and confirmed its resolve to continue its work to improve the standard of its signage in the future.

Main Recommendations of the Investigation

It was recommended that the County Council amend or replace the signs which were the subject of the investigation, that it ensure in future that the statutory language provisions are adhered to when new signs are erected and that procedures are put in place to deal appropriately and in a timely fashion with complaints received concerning breaches of language legislation.

Investigation launched: 8 February 2019
Report issued: 28 May 2019

Comhairle Contae Loch Garman



Léirigh imscrúdú gur sháraigh Comhairle Contae Loch Garman na dualgais reachtúla teanga atá daingnithe sna rialacháin i dtaca le comharthaíocht faoi fho-alt 9(1) d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003 agus dualgais reachtúla teanga maidir le comharthaí tráchtá.

“ Bhí os cionn bliana caite ó tarraingíodh anuas seacht gcinn de na gearáin sin leis an gComhairle Contae den chéad uair...

Faoi mhí na Samhna 2018, bhí dhá ghearán déag a bhain le comharthaí á bhfiosrú go neamhfhoirmiúil ag m'Oifigse le Comhairle Contae Loch Garman. Ní raibh freagra nó freagra críochnúil faighte orthu go fóill, d'ainneoin iarrachtaí leanúnacha réiteach a fháil orthu. Bhí os cionn bliana caite ó tarraingíodh anuas seacht gcinn de na gearáin sin leis an gComhairle Contae den chéad uair agus dhá bhliain caite i gcás cúig cinn díobhsan. Rinne mé cinneadh sna cúinsí sin imscrúdú foirmiúil a sheoladh.

Rinne mé imscrúdú cheana ar Chomhairle Contae Loch Garman in 2015 maidir le comharthaí dá cuid agus rinne mé fionnachtain san imscrúdú sin go raibh an Chomhairle Contae ag sárú na ndualgas reachtúil teanga trí chomharthaí i mBéarla amháin a chur in airde. I dtuarascáil an imscrúdaithe sin, mhol mé do Chomhairle Contae Loch Garman a chinntiú go gcoifí go hiomlán agus go cuí leis na forálacha reachtúla teanga atá sna rialacháin a rinneadh faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla i gcás comharthaí nua agus go ndaingneofaí cleachtais oibre chun plé go cuí agus go tráthúil le gearáin faoi sháruithe ar reachtaíocht teanga.

Bhí fianaise á cur faoi mo bhráid i bhfoirm na ngearán go raibh comharthaí fós á gcur in airde ag Comhairle Contae Loch Garman gan cloí leis na forálacha reachtúla atá sna rialacháin. I bhfianaise na ngearán a rinneadh le m'Oifig agus an easpa dul chun cinn a rinneadh nuair a

Wexford County Council



An investigation found that Wexford County Council breached the statutory language obligations regarding signs in the regulations made under section 9(1) of the Official Languages Act 2003 and statutory language obligations concerning traffic signs.

“ Seven of these complaints were originally raised with the County Council more than a year earlier...

By November 2018, my Office was informally investigating twelve complaints concerning signage with Wexford County Council. No reply or final reply had been received in respect of these complaints despite continuing efforts to resolve them. Seven of these complaints were originally raised with the County Council more than a year earlier and two years earlier in the case of five of those complaints. I decided, in these circumstances, to commence a formal investigation.

I had previously conducted an investigation into Wexford County Council in 2015 with regard to signs and I had made a determination in that investigation that the County Council had breached its statutory language obligations by erecting signs in English only. In that investigation report, I recommended that Wexford County Council ensure that the statutory language provisions contained in the regulations made under the Official Languages Act were, in future, fully and appropriately adhered to in the case of new signs and that working practices should be established to deal with complaints concerning breaches of language legislation in an appropriate and timely fashion.

Evidence was being presented to me in the form of complaints that Wexford County Council was still erecting signs without adhering to the provisions of the regulations. In view of the complaints received by my Office and the lack of

fiosraíodh na gearáin seo leis an gComhairle Contae, b'údar imní dom go bhféadfadh sé nár chuir an Chomhairle Contae na moltaí sin i bhfeidhm, i bhfeidhm go héifeachtach, nó gur éiríodh as a gcur i bhfeidhm.

I bhfreagraí na Comhairle Contae, deimhníodh go raibh na comharthaí neamhghéilliúla ceartaithe nó á gceartú. Ina theannta sin, thug an Chomhairle Contae cur síos don imscrúdú ar an gcóras a bhí i bhfeidhm aici chun gearáin ó m'Oifig a fhiosrú agus a fhreagairt agus thug sí le fios go raibh athbhreithniú á dhéanamh ar an gcóras sin chun na deacrachtaí atá ag baint leis a shainaithint agus a réiteach *"mar chuid d'iarracht a chinntiú go rachfar i ngleic le gearáin ar bhealach níos struchtúrtha agus níos tráthúla amach anseo."*

“...aithníodh i bhfreagra na Comhairle Contae nach raibh na nósanna imeachta sin á leanúint...

Maidir le comharthaí nua, aithníodh i bhfreagra na Comhairle Contae nach raibh na nósanna imeachta sin á leanúint (nó á leanúint i gcónaí) mar is cóir in áiteanna nó in earnálacha áirithe san eagraíocht agus nár mhór próiseas ní ba chórasaí a chur i bhfeidhm *"chun a chinntiú go mbeidh córas seiceála i gceist le gach comharthaíocht nua a fhaightear chun ceanglais Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla 2003 a chomhlíonadh, maidir le cibé rannóg a bheidh i gceist."* Cuireadh in iúl don imscrúdú go raibh na nósanna imeachta leasaithe ag an gComhairle Contae agus go raibh céim bhreise á cur leo. Ba chóir feasta an dréacht d'aon chomhartha nua a chur faoi bhráid an Oifigigh Gaeilge le profú sula gcuirtear an comhartha nua sin á dhéanamh.

Príomh-mholtaí an Imscrúdaithe

Chomh maith leis na comharthaí a cheartú, mhol mé don Chomhairle Contae go dtabharfaí chun críche an t-athbhreithniú ar an bpróiseas fiosraithe gearán ar tagraíodh dó ina freagra ar an imscrúdú agus go gcuirfí i bhfeidhm aon leasuithe is gá chun go mbeadh córas éifeachtach i bhfeidhm chun go bhfiosrófar agus go bhfreagrófar gearáin go críochnúil agus go sásúil.

Ina theannta sin, mhol mé nósanna imeachta leasaithe maidir le hordú comharthaí nua a eisiúint chuig an bhfoireann agus moltaí a chur

progress made when the complaints were raised with the County Council, it was a matter of concern to me that it appeared that the County Council had not implemented these recommendations, implemented them effectively or had subsequently ceased to implement them.

The County Council confirmed in its replies that the noncompliant signs were corrected or in the process of being corrected. Furthermore, the County Council provided to the investigation a description of the system it had in place to investigate complaints raised by my Office and it informed the investigation that a review of the system was being carried out to identify and correct the difficulties involved *"as part of an effort to ensure that complaints are dealt with in a more structured and prompt way in future."*

“...it was acknowledged in the County Council's reply that the procedures were not being followed...

With regard to new signs, it was acknowledged in the County Council's reply that the procedures were not being followed (or always followed) in the appropriate manner in certain areas or sections of the organisation and that a more systematic process was required *"to ensure that a system existed to check that all new signage acquired fulfils the requirements of the Official Languages Act 2003, no matter which section is involved."* The investigation was informed that the procedure had been amended and that an extra step had been added. In future a draft of any new sign is to be submitted to the Irish Language Officer for proofing before proceeding with the construction of the new sign.

Main Recommendations of the Investigation

In addition to correcting the signs, I recommended that the County Council complete the review of the complaints investigation process referred to in its reply and implement any amendments necessary to have an effective system in place to investigate and reply to complaints in an appropriate and timely fashion.

I also recommended that the County Council issue to its staff amended procedures for ordering signs and submit recommendations to

faoi mo bhráid maidir leis na céimeanna breise atá beartaithe ag an gComhairle Contae d'fhonn a dheimhniú go bhfuil na nósanna imeachta sin ar eolas ag an bhfoireann agus á leanúint acu agus go bhfuil siad daingnithe mar ghnáthchleachtas ar fud na heagraíochta.

Cé gur i nGaeilge a scríobh mé chuig an gComhairle Contae i dtaca leis an imscrúdú, ba i mBéarla a bhí an chéad leagan de dhá fhreagra ón gComhairle Contae, cé gur cuireadh leagan Gaeilge ar fáil ina dhiaidh sin. Is den riachtanas é go mbeadh socruithe i bhfeidhm ag comhlachtaí poiblí chun déileáil go héifeachtach le cumarsáid i scríbhinn as Gaeilge, pé acu uaimse nó ó aon duine eile. Rinne mé moladh dá réir sin.

Imscrúdú seolta: 23 Samhain 2018
Tuarascáil eisithe: 17 Iúil 2019

Comhairle Contae Lú



Léirigh imscrúdú gur sháraigh Comhairle Contae Lú na dualgais teanga atá sna forálacha reachtúla seo a leanas:

- alt 9(2) d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003 trí chumarsáid leis an bpost leictreonach i nGaeilge a fhreagairt i mBéarla,
- alt 18(1) den Acht toisc nár cuireadh i bhfeidhm gealltanais áirithe a daingníodh i Scéim Teanga na Comhairle Contae a bhaineann le soláthar seirbhísí agus eolais i nGaeilge ar shuíomh gréasáin na Comhairle Contae, agus
- na rialacháin agus na hordacháin atá déanta faoi fho-ailt 95(2) agus 95(16) den Acht um Thrácht ar Bhóithre, 1961 i gcás comharthaí tráchta áirithe.

Idir na blianta 2016 agus 2018, rinneadh cúig ghearán liom faoi na hábhair a bhain leis an imscrúdú seo. D'fhiosraigh m'Oifig na gearáin ar bhonn neamhfhoirmiúil le Comhairle Contae Lú ach níor chuir an Chomhairle Contae freagra, nó freagra críochnúil, ar fáil. Scríobh mé féin chuig Príomhfheidhmeannach na Comhairle Contae ar

me concerning the steps to be taken to ensure that staff are aware of the procedures and are following them and that the procedures are established as normal practice throughout the organisation.

Although I had written in Irish to the County Council regarding the investigation, the first version of the two replies received from the County Council were in English although Irish-language versions were subsequently provided. All public bodies need to have arrangements in place to deal effectively with written correspondence in Irish, from me or from anybody else. I recommended that this be done.

Investigation launched: 23 November 2018
Report issued: 17 July 2019

Louth County Council



An investigation demonstrated that Louth County Council infringed the language obligations in the following statutory provisions:

- section 9(2) of the Official Languages Act 2003 by replying in English to a communication by electronic mail written in Irish,
- section 18(1) of the Act by failing to implement certain commitments made in the County Council's language scheme that concern the provision of services and information through Irish on the County Council's website, and
- the regulations and orders made under subsections 95(2) and 95(16) of the Road Traffic Act 1961 in the case of certain traffic signs.

Between 2016 and 2018, I received five complaints concerning the matters addressed in this investigation. My Office raised the complaints with Louth County Council on an informal basis but the County Council did not reply or reply fully. I wrote to the Chief Executive

an 2 Aibreán 2019 maidir leis na gearáin. Níor freagraíodh an litir sin. Rinne mé cinneadh dá bharr sin, ar an 20 Bealtaine 2019, imscrúdú a sheoladh agus lorg mé freagra faoin 11 Meitheamh 2019. Níor chuir an Chomhairle Contae freagra ar fáil dom go dtí an 5 Iúil 2019.

Freagra i mBéarla

Sheol gearánach ríomhphost i nGaeilge chuig an gComhairle Contae ar an 30 Iúil 2018 agus cé go bhfuair sé freagra uathoibríoch ar ais ón gComhairle Contae a bhí dátheangach, fuair sé dhá fhreagra ina dhiaidh sin a bhí i mBéarla amháin. De réir alt 9(2) d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, tá dualgas ar chomhlachtaí poiblí cumarsáid i scríbhinn (lena n-áirítear ríomhphoist) a fhreagairt sa teanga oifigiúil cheánna ina bhfuarthas í.

Chuir an Chomhairle Contae in iúl ina freagra ar an imscrúdú gur meabhraíodh do gach rannóg nach mór aon chumarsáid a fhaightear trí Ghaeilge a fhreagairt i nGaeilge agus gur iarradh orthu dréachtfhreagraí a chur chuig an Oifigeach Gaeilge chun iad a aistriú.

Suíomh Gréasáin

Daingníodh Scéim Teanga faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla in 2007 i gcás Údarás Áitiúla Lú. Tugadh gealltanais sa Scéim Teanga sin eolas agus seirbhísí áirithe a chur ar fáil i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla ar shuíomh gréasáin na Comhairle Contae lena n-áirítear an t-ábhar statach, foirmeacha, córais ríomhíocaíochta agus idirghníomhaíochta agus foilseacháin áirithe ar nós na dtuarascálacha bliantúla agus na ráiteas airgeadais.

Rinneadh dhá ghearán liom nach raibh na gealltanais seo á gcur i bhfeidhm ag Comhairle Contae Lú agus rinne m'Oifig faireachán ar chomhlíonadh na ngealltanais sin de chuid na Scéime Teanga faoi alt 21(a) d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla. Scríobh Bainisteoir Géilliúlachta na hOifige seo chuig Príomhfheidhmeannach na Comhairle Contae ar

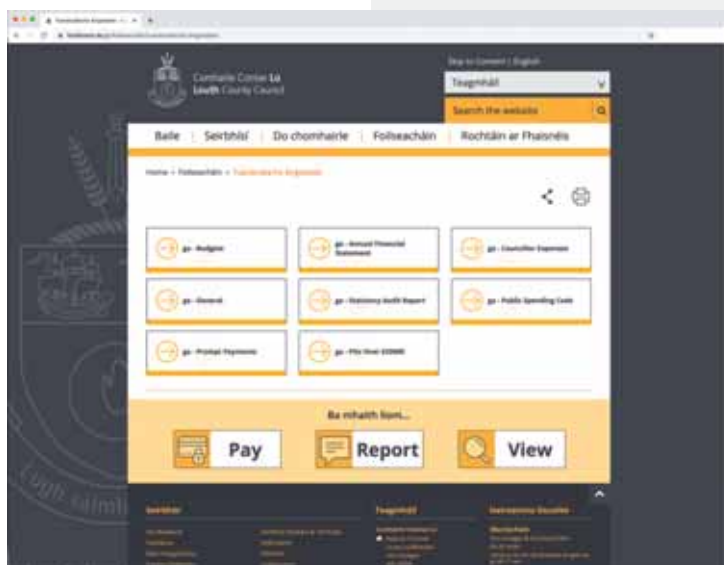
of the County Council on 2 April 2019 concerning the complaints. This letter was not replied to. I consequently decided on 20 May 2019 to launch an investigation and I required a reply by 11 June 2019. The County Council did not reply until 5 July 2019.

Reply in English

The complainant sent an email in Irish to the County Council on 30 July 2018 and although he received an automatic acknowledgement that was bilingual, he subsequently received two replies in English only. According to section 9(2) of the Official Languages Act, public bodies are required to reply to written communication (including emails) in the same official language in which the communication was received.

In its reply, the County Council informed the investigation that every section had been reminded that any communication received in Irish should be replied to in Irish and they had been advised to send draft-replies to the Irish Language Officer for translation.

Website



A Language Scheme was confirmed under the Official Languages Act in the case of Louth Local Authorities in 2007. Commitments were made in this Language Scheme to provide certain information and services on the County Council's website in Irish, including static content, forms, e-payment systems, interactive services and certain publications

such as the annual report and financial statements.

I received two complaints that Louth County Council was not adhering to these commitments contained in the Language Scheme and my Office also carried out an audit of compliance with these commitments under section 21(c) of the Official Languages Act. This Office's Compliance Manager wrote to the County Council's Chief Executive on 28 February 2019

an 28 Feabhra 2019 chun a chur in iúl di nach bhfacthas don Oifig go raibh na gealltanais sin á gcomhlíonadh go sásúil.

I bhfreagra na Comhairle Contae ar an imscrúdú, glacadh leis nár comhlíonadh agus nár cuireadh i bhfeidhm gach ceann de ghealltanais na Scéime Teanga ach mhaígh sí go raibh sí tiomanta dá cuid oibleagáidí faoin scéim sin a chomhlíonadh.

Gearáin faoi Chomharthaí Tráchta

Rinneadh trí ghearán liom maidir le comharthaí tráchtá i gContae Lú a tarraingíodh anuas le Comhairle Contae Lú agus nach bhfuarthas freagra, nó freagra críochnúil, orthu. Sa fhreagra ar an imscrúdú, dheimhnigh an Chomhairle Contae go raibh tuairisc tugtha don rannóg ábhartha agus gur cuireadh ceartú fhormhór na gcomharthaí sin ar an gclár oibreacha. Níor tugadh le fios cén uair a cheartófaí na comharthaí sin.

Bhain gearán amháin, áfach, le comharthaí tráchtá agus an logainm “Ó Méith” orthu ar bhóithre an R168 agus an R132. Thug an gearánach le fios go raibh an logainm litrithe go míchuinn (“O Méith” – gan síneadh fada ar an “O”). Chuir an Chomhairle Contae in iúl ina freagra dar dáta an 5 Iúil go ndearnadh cuardach agus nár aimsíodh aon chomhartha ar a raibh an logainm “Ó Méith” litrithe go míchuinn. Iarradh ar an bhfoireann, áfach, a dúradh, leanúint orthu á gcuardach agus go gceartófaí aon cheann a bhí litrithe go míchuinn dá n-aimseofaí a leithéid.

“...ní fhaca sé an logainm litrithe go cruinn ar aon chomhartha tráchtá...”

Ar an 11 Lúnasa 2019, thaistil oifigeach de chuid na hOifige seo bóithre an R168 agus an R132 agus chonaic sé go raibh “O Méith” ar thuairim agus 12 chomhartha tráchtá. Go deimhin, ní fhaca sé an logainm litrithe go cruinn ar aon chomhartha tráchtá (seachas dhá chomhartha ealaíonta ar imeall thoir agus thiar an tsráidbhaile féin).

Príomh-mholtaí an Imscrúdaithe

Mhol mé don Chomhairle Contae pé socruithe ba ghá a chur i bhfeidhm chun a chinntiú go gcoifí leis an dualgas reachtúil atá uirthi aon chumarsáid i scríbhinn, nó leis an bpost

to inform her that it appeared to this Office that these commitments were not being satisfactorily complied with.

In its reply to the investigation, the County Council conceded that not every commitment made in the Language Scheme had been implemented or complied with but the Council asserted that it fully committed to fulfilling its obligations under the Scheme.

Complaints concerning Traffic Signs

I received three complaints concerning traffic signs that were raised with Louth County Council which hadn't been replied to or replied to fully. In the reply to the investigation, the County Council confirmed that a report had been sent to the relevant section and that the majority of these signs had been placed on the works schedule. It was not indicated when these signs would be corrected.

One complaint related to traffic signs containing the place name “Ó Méith” on the R168 and R132 roads. The complainant indicated that the place name was misspelt (“O Méith” – without a síneadh fada on the “O”). The County Council informed the investigation in its reply of 5 July that a search had been carried out and no sign had been found with the placename “Ó Méith” incorrectly spelt. The Council said, however, that its staff were requested to continue searching and that it would amend incorrect signs if any were found.

“...he failed to find any road sign where the place name was correctly spelt...”

On 11 August 2019, an officer of this Office travelled the R168 and the R132 roads and found “O Méith” on about twelve traffic signs. Indeed, he failed to find any road sign where the place name was correctly spelt (with the exception of two artistic signs on the eastern and western edge of the village itself).

Main Recommendations of the Investigation

I recommended that the County Council put in place whatever arrangements were necessary to ensure that it complied with the statutory

leictreonach, a fhaightear i nGaeilge a fhreagairt sa teanga chéanna.

Mhol mé go n-ullmhófaí plan gníomhaíochta maidir le heolas agus seirbhísí a chur ar fáil as Gaeilge ar a suíomh gréasáin i gcomhréir leis na gealltanais atá déanta ina Scéim Teanga agus go ndéanfaí socruithe san eagraíocht chun a chinntiú go gcloítear leis na gealltanais sin feasta nuair a bheidh athruithe á gcur i bhfeidhm ar an suíomh nó faisnéis nó saoráidí nua á gcur air.

Mhol mé freisin na comharthaí tráchta a sonraíodh san imscrúdú a cheartú nó a athrú agus go ndaingneofaí cleachtais oibre sa Chomhairle Contae chun plé go cuí agus go tráthúil le gearáin ón Oifig seo.

Imscrúdú seolta: 20 Bealtaine 2019

Tuarascáil eisithe: 16 Deireadh Fómhair 2019

Comhairle Contae Cheatharlach



Léirigh imscrúdú gur sháraigh Comhairle Contae Cheatharlach na dualgais reachtúla teanga atá daingnithe sna rialacháin i dtaca le comharthaíocht faoi fho-alt 9(1) d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003 agus dualgais reachtúla teanga maidir le comharthaí tráchta.

Rinneadh trí ghearán liom in 2017 agus 2018 maidir leis an easpa Gaeilge ar chomharthaí i mbaile Cheatharlach ar chosúil gur chomharthaí de chuid Chomhairle Contae Cheatharlach iad. Fiosraíodh na gearáin sin leis an gComhairle Contae tríd an bpróiseas neamhfhoirmiúil a fheidhmíonn m'Oifig mar chéad chéim. Níor éirigh leis an gComhairle Contae aon fhreagra a chur ar fáil ar na gearáin sin in ainneoin ceithre cinn de mheabhúrcháin a bheith curtha chuig an gComhairle Contae ag m'Oifig, i ndiaidh a bhfiosraithe den chéad uair.

obligation to reply in Irish to any written communication or electronic mail received in Irish.

I recommended that the County Council prepare an action plan to provide information and services in Irish on its website in accordance with the commitments made in the Language Scheme and that arrangements be set in place to ensure that the commitment is adhered to in future when changes are made to the website or new information or facilities made available on it.

I also recommended that the traffic signs specified in the investigation are corrected and that work practices are established in the County Council to ensure that complaints raised by this Office are dealt with appropriately and in a timely fashion.

Investigation launched: 20 May 2019

Report issued: 16 October 2019

Carlow County Council



An investigation found that Carlow County Council breached the statutory language obligations with regard to signs in the regulations made under section 9(1) of the Official Languages Act 2003 and the statutory language obligations concerning traffic signs.

I received three complaints in 2017 and 2018 concerning the absence of Irish on signs in Carlow town that appeared to be signs belonging to Carlow County Council. These complaints were raised through the informal process my Office operates as a first step. The County Council failed to reply to any of these complaints notwithstanding four reminders sent by my Office after originally raising the complaints.

“B’ábhar mór díomá dom mar sin nach raibh gearáin ó m’Oifigse á bhfreagairt ag Comhairle Contae Cheatharlach...

Rinne mé imscrúdú cheana ar Chomhairle Contae Cheatharlach in 2015 maidir le comharthaí dá cuid, agus i measc na moltaí a rinne mé i dtuarascáil an imscrúdaithe sin, mhol mé go ndaingneofaí cleachtas oibre sa Chomhairle Contae le plé go cuí agus go tráthúil le gearáin faoi shárúithe ar reachtaíocht teanga. B’ábhar mór díomá dom mar sin nach raibh gearáin ó m’Oifigse á bhfreagairt ag Comhairle Contae Cheatharlach agus gur ghá dom imscrúdú a sheoladh arís d’fhonn fionnachtana a dhéanamh ar ábhar na ngearán a bhí déanta liom. Sheol mé an t-imscrúdú ar an 4 Iúil 2019.

Nuair nach bhfuarthas aon fhreagra ón gComhairle Contae, b’éigean do m’Oifig scríobh chuig an bPríomhfheidhmeannach arís ar an 7 Lúnasa 2019 chun comhairle a chur uirthi go raibh ceanglas reachtúil faoin Acht freagra a chur ar fáil. D’fhreagair an Chomhairle Contae i dtús báire ar an 3 Meán Fómhair 2019 agus chuir sí freagra níos iomláine ar fáil i bhfoirm tuarascáil dar dáta an 18 Deireadh Fómhair 2019.

Sa fhreagra a chuir Comhairle Contae Cheatharlach ar fáil, glacadh leis go raibh na comharthaí ar neamhréir leis an reachtaíocht ábhartha teanga. Deimhníodh go raibh céimeanna á nglacadh sna rannóga ábhartha den Chomhairle Contae chun na comharthaí sin a cheartú agus nuair a bheidís ceartaithe, go gcuirfí ar fáil fianaise á dheimhniú sin. Mhaígh an Chomhairle Contae go raibh an lucht bainistíochta agus an fhoireann an-dáiríre faoi chomhlíonadh na ndualgas reachtúil teanga a bhaineann le comharthaí.

Tugadh le fios go raibh córas i bhfeidhm ag an gComhairle Contae chun plé le gearáin ach go ndearnadh roinnt athruithe foirne le déanaí sa Rannóg Seirbhísí Corparáideacha agus go raibh *“easpa leanúnachais mar thoradh air.”* Maíodh go rabhthas tar éis aghaidh a thabhairt ar an gceist sin.

“It was very disappointing that Carlow County Council was still not replying to complaints...

I had previously carried out an investigation of Carlow County Council in 2015 concerning Council signs and included in the recommendations made in the investigation report I recommended that work practices be established in the County Council to deal in an appropriate and timely manner with complaints concerning breaches of language legislation. It was very disappointing that Carlow County Council was still not replying to complaints and that I needed to launch another investigation to make findings regarding complaints made to me. I launched the investigation on 4 July 2019.

As no reply was received, my Office wrote to the Chief Executive again on 7 August 2019 to advise her that there was a statutory requirement under the Act to reply. The County Council replied first on 3 September 2019 and provided a more comprehensive reply in the form of a report dated 18 October 2019.

In the reply provided by Carlow County Council, it was accepted that the signs were not in accordance with the relevant language legislation. It was confirmed that steps were being taken in the relevant sections of the County Council to correct the signs and when they were corrected, evidence would be provided to confirm this. The County Council asserted that the management and staff were highly committed to fulfilling the statutory obligations regarding the use of languages on signs.

The investigation was informed that the County Council had a system in place to deal with complaints but that several changes had recently been made in the Corporate Services Section *“which resulted in a lack of continuity.”* It was asserted that this issue had now been addressed.

“...ghlac an Chomhairle Contae leis, i bhfianaise na moille fada a bhain le freagra a chur ar fáil ar na gearáin, go raibh gá lena córas fiosraithe gearán a leasú...

Ina theannta sin, ghlac an Chomhairle Contae leis, i bhfianaise na moille fada a bhain le freagra a chur ar fáil ar na gearáin, go raibh gá lena córas fiosraithe gearán a leasú agus a fheabhsú lena n-áirítear spriocanna ama a gcaithfí cloí leo ón am a bhfaightear gearán go dtí go ndéantar ábhar an ghearán a réiteach agus freagra a chur ar fáil.

Príomh-mholtaí an Imscrúdaithe

Chomh maith leis na comharthaí a áiríodh san imscrúdú a cheartú nó a athrú, mhol mé nósanna imeachta leasaithe a eisiúint chuig an bhfoireann maidir le hordú comharthaí nua agus moltaí a chur faoi mo bhráid maidir leis na céimeanna breise atá beartaithe ag an gComhairle Contae, d'fhonn a dheimhniú go bhfuil na nósanna imeachta sin ar eolas ag an bhfoireann agus á leanúint acu agus go bhfuil na nósanna imeachta sin daingnithe mar ghnáthchleachtas ar fud na heagraíochta. Mhol mé freisin go gcuirfí i gcrích pé leasuithe ba ghá a dhéanamh ar an bpróiseas fiosraithe gearán chun go mbeadh córas éifeachtach i bhfeidhm faoina bhfiosrófaí agus faoina bhfreagrófaí go críochnúil agus go sásúil aon ghearán ón Oifig seo, laistigh den sprioc-am a sonraíodh.

Imscrúdú seolta: 4 Iúil 2019

Tuarascáil eisithe: 4 Nollaig 2019

“...in view of the long delay in replying to the complaints raised, the County Council accepted that its system for investigating complaints needed to be amended...

In addition, in view of the long delay in replying to the complaints raised, the County Council accepted that its system for investigating complaints needed to be amended and improved to include target time-frames to be adhered to from the time a complaint is received until that matter is dealt with and a reply provided.

Main Recommendations of the Investigation

In addition to correcting or replacing the signs included in the investigation, I recommended that amended procedures regarding the ordering of new signs be issued to staff and that proposals be submitted to me regarding the extra steps the County Council intends to take to confirm that staff are aware of these procedures and are following them and that these procedures are established as normal practice throughout the organisation. I also recommended that the necessary amendments be made to the complaints investigation process so that an efficient system is in place to investigate and to respond comprehensively within the specified time to any complaint received from this Office.

Investigation launched: 4 July 2019

Report issued: 4 December 2019

CÚLRA AN PHRÓISIS IMSCRÚDAITHE

Is croífhaidhm de chuid an Choimisinéara Teanga imscrúdú a thionscnamh má mheastar go bhféadfadh sárú a bheith déanta ar aon fhoráil de chuid an Achta nó d'aon achtachán eile a bhaineann le húsáid nó le stádas teanga oifigiúla. Is féidir liom imscrúdú a dhéanamh ar mo thionscnamh féin, de bhun gearáin, nó ar iarratas ón Aire.

Próiseas foirmiúil a bhíonn i gceist le himscrúdú ina gcuirtear an mhainneachtain reachtúil a d'fhéadfadh a bheith tarlaithe i láthair an chomhlachta phoiblí. Tugtar deis don chomhlacht poiblí a chás a chur i mo láthair agus is gá gach taifead ábhartha a chur ar fáil dom. Tar éis dom an t-eolas ar fad a fháil agus a mheá eisím tuarascáil imscrúdaithe chuig na páirtithe ábhartha ina mbíonn fionnachtana agus moltaí atá déanta agam, más cuí sin. Is féidir le páirtí in imscrúdú, nó aon duine a ndéanann mo chinneadh agus na moltaí difear dóibh, achomharc a dhéanamh ar phonc dlí chun na hArd-Chúirte.

Tá achoimre le fáil sa Tuarascáil seo ar na himscrúduithe a tugadh chun críche le linn na bliana 2019. Ní mór a thuiscint, áfach, gur cuntais ghairide atá i gceist leis na hachoirí agus is sna tuarascálacha oifigiúla atá na tuairiscí údarásacha. Tá achoimre thíos ar líon na n-imscrúduithe a tionscnaíodh agus a tugadh chun críche le linn 2019:

	2018	2019
Tugtha ar aghaidh ón mbliain roimhe	3	2
Imscrúduithe seolta	8	5
Iomlán idir lámha	9	7
Tugtha ar aghaidh go dtí an chéad bhliain eile	2	2
Iomlán críochnaithe	9	5

BACKGROUND TO INVESTIGATION PROCESS

A key function of An Coimisinéir Teanga is to initiate investigations if it is felt that a provision of the Act or of any other enactment concerning the use or status of an official language may have been breached. I can carry out an investigation on my own initiative, pursuant to a complaint, or at the request of the Minister.

An investigation involves a formal process whereby the possible statutory failure that may have occurred is presented to the public body. The public body is given the opportunity to present its case to me and is required to provide me with all relevant records. After evaluating all the information received, I issue an investigation report containing findings and recommendations, if appropriate, to all the relevant parties. A party to an investigation or any person affected by the findings and recommendations may appeal to the High Court on a point of law.

A summary of all the investigations completed during 2019 is available in this Report. However it should be clearly understood that these summaries are merely condensed accounts of the cases involved and that the authoritative accounts are contained in the official reports. The following is a summary of the number of investigations initiated and completed during 2019:

	2018	2019
Brought forward from previous year	3	2
Investigations launched	8	5
Total in hand	9	7
Brought forward to next year	2	2
Total completed	9	5

GEARÁIN

Le linn na bliana seo fuair m'Oifig 704 gearán. Is ardú 11% é sin ar an líon gearán a fuarthas le linn na bliana 2018 (638).

Is ó Chontae Bhaile Átha Cliath is mó a tháinig na gearáin ach tháinig líon suntasach freisin ó Chontaetha na Gaillimhe, Chill Chainnigh, Chiarraí agus Dhún na nGall. Dála na bliana anuraidh, tháinig tuairim agus an cúigiú cuid díobh ón nGaeltacht.

Fearacht blianta roimhe seo, fuarthas comhréiteach ar chuid mhór de na gearáin a rinneadh le m'Oifig tríd an gcóras neamhfhoirmiúil réitithe gearán a fheidhmíonn m'Oifig nó trí chomhairle a chur ar fáil do ghearánaigh. Is mór agam an comhoibriú a fuair m'Oifig ó chomhlachtaí poiblí áirithe le déileáil le cásanna ar an mbealach sin. I gcásanna den chineál seo cuireann an comhlacht poiblí moltaí sásúla os ár gcomhair chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar ábhar an ghearáin. Mura mbíonn aon toradh sásúil ar na hiarrachtaí seo tá sé de chumhacht agam imscrúdú foirmiúil a thionscnamh chun teacht ar fhionnachtana agus moltaí. Tá achomre ar na cásanna nár réitíodh tríd an gcóras neamhfhoirmiúil réitithe gearán agus inar críochnaíodh imscrúduithe foirmiúla ina leith sa chaibidil den Tuarascáil seo dar teideal *"Imscrúduithe"*.

Tá réimse na ngearán fairsing agus ilghnéitheach, agus bíonn an cur chuige atá de dhíth ag brath go mór ar dhearcadh an chomhlachta poiblí lena mbaineann sé. Bíonn comhoibriú maith le fáil go hiondúil ó fhormhór na gcomhlachtaí poiblí. Tá cur síos gairid anseo thíos ar shamplaí de ghearáin a réitíodh trí an gcóras neamhfhoirmiúil le linn na bliana le léargas a thabhairt ar an obair sin agus chun cuntas a thabhairt ar roinnt cásanna ar díol spéise iad.

Bhain os cionn 90% de na gearáin le cúig réimse faoi leith:

- forálacha i scéimeanna teanga,
- comharthaíocht agus stáiseanáireacht,
- freagraí i mBéarla ar chumarsáid i nGaeilge,
- comharthaí bóthair, agus
- fadhb le húsáid ainm agus sloinne i nGaeilge

COMPLAINTS

My Office received 704 complaints during the year. This constituted an increase of 11% on the number of complaints received in 2018 (638).

The greatest number of complaints were received from County Dublin although a significant amount was received from Counties Galway, Kilkenny, Kerry and Donegal. As transpired last year, about a fifth of the complaints came from the Gaeltacht.

As in previous years, my Office resolved the majority of complaints through the informal complaints process or through providing advice to the complainants. I appreciate the cooperation received from certain public bodies in dealing with cases in this manner. In cases such as these the public body makes satisfactory proposals to deal with the complaint. If our efforts do not yield a satisfactory outcome, I have the authority to initiate a formal investigation in order to make findings and recommendations. Summaries of cases that were not resolved in this informal manner and in respect of which formal investigations were completed are provided in the chapter of this Report entitled *"Investigations"*.

The range of complaints is wide and varied and the approach required in dealing with them often depends on the attitude of the public body concerned. Most public bodies are cooperative. A short account is given below of examples of complaints resolved through the informal process in order to provide an insight into the operation of this process and into some interesting cases.

Over 90% of the complaints related to five particular areas:

- provisions contained in language schemes,
- signage and stationery,
- replies in English to correspondence in Irish,
- road signs, and
- difficulty in using names and surnames in Irish

Cuimsíonn scéimeanna teanga réimse leathan gealltanais maidir le seirbhísí a chur ar fáil atá tugtha ag os cionn 130 comhlacht poiblí. Ní hionadh, mar sin, go mbaineann an líon is airde gearán leis an réimse seo. Is féidir le fíoriarmhairtí a bheith i gceist leis na seirbhísí a ndéantar gearán fúthu mar a léirítear i gcuid de na cásanna samplacha a bhfuil cuntas orthu anseo thíos – seirbhís a chur ar fáil do theaghlaigh Ghaeltachta nó toradh iarratais ar chomórtas fostaíochta chun dhá shampla a lua.

Tá an t-athrú aeráide go mór i mbéal an phobail ar na saolta seo. D'fhéadfaí a áitiú gurb ionann gan faisnéis a chur ar fáil i nGaeilge i dtaobh bheartais an Stáit agus constaic a chur roimh an nGaeilge agus lucht a labhartha páirt chuí a ghlacadh i ndioscúrsa poiblí na sochaí faoi mhórchéisteanna na linne.

Baineann sciar maith de na gearáin le comharthaíocht agus stáiseanáireacht agus ní haon iontas é sin, ach an oiread, de bharr a fheiceálaí is a bhíonn siad.

Tá líon agus céatadán na ngearán i dtaca le freagraí i mBéarla ar chomhfhreagras i nGaeilge fós measartha ard i bhfianaise an fhoráil seo a bheith i bhfeidhm ó 2004 agus í a bheith ar cheann de na forálacha is bunúsaí in Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla. Masla atá sna cásanna sin do na chomhfhreagraithe agus don rogha theanga atá déanta acu.

Bíonn deacrachtaí ag daoine a n-ainm agus a sloinne i nGaeilge a úsáid i ngnóthaí leis an Stát ar fháthanna éagsúla. I ndlínse ina bhfuil dá theanga oifigiúla ba chóir go n-aimseofaí meicníocht a thacódh agus a shimpleodh an tslí rompu siúd ar mian leo an leagan Gaeilge dá n-ainm a úsáid.

Baineann céatadán suntasach de na gearáin, chomh maith, le forálacha d'achtacháin eile a bhaineann le stádas nó le húsáid na Gaeilge. Ar ndóigh, baineann na gearáin maidir le húsáid na Gaeilge ar chomharthaí tráchta leis an réimse seo chomh maith, ach léirítear an figiúr sin go hiondúil mar fhigiúr neamhspleách sna staitisticí anseo thíos. Is sa *Lámhleabhar do Chomharthaí Tráchta* a leagtar síos na dualgais atá ar na húdaráis bóithre i leith úsáid na Gaeilge ar chomharthaí tráchta.

Is ceart a rá nár bhain na gearáin ar fad chun na hOifige le linn na bliana le sárú ar dhualgais reachtúla faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003 ná faoi aon achtachán eile, go deimhin.

Language schemes cover a wide variety of commitments made by over 130 public bodies to provide services. It is not surprising that the highest number of complaints relate to this area. The services complained of can have very real consequences as demonstrated in some of the examples described below – services to Gaeltacht families or the results of a competition for employment to mention two examples.

Climate change is a very topical issue these days. It could be argued that if information concerning the State's policies is not provided in Irish, an obstacle is put in the way of the full participation of the Irish language and those who speak it in our society's public discourse on the major questions of the day.

A significant number of complaints relate to signage and stationery which is not surprising, given their visibility.

The amount and percentage of complaints that relate to answers in English to correspondence written in Irish remains significantly high when one considers that this provision has been in place since 2004 and is one of the most basic provisions of the Official Languages Act. Such incidents are offensive to the correspondents and the language choice they have made.

People encounter difficulties in using the Irish-language versions of their names and addresses for various reasons when dealing with the State. In a jurisdiction which recognises two official languages, some mechanism should be found to support and facilitate people wishing to use the Irish-language version of their names.

A substantial percentage of complaints related also to the provisions of other enactments concerning the status or use of Irish. Of course, complaints relating to the use of Irish on road signs belong by right to this category, but this is generally provided as an independent figure in the statistics below. The obligations on roads authorities in respect of road traffic signage are set out in the *Traffic Signs Manual*.

It should be said that not all the complaints received by my Office during the years relate to infringements of statutory obligations under the Official Languages Act 2003 or indeed, any other

Mar a bhí amhlaidh blianta eile, bhain cuid díobh le deacrachtaí agus fadhbanna níos ginearálta a bhain le gnó a dhéanamh trí Ghaeilge nach gcuimsítear in aon dualgas reachtúil. Sna cásanna sin cuirtear comhairle dá réir ar fáil don ghearánach. Áirítear na cásanna sin sna 403 cás inar tugadh comhairle don phobal le linn na bliana. Is ionann iad agus 57% de na ceisteanna ar fad a chuir an pobal faoi bhráid m'Oifige. Ina fhianaise sin, tá sciar seirbhísí agus faisnéise a bhfuil éileamh áirithe orthu as Gaeilge, agus nach bhfuil foráil déanta dá soláthar go fóill.

enactment. As transpired in other years, some of these related to difficulties of a more general nature when conducting business through Irish that are not covered by any statutory provision. In these cases, the complainant is advised accordingly. These cases are included in the 403 cases in which advice was given to the public during the year. This constitutes 57% of all the questions submitted to my Office by the public. This indicates that there is certain demand for a range of services and information in Irish that is not provided for.

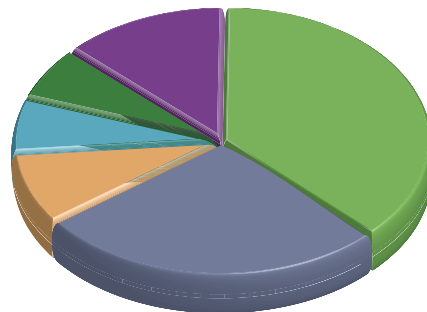
Gearáin: Deacrachtaí agus Fadhbanna – Staitisticí Complaints: Difficulties and Problems – Statistics

Gearáin le linn 2019 Complaints during 2019

	2018	2019
Gearáin <i>Complaints</i>	328	301
Comhairle tugtha <i>Advice given</i>	306	403
Iomlán <i>Total</i>	634	704

Tá anailís ar na cásanna éagsúla sna staitisticí agus sna léaráidí seo a leanas:
An analysis of the various cases is provided in the following statistics and illustrations:

Céatadán na ngearán de réir cineáil Percentage of complaints by type

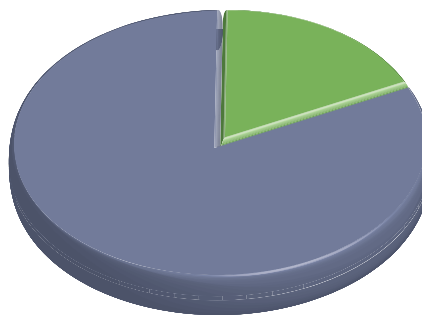


	2018	2019
Foráil de scéim teanga (san áireamh: cártaí aitheantais, suíomhanna gréasáin agus foirmeacha) <i>Provision of a language scheme (including identity cards, websites and forms)</i>	35.5%	37.5%
Easpa Gaeilge ar chomharthaíocht & stáiseanóireacht <i>Lack of Irish on signage and stationery</i>	29.7%	27.4%
Easpa Gaeilge ar chomharthaí bóthair <i>Lack of Irish on road signs</i>	8.5%	8.9%
Freagraí i mBéarla ar chumarsáid i nGaeilge <i>Replies in English to correspondence in Irish</i>	9.0%	6.7%
Fadhb le hainm agus/nó le seoladh i nGaeilge <i>Problem with use of name and/or address in Irish</i>	8.0%	6.7%
Achtacháin eile a bhaineann le stádas nó le húsáid na Gaeilge <i>Other enactments relating to the use or status of Irish</i>	2.7%	3.3%
Foilsíú doiciméad áirithe <i>Publication of certain documents</i>	1.4%	2.8%
Eile (cúiseanna aonair) <i>Other (individual issues)</i>	5.2%	6.7%
Iomlán <i>Total</i>	100%	100%

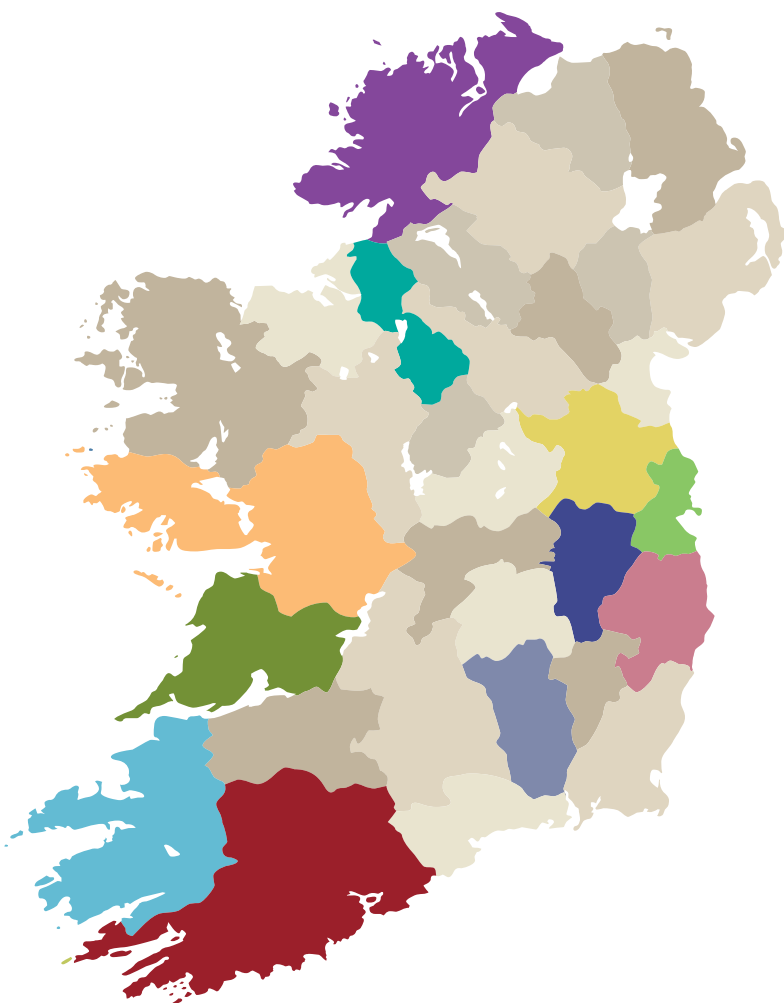
Gearáin: An Ghaeltacht agus lasmuigh den Ghaeltacht

Complaints: Gaeltacht and non-Gaeltacht

	2018	2019
 An Ghaeltacht <i>Gaeltacht</i>	20%	18%
 Lasmuigh den Ghaeltacht <i>Non-Gaeltacht</i>	80%	82%
Iomlán Total	100%	100%



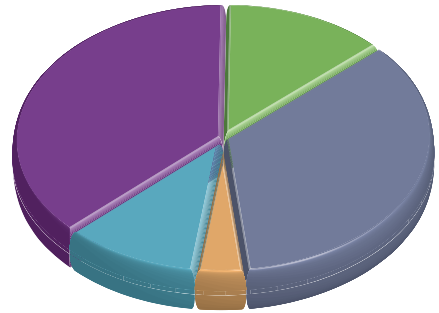
Gearáin de réir contae Complaints by county



	2018	2019
 Baile Átha Cliath <i>Dublin</i>	32.8%	35.3%
 Gaillimh <i>Galway</i>	13.4%	15.3%
 Cill Chainnigh <i>Kilkenny</i>	16.5%	8.9%
 Ciarraí <i>Kerry</i>	4.4%	4.2%
 Dún na nGall <i>Donegal</i>	3.1%	4.1%
 Corcaigh <i>Cork</i>	3.1%	3.5%
 Liatroim <i>Leitrim</i>	2.3%	3.2%
 Cill Mhantáin <i>Wicklow</i>	2.6%	2.5%
 Cill Dara <i>Kildare</i>	1.4%	2.5%
 An Mhí <i>Meath</i>	4.1%	1.7%
 An Clár <i>Clare</i>	1.4%	1.4%
Lasmuigh den dlinse <i>Outside the jurisdiction</i>	1.0%	1.2%
Eile <i>Other</i>	13.9%	16.2%
Iomlán Total	100%	100%

Gearáin de réir cineál comhlachta phoiblí Complaints by type of public body

	2018	2019
 Ranna & oifigí rialtais Government departments & offices	18.5%	13.2%
 Údaráis áitiúla Local authorities	36.0%	34.9%
 Údaráis sláinte Health authorities	3.0%	3.9%
 Údaráis oideachais Education authorities	3.0%	10.9%
 Eagraíochtaí eile stáit Other state organisations	39.5%	37.1%
Iomlán Total	100%	100%



Samplaí de Ghearáin a Fiosraíodh in 2019

BOIRD OIDEACHAIS AGUS OILIÚNA



Fuair gearánach freagra i mBéarla ó dhá cheann déag de Bhoird Oideachais agus Oiliúna na tíre ar litreacha i nGaeilge uaidh. D'fhiosraigh m'Oifig an gearán seo leis na Boird a bhí i gceist

agus bhí freagra faighte ó naoi gcinn díobh faoi dheireadh na bliana 2019. Sna freagraí a fuarthas uathu, ghlac na Boird leithscéal as ar tharla, mhínigh siad gur earráid nó botún riaracháin faoi deara nár cloíodh leis an dualgas reachtúil agus thug siad le fios go raibh céimeanna á nglacadh acu chun an dualgas sin a chur i gcuimhne dá bhfoireann.

Cheapfaí go dtabharfaí freagra i nGaeilge ar litir i nGaeilge mar ghnáthchúirtéis, gan beann ar aon dualgas reachtúil, ach tá dualgas reachtúil ann cumarsáid i scríbhinn a fhreagairt sa teanga oifigiúil chéanna ina bhfuarthas í, agus bhí an dualgas sin i bhfeidhm sular bunaíodh na Boird Oideachais agus Oiliúna. Is ábhar imní agus díomá go dteipfeadh chomh fairsing sin ar earnáil iomlán dualgas bunúsach de chuid an Achta a chomhlíonadh. Is dealraitheach nár tugadh aird a dóthain ar an dualgas sin i gcleachtais riaracháin na n-eagraíochtaí.

Examples of Complaints Examined in 2019

EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARDS



A complainant received replies in English from twelve Education and Training Boards to letters sent in Irish. My Office investigated this complaint with the Boards in question and had received replies from nine of them by the end of 2019. In the replies received, the Boards apologised for what had happened, they explained that an administrative error or oversight was responsible for not adhering to the statutory obligation and they indicated that steps were being taken to remind staff of this obligation.

One would imagine that a letter written in Irish would be replied to in Irish as a common courtesy, regardless of any statutory obligation, however there is a statutory obligation to reply to a written communication in the same official language in which it was received and this obligation was in place before the Education and Training Boards were established. That an entire sector should so widely fail to fulfil such a basic obligation under the Act is a matter of concern and disappointment. It appears that this obligation was not sufficiently addressed in the administrative practices of these organisations.

FEIDHMEANNACHT NA SEIRBHÍSE SLÁINTE



Rinne beirt tuismitheoirí ón nGaeltacht gearán liom nach raibh seirbhís ar fáil as Gaeilge dóibhsean ná dá bpáistí óga ó Fheidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte nuair a thug siad a bpáistí chuig clinic imdhíonta MMR a reáchtáladh in Ionad Leighis i gceantar láidir Gaeltachta in iarthar na tíre.

Ba chainteoirí dúchais iad na tuismitheoirí agus a bpáistí óga araon ach nuair a tháinig siad go dtí an clinic, bhí sé á reáchtáil i mBéarla agus ní raibh an fhoireann a bhí i mbun an ghnó in ann plé leo i nGaeilge.

Daingníodh Scéim Teanga faoin Acht i gcás Fheidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte in 2005 i réigiún an Iarthair. Tugadh gealltanais sa scéim go ndéanfaí gach iarracht seirbhísí sláinte a chur ar fáil sa teanga oifigiúil is ansa leis an othar agus go mbunófaí córais le cinntiú go mbeadh teaghlaigh atá ag tógáil clainne le Gaeilge in ann teacht ar scrúduithe agus tástálacha éagsúla trí Ghaeilge.

I bhfreagra na Feidhmeannachta, glacadh leithscéal as ar tharla. Tugadh le fios go raibh dúshlán ag baint le baill foirne a chur ar fáil don Ghaeltacht a raibh Gaeilge acu, ach tugadh le fios go raibh treoir tugtha do na bainisteoirí cuí a chinntiú go gcuirtear baill foirne le Gaeilge ar fáil nuair atá gá leo chun seirbhísí sláinte a chur ar fáil trí Ghaeilge. Ina theannta sin, cuireadh in iúl go n-ullmhófaí agus go bhfeidhmeofaí plan do na seirbhísí bunchúraim i nGaillimh a chinnteodh go bhfaigheadh cainteoirí Gaeilge seirbhísí trí Ghaeilge.

Léirítear go suntasach san eachtra seo an riachtanas bonn reachtúil a chur faoi sholáthar seirbhísí poiblí trí Ghaeilge sa Ghaeltacht – riachtanas ar thagair mé dó i réamhrá na tuarascála seo. Tá inmharthanacht na Gaeilge mar theanga phobail ag brath ar an líon róbheag tuismitheoirí a chuireann an dua agus an dúshlán orthu féin a gclann a thógáil le Gaeilge – níor chóir don Stát féin a bheith ag cur leis na constaicí iomadúla atá ina mbealach.

HEALTH SERVICE EXECUTIVE



Two parents from the Gaeltacht complained to me that a service in the Irish language was not available to either themselves or their young children from the Health Service Executive when they brought their children to an MMR vaccination clinic run in a Health Centre in a strong Gaeltacht area in the west of Ireland.

Both the parents and the young children were native Irish speakers but when they arrived at the clinic, it was being run through English and the staff involved were unable to deal with them through Irish.

A Language Scheme under the Act was confirmed in 2005 for the Health Service Executive for the Western region. A commitment was made in this scheme to make every effort to provide health services in the official language preferred by the patient and that a system would be established to ensure that families rearing their children through Irish could avail of various examinations and tests in Irish.

In its reply, the HSE apologised for the incident. It explained that providing staff for the Gaeltacht with a competency in Irish presented challenges, however a direction had been given to the relevant managers to ensure that staff with Irish were made available when required to provide health services through Irish. In addition, the HSE informed us that a plan would be prepared and implemented in the primary care services in Galway to ensure that Irish speakers would receive services in Irish.

This incident vividly demonstrates the need that I referred to in my introduction to this report, to put the provision of public services through Irish in the Gaeltacht on a statutory footing. The survival of Irish as a living community language depends on the small number of parents who take upon themselves the trouble and challenge of rearing their children as Irish speakers – the State itself should not add to the many difficulties they face.

AN ROINN CUMARSÁIDE, GNÍOMHAITHE AR SON NA hAERÁIDE AGUS COMHSHAOIL



**Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaithe
ar son na hAeráide & Comhshaoil**
Department of Communications,
Climate Action & Environment

Níorbh fhéidir le gearánach teacht ar leagan Gaeilge de *Plean Gnímh don Aeráid, 2019* a d'fhoilsigh an Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaithe ar son na hAeráide agus Comhshaoil.

Sa Scéim Teanga a daingníodh i gcás na Roinne in 2018, tugadh an gealltanais go gcuirfí ar fáil go dátheangach “*Ráitis nó athbhreithnithe móra ar bheartais in earnálacha na cumarsáide, craoltóireachta, poist, fuinnimh, gníomhaithe ar son na haeráide, comhshaoil agus acmhainní nádúrtha.*”

Is ar an mbonn seo a tharraing m’Oifig an cheist seo anuas leis an Roinn. Mhínigh an Roinn nár cuireadh leagan Gaeilge den doiciméad ar fáil ar a suíomh gréasáin ag an am céanna leis an leagan Béarla toisc go raibh athruithe á ndéanamh ar an leagan Béarla díreach go dtí an pointe ar foilsíodh é. Cuireadh ar a súile don Roinn go raibh roinnt míonna ann ó foilsíodh an leagan Béarla. Cuireadh leagan Gaeilge den Phlean ar fáil agus glacadh leis go gcaithfí na ráitis nó na hathbhreithnithe ar tagraíodh dóibh sa ghealltanais sa Scéim Teanga a fhoilsiú i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla ag an am céanna.

AN POST



Bhí lipéad de chuid an Phoist greamaithe de chlúdach litreach a seachadadh chuig gearánach inar tugadh le fios go raibh an seoladh “*mícheart*”. Is amhlaidh a bhí an seoladh scríofa i nGaeilge ar an gclúdach sin agus tugadh le fios sa lipéad a greamaíodh de gurbh é an leagan Béarla den seoladh an leagan cruinn. Ghoill sé ar an ngearánach go rabhthas ag tabhairt le fios nach raibh na leaganacha Gaeilge de na logainmneacha cruinn agus nár chóir iad a úsáid.

Tá geallta ag an bPost ina Scéim Teanga faoin Acht gurb é aidhm na heagraíochta go bhfaigheadh postas ar a bhfuil seoladh i nGaeilge an leibhéal céanna seirbhíse agus a gheobhadh postas ar a bhfuil seoladh Béarla.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS, CLIMATE ACTION AND ENVIRONMENT



**Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaithe
ar son na hAeráide & Comhshaoil**
Department of Communications,
Climate Action & Environment

A complainant was unable to obtain an Irish-language version of the *Climate Action Plan 2019* published by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment.

In the Language Scheme confirmed for the Department in 2018, a commitment was given to publish bilingually “*Major policy statements or reviews in the communications, broadcasting, postal, energy, climate action, environment and natural resources sectors.*”

It was in this context that my Office raised the question with the Department. The Department explained that an Irish-language version had not been provided on its website at the same time as the English-language version because amendments were being made to the English version right up to the time it was published. It was pointed out to the Department, however, that several months had passed since the publication of the English-language version. An Irish-language version was provided and it was accepted that the major statements or reviews referred to in the commitment made in the Language Scheme should be published both in Irish and in English at the same time.

AN POST



A label from An Post indicating that the address was “*incorrect*” was attached to the envelope of a letter delivered to a complainant. The address on the envelope was written in Irish and the label indicated that the English-language version of the address was the correct version. The complainant was aggrieved that it had been indicated that the Irish versions of the placenames were incorrect and that they should not be used.

In its Language Scheme under the Act, An Post affirmed the organisation’s aim that post addressed in Irish should receive that same level of service as post addressed in English.

Nuair a d'fhiosraigh m'Oifig an cheist leis an bPost, mhínigh An Post nár cheart go ngreamófaí an lipéad den litir ná go dtabharfaí le fios gurb iad na logainmneacha Béarla amháin na leaganacha cruinne. Ní raibh sé seo de réir nósanna oibriúcháin caighdeánacha na heagraíochta. Glacadh leithscéal leis an ngearánach agus meabhraíodh d'fhoireann na hoifige áitiúla seachadta agus d'fhoireann na n-oifigí seachadta go léir na nósanna oibriúcháin is gá a leanúint maidir le litreacha a bhfuil seoladh i nGaeilge orthu.

BORD OIDEACHAIS AGUS OILIÚNA NA GAILLIMHE AGUS ROS COMÁIN



Rinne duine gearán liom maidir leis an leagan Gaeilge d'fhoirm iarratais do phoist mhúinteoireachta a chuir Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna na Gaillimhe agus Ros Comáin ar fáil do chomórtas earcaíochta.

Níorbh ionann cuid de na hinniúlachtaí ar iarradh ar iarratasóirí eolas a chur ar fáil fúthu sa leagan Gaeilge den fhoirm agus iad sin a bhí sa leagan Béarla. Bhí an gearánach den tuairim dá ndéanfadh iarratasóir leagan Gaeilge den fhoirm a chomhlánú, nach mbeadh an t-eolas a bhí curtha ar fáil aige/aici ag freagairt in aon chor do na hinniúlachtaí a sonraíodh sa bhunleagan Béarla den fhoirm agus gur dóiche go bhféadfadh sin an t-iarratasóir a chomhlánaigh an leagan Gaeilge den fhoirm faoi mhíbhuntáiste mór.

Nuair a tharraing m'Oifig an gearán seo anuas leis an mBord, chuir sé leagan leasaithe den fhoirm Ghaeilge ar fáil agus ghabh sé leithscéal as an míchaoithiúlacht a chruthaigh an earráid riaracháin seo.

Is léiriú é seo ar a thábhachtaí agus atá sé go ndéanfadh comhlachtaí poiblí cúram cuí de cháipéisí atá á n-aistriú lena gcur ar fáil don phobal ionas nach gcruthaítear deacrachtaí gan ghá do dhaoine a bhaineann úsáid astu.

When my Office investigated the matter with An Post, An Post explained that the label should not have been attached to the letter nor should it have been indicated that only the English versions of the placenames were correct. These actions were not in accord with the operational standards of the organisation. It apologised to the complainant and the staff of the local delivery office and the staff of all its delivery offices were reminded of the operational procedures to be followed in delivering letters addressed in Irish.

GALWAY AND ROSCOMMON EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD



A member of the public made a complaint concerning the Irish-language version of an application form for teaching posts provided by the Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board in a recruitment competition.

The competencies that the applicant was required to demonstrate were not the same in the Irish-language version of the form as in the English-language version. The complainant was of the opinion that if an applicant filled in the Irish version of the form, the information provided by him/her would not correspond at all to the competencies specified in the original English version of the form and would probably put the applicant who filled in the Irish version at a great disadvantage.

When my Office raised this complaint with the Board, it provided an amended version of the Irish-language form and apologised for the inconvenience this administrative error had caused.

This illustrates the importance of taking adequate care when public bodies have documents translated to make them available to the public, so that unnecessary difficulties are avoided for people using them.

AN ROINN LEANAÍ AGUS GNÓTHAÍ ÓIGE



**An Roinn Leanaí
agus Gnóthaí Óige**
Department of Children
and Youth Affairs

D'fhoilsigh an Roinn Leanaí agus Gnóthaí Óige Dréachtphean Gníomhaíochta Feighlíochta Leanaí i mí Aibreáin chun críche comhairliúcháin poiblí. Nuair nár bhféidir le duine den phobal teacht ar leagan Gaeilge den Dréachtphean, rinne sé gearán liom faoi.

Faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, ní mór aon doiciméad ina bhfuil tograí nó moltaí ó thaobh beartas poiblí a fhoilsiú go comhuaineach i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla. Chonacthas dúinn go raibh tograí beartais phoiblí sa doiciméad seo agus tharraingíomar an gearán anuas leis an Roinn ar an mbonn sin.

Ghlac an Roinn leis gur chóir go bhfoilseofaí an Dréachtphean féin go comhuaineach sa dá theanga agus nár tharla sin. Ina ionad sin, d'fhoilsigh an Roinn leagan achomair mhínitheach i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla agus chuir sí an ceistneoir ar líne sa dá theanga. Dá inmholta an méid sin a chur ar fáil sa dá theanga ní shásaítear an fhoráil reachtúil leis.

I ndiaidh don Oifig seo dul i dteagmháil leis an Roinn, d'fhoilsigh sí leagan Gaeilge den Dréachtphean agus cuireadh síneadh leis an tréimhse ina bhféadfadh an pobal aighneachtaí a dhéanamh.

Cuireadh ina luí ar an Roinn, áfach, nach féidir neamhaird a dhéanamh den dualgas reachtúil doiciméad den chineál seo a fhoilsiú go comhuaineach i ngach ceann de na teangacha oifigiúla agus gur gá é sin a chinntiú amach anseo.

COMHAIRLE CONTAE NA GAILLIMHE



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Rinneadh gearán le m'Oifig i dtaca leis na comharthaí moillithe luais a chuir Comhairle Contae na Gaillimhe in airde ar an gCeathrú Rua agus ar an Spidéal i gceantar Gaeltachta na Gaillimhe. Ba chomharthaí teachtaireachta inathraithe (VMS) iadsan ar ar taispeánadh teachtaireachtaí i mBéarla amháin agus bhí an gearánach míshásta go gcuirfí a leithéid ar fáil i gceantar Gaeltachta.

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH AFFAIRS



**An Roinn Leanaí
agus Gnóthaí Óige**
Department of Children
and Youth Affairs

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs published a Draft Childminding Action Plan in April for public consultation. When a person was unable to obtain an Irish-language version of the Draft Plan, he made a complaint to me.

Under the Official Languages Act any document containing public policy proposals must be published simultaneously in both the Irish and English languages. It appeared to us that the document did contain public policy proposals and the matter was raised with the Department on this basis.

The Department conceded that the Draft Plan should have been published simultaneously in both languages and that this had not happened. Instead, the Department had published an abridged explanatory version in Irish and in English and provided the on-line questionnaire in both languages. While the provision of these was laudable it does not fulfil the statutory provision.

After my Office contacted the Department, however, it published an Irish-language version of the Draft Plan and the period during which the public could make submissions was extended.

It was emphasised to the Department, however, that the statutory requirement to publish such a document simultaneously in both official languages cannot be ignored and must be adhered to in future.

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

A complaint was received concerning speed signs erected by Galway County Council in An Cheathrú Rua and An Spidéal in the Galway Gaeltacht area. These were variable message signs (VMS) that displayed messages in English only and the complainant was dissatisfied that such signs should be erected in a Gaeltacht area.

Tá na ceanglais reachtúla maidir le húsáid teangacha ar chomharthaí tráchta sonraithe sa “Lámhleabhar do Chomharthaí Tráchta” a fhoilsíonn an Roinn Iompair. Mínítear sa “Lámhleabhar”, cé nach féidir téacs i nGaeilge a bheith san áireamh i gcónaí ar VMS, gur chóir go mbeadh an téacs i nGaeilge ar aon cheann de na comharthaí sin a chuirtear in airde sa Ghaeltacht.

Tar éis do m’Oifig an scéal a fhiosrú leis an gComhairle Contae chuir sí in iúl go raibh an téacs Béarla mar réamhshocrú ar na comharthaí nua a cuireadh in airde. Leasaíodh na comharthaí seo ionas nach mbeadh aon téacs i bhfocail á thaispeáint orthu ach luas na feithicle amháin agus feidhm á baint as dath uaine nó dearg chun a chur in iúl an rabhthas ag cloí leis an teorainn luais.

AN ROINN OIDEACHAIS AGUS SCILEANNA



**An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna**
Department of
Education and Skills

Rinneadh gearán nach raibh fáil ar leagan Gaeilge den chlár *Walk Tall* nó *Misneach* ar chuid é den churaclam oideachais shóisialta phearsanta agus sláinte do bhunscoileanna agus gur chruthaigh sé sin deacrachtaí do bhunscoileanna a bhíonn ag teagasc trí Ghaeilge.

De réir alt 7(2)(d) den Acht Oideachais, 1998, is feidhm de chuid an Aire Oideachais agus Scileanna seirbhísí taca trí Ghaeilge a sholáthar do scoileanna aitheanta a chuireann teagasc trí Ghaeilge ar fáil agus d’aon scoil aitheanta eile a iarrann soláthar den sórt sin. Is ar an mbonn sin a rinne m’Oifig teagmháil leis an Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna faoin gceist.

Ghlac an Roinn leis go raibh moill ar an leagan Gaeilge de *Walk Tall* de bharr easpa saineolais ar an nGaeilge sa tSeirbhís um Fhorbairt Ghairmiúil do Mhúinteoirí. Bhí socruithe déanta, áfach, chun aistriúcháin a chur á ndéanamh agus chun go n-uaslódálfaí na leaganacha Gaeilge de na leabhair ar shuíomh gréasáin na Seirbhíse a luaithe agus a bheidís ar fáil.

The statutory requirements regarding the use of languages on traffic signs are specified in the “Traffic Signs Manual” published by the Department of Transport. It is explained in the “Manual” that while it may not be possible to include an Irish-language text on a VMS, that the text in Irish should be included on any such signs erected in the Gaeltacht.

When my Office raised the matter with the County Council, it explained that the text in English was a default setting on the new signs erected. The signs were amended so that no text in words were displayed, only the speed of the vehicle, and use was made of green and red colours to indicate if the speed limit was being adhered to.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS



**An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna**
Department of
Education and Skills



A complaint was received that no Irish-language version of the programme *Walk Tall* or *Misneach*, which forms part of the curriculum for personal, social and health education curriculum for primary schools, was available and that this had created difficulties for schools teaching through Irish.

According to section 7(2)(d) of the Education Act 1998, it is a function of the Minister for Education and Skills to provide support services through Irish to schools that teach through Irish and to any other school requiring them. It was on this basis that my Office contacted the Department of Education and Skills.

The Department accepted that there was a delay in providing the Irish version of *Walk Tall* due to a lack of expertise in Irish in the Professional Development Service for Teachers. Arrangements had, however, been made to have translations made and that the Irish-language versions would be uploaded onto the Service’s website as soon as they were available.

OIFIG NA gCOIMISINÉIRÍ IONCAIM



Rinneadh gearán leis an Oifig seo maidir le doiciméad a d'eisigh oifigigh Chustaim chuig gnólacht sa Ghaeltacht le linn cuairt chun an cheantair. Ghoill sé ar an ngearánach gur i mBéarla amháin a bhí an doiciméad, cé gurbh í an Ghaeilge gnáth-theanga an ghnólachta agus an cheantair.

Ní fhacthas do m'Oifig gur sáraíodh aon dualgas reachtúil teanga tríd an doiciméad a eisiúint, mar sin féin, cuireadh in iúl d'Oifig na gCoimisinéirí Ioncaim go bhfuarthas an gearán agus iarradh ar an Oifig sin a beartas a shoiléiriú maidir le heisiúint na ndoiciméad a bhí i gceist.

Mhínigh Oifig na gCoimisinéirí Ioncaim go raibh áis ar fáil do cháiniócoirí, pé acu daoine aonair nó gnólachtaí, lena rogha teanga a chur ar taifead agus go n-eiseofaí feasta doiciméid agus comhfhreagras i nGaeilge chucu ach an rogha sin a bheith curtha in iúl acu. D'fhéadfadh an gnólacht teagmháil a dhéanamh léi chun a rogha a chur ar taifead dá mba mhian leis an ngnólacht go ndéileálfaí leis i nGaeilge.

Chuir Oifig na gCoimisinéirí Ioncaim in iúl freisin go n-atheiseofaí an doiciméad chuig an ngnólacht i nGaeilge agus go ndéanfaí deimhin de go raibh leaganacha Gaeilge ar fáil de na doiciméid Custam agus Mháil is minice a úsáidtear chun freastal ar chustaiméirí ar mian leo a ngnó a dhéanamh as Gaeilge.

OFFICE OF THE REVENUE COMMISSIONERS



A complaint was made to this Office concerning a document issued by Customs officers to a company situated in the Gaeltacht while visiting the area in question. The complainant felt aggrieved that this document was in English only although Irish was the normal language of the company and the area.

It did not appear to my Office that any statutory language obligation had been infringed by issuing this document, nonetheless the Office of the Revenue Commissioners was informed that the complaint had been received and requested to clarify its policy concerning the issuing of the documents in question.

The Office of the Revenue Commissioners explained that a facility was available to taxpayers, whether individuals or companies, to register their language preference and that documents and correspondence would be sent to them in Irish as soon as they register that preference. The company in question was welcome to register that preference if it wished to be dealt with in Irish.

The Office of the Revenue Commissioners also informed my Office that the document would be re-issued to the company in Irish and that it would ensure that Irish-language versions of the most commonly used Customs and Excise documents were available to provide a service to customers wishing to conduct their business in Irish.

An Coimisinéir Teanga, Cathaoirleach,
Fóram Ombudsman na hÉireann, ag
seoladh an leabhráin 'Oifigí
Ombudsman in Éirinn'
An Coimisinéir Teanga, Chairman, Irish
Ombudsman Forum, at the launch of the
booklet 'Ombudsman Offices in Ireland'



FAIREACHÁN

Áirítear ar cheann d'fheidhmeanna an Choimisinéara Teanga faireachán a dhéanamh ar chur i bhfeidhm fhorálacha Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003. Leanadh i mbliana leis an múnla nua faireacháin ar cuireadh tús leis le linn na bliana 2018, inar leagadh tuilleadh béime ar obair iniúchta a bhí bunaithe ar théamaí éagsúla. Fearacht na bliana anuraidh, cuireadh san áireamh meascán de scéimeanna teanga, rialacháin agus dualgais dhíreacha faoin Acht seachas faireachán bunaithe go príomha ar scéimeanna teanga. Is ar fhorálacha Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla amháin a díródh san obair faireacháin ó tharla nach bhfuil aon chumhacht agam faireachán a dhéanamh ar fhorálacha in aon achtachán eile a bhaineann le húsáid nó le stádas teanga oifigiúla.

An príomhchuspóir a bhí leis an obair faireacháin seo ná measúnú a dhéanamh ar chur i bhfeidhm na ndualgas teanga a bhain le gach réimse a scrúdaíodh. Ullmhaíodh plan iniúchta don bhliain inar cuimsíodh réimse leathan dualgas reachtúil a bhaineann le gnéithe éagsúla den Acht, idir (i) dhualgais dhíreacha (cumarsáid scríofa agus foilseacháin), (ii) dhualgais faoi na Rialacháin i dtaca le stáiseanóireacht, comharthaíocht agus fógairtí taifeadta béil, agus (iii) dualgais faoi na scéimeanna teanga atá daingnithe ag an Aire. Is ar na réimsí oibre seo a leanas a díródh an chuid is mó d'obair faireacháin na bliana:

- Faireachán ar chur i bhfeidhm mholtaí imscrúduithe
- Faireachán ar chur i bhfeidhm gealltanais scéime teanga i dtaca leis an nGaeltacht
- Iniúchadh ar úsáid na dteangacha oifigiúla ar chomharthaíocht ag suíomhanna oidhreacht de chuid Oifig na nOibreacha Poiblí
- Iniúchadh ar úsáid na Gaeilge i gcórais ríomhaireachta na gCoimisinéirí Ioncaim
- Faireachán ar shuíomhanna gréasáin agus ar chórais idirghníomhacha de chuid na n-údarás áitiúil
- Faireachán ar chur i bhfeidhm dhualgais dhíreacha Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003 agus forálacha scéime teanga i gcás na mBord Oideachais agus Oiliúna

MONITORING

The functions of An Coimisinéir Teanga include monitoring the implementation of the provisions of the Official Languages Act 2003. The new monitoring procedure, commenced in 2018, placing greater emphasis on audit work based on different themes, was continued this year. Similar to last year, the system incorporated a combination of language schemes, regulations and direct provisions of the Act, rather than monitoring based primarily on language schemes. The monitoring work focused only on the provisions of the Official Languages Act, as I don't have the powers to monitor the implementation of the provisions of any other enactment relating to the use or status of the Irish language.

The primary objective of this monitoring work was to evaluate the implementation of the language obligations in each area examined. An audit plan for the year was prepared, incorporating a wide range of statutory obligations concerning various aspects of the Act, including (i) direct provisions (written communications and publications), (ii) obligations arising from the Regulations in respect of signage, stationery and recorded oral announcements, and (iii) obligations under the language schemes which have been confirmed by the Minister. Most of the year's audit work focused on the following areas:

- Monitoring the implementation of recommendations made in investigations
- Monitoring the implementation of language scheme commitments in relation to the Gaeltacht
- An audit of the use of the official languages on signage at heritage sites of the Office of Public Works
- An audit of the use of Irish in the computer systems of the Revenue Commissioners
- Monitoring of the websites and interactive services of local authorities
- Monitoring of the implementation of the direct provisions of the Official Languages Act 2003 and the provisions of the language schemes in the case of the Education and Training Boards

- Iniúchadh ar úsáid na dteangacha oifigiúla ar chomharthaíocht in ollscoileanna a thagann faoi scáth Ollscoil na hÉireann

Mar a bhí amhlaidh anuraidh, tá sé i gceist agam tuarascáil faireacháin a fhoilsiú ina dtabharfar léargas níos iomláine ar an obair iniúchta a cuireadh i gcrích agus ar phríomhthorthaí na n-iniúchtaí sin.

Faireachán ar chur i bhfeidhm moltaí imscrúduithe

Faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, tá sé de chúram ar an gCoimisinéir Teanga tuarascáil a chur faoi bhráid gach Tí den Oireachtas má fheictear dó nó di nach bhfuil comhlacht poiblí ag cur moltaí a rinne sé nó sí i dtuarascáil imscrúdaithe i ngníomh, i ndiaidh do thréimhse réasúnach ama a bheith caite. Is í seo an chéim dheireanach atá ar fáil dom faoin Acht nuair nach gcloíonn comhlacht poiblí leis na moltaí a dhéantar i dtuarascáil imscrúdaithe. Le linn na bliana 2019 scrúdaigh m'Oifig an bealach ar cuireadh moltaí i seacht dtuarascáil imscrúdaithe i bhfeidhm. Seo iad na himscrúduithe ar tugadh cuntas orthu sa Tuarascáil Bhliantúil anuraidh. Tá cuntas gearr tugtha anois ar thorthaí na bhfiosrúcháin sin sa tuarascáil seo agus cuirfear tuilleadh sonraí ar fáil sa tuarascáil faireacháin a fhoilseofar níos déanaí i mbliana.

1. Raidió Teilifís Éireann

Léirigh imscrúdú gur sháraigh RTÉ forálacha teanga den Acht Craolacháin, 2009. Leagtar dualgas san Acht ar RTÉ réimse cuimsitheach clár a chur ar fáil i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla i gclársceidil a chuid seirbhísí craolacháin chomh maith le cláir nuachta agus cúrsaí reatha a chur ar fáil sa dá theanga oifigiúla. B'fhionnachtain de chuid an imscrúdaithe nach raibh RTÉ ag comhlíonadh an dualgaís a bhí air chomh fada agus a bhain sé leis na seirbhísí craolacháin teilifíse. Ba é an príomh-mholadh a rinne mé san imscrúdú go gcuirfeadh RTÉ plean feidhmithe faoi mo bhráid a d'fhreagródh do chomhlíonadh na ndualgas reachtúil teanga a thagann i gceist.

Le linn na bliana chuir RTÉ plean feidhmithe faoi mo bhráid ar lorg mé tuilleadh soiléirithe ina thaobh agus a pléadh ag cruinniú le hoifigigh



- An audit of the use of the official languages on signs at universities which come under the auspices of the National University of Ireland

As happened last year, I intend publishing a monitoring report to provide a detailed insight into the completed monitoring work and the main results obtained.

Monitoring the implementation of recommendations in investigations

Under the Official Languages Act, it is the responsibility of An Coimisinéir Teanga to submit a report to both Houses of the Oireachtas if he or she is of the opinion that the recommendations of an investigation are not being implemented by a public body, after a reasonable period of time has elapsed. This is the final step available to me under the Act when a public body does not comply with the recommendations made in an investigation report. During 2019 my Office examined the way the recommendations made in seven investigation reports were implemented. These are the investigations reported on in last year's Annual Report. A short account of the results of the audits is provided in this report and a more detailed account will be provided in the monitoring report to be published later this year.

1. Raidió Teilifís Éireann

An investigation found that RTÉ breached language provisions of the Broadcasting Act 2009. The Act requires RTÉ to provide a comprehensive range of programmes in the Irish and English languages in the programme schedule of its broadcasting services and also to provide news and current affairs programmes in both official languages. The investigation found that RTÉ was not fulfilling its obligation insofar as it related to its television broadcasting services. The main recommendation made in the investigation required RTÉ to provide me with an implementation plan setting out how the relevant language requirements would be complied with.

During the year RTÉ provided me with an implementation plan on which I requested further clarification and was discussed at a



shinsearacha de chuid RTÉ. Léiríodh sa phlean feidhmithe go raibh méadú mór beartaithe ag RTÉ ar líon na n-uaireanta craolacháin i nGaeilge i réimsí na gclár nuachta agus na gclár do pháistí go príomha don bhliain 2020. Ina iomláine tá beartaithe ag an stáisiún ceithre oiread cláir Ghaeilge theilifíse a chraoladh sa bhliain 2020 is a craoladh in 2017, an bhliain thagartha a úsáideadh le linn an imscrúdaithe. Tá sé beartaithe freisin tuilleadh clár a chraoltar ar TG4 a chraoladh ar RTÉ mar aon le Rannóg na gClár Gaeilge a bheith ar ais i mbun obair lánaimseartha.

In ainneoin go bhfuil méadú suntasach beartaithe ar líon na n-uaireanta an chloig de chlár Ghaeilge a chraolfar ar chainéil teilifíse an stáisiúin, bhí mé den tuairim nach bhféadfaí a dhearbhu ag an tráth seo go mbeadh réimse cuimsitheach clár ar fáil i nGaeilge. D'fhéadfaí sin a bhaint amach san am atá le teacht, áfach, ach leanúint leis an dul chun cinn. Tá an méid seo curtha in iúl do RTÉ agus é beartaithe agam athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar an dul chun cinn faoi lár na bliana 2020.

2. An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara

In imscrúdú a rinne mé ar an Roinn



**An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara**
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara chinn mé go raibh sárú déanta ar mhíreanna dá scéim teanga tar éis don Roinn poist d'oibríthe ginearálta a fhógairt do chalafoirt Ghaeltachta gan aon riachtanas Gaeilge a bheith luaite leis na poist sin. Tar éis dúinn faireachán a dhéanamh ar chomhlíonadh mholtaí an imscrúdaithe tá mé sásta go bhfuil socruithe déanta ag an Roinn a laghdódh an baol go dtarlódh a leithéid arís. Ghlac an Roinn leis go raibh dualgas uirthi riachtanas teanga a chur le poist den chineál seo agus sa bheis air sin go ndéanfar tástáil ar inniúlacht Gaeilge iarrthóirí ar phoist sa Ghaeltacht feasta.

meeting with senior officials from RTÉ. The implementation plan indicated that RTÉ planned a significant increase in the number of Irish-language broadcasting hours, primarily in the area of news programmes and children's programmes for 2020. In total the station plans to broadcast four times as many television programmes in Irish in 2020 as it did in 2017, the baseline year referenced during the investigation. It is also planned to broadcast more of TG4's programmes on RTÉ along with the Irish Language Programmes Section returning to a full-time schedule.

Despite the substantial increase planned in the number of hours of Irish medium language programmes to be broadcast on the station's television channels, I was of the view that it was not possible to confirm, at this stage, that a comprehensive range of programmes would be available in the Irish language. That could, however, be achieved in the future if progress is maintained. RTÉ has been informed of this and I intend reviewing progress by mid-2020.

2. Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

In an investigation I conducted on the Department of



**An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara**
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Agriculture, Food and the Marine I found that provisions of its language scheme were breached after it advertised posts for general workers at Gaeltacht ports, without specifying a requirement for proficiency in the Irish language for those posts. After monitoring the implementation of the recommendations of the investigation I am satisfied that the Department has arrangements in place to reduce the risk of this recurring. The Department accepted that there was an obligation to attach a language condition to such posts and will in future test applicants' competency in the Irish language for positions located in the Gaeltacht.

3. Comhlacht Chalafort Bhaile Átha Cliath

Bhain an t-imscrúdú seo le comhartha suntasach i mBéarla amháin a bhí curtha in airde ag Comhlacht Chalafort Bhaile Átha Cliath ar Bhóthar an Phoirt Thoir ar an tslí isteach chuig an gcalafort. Rinne mé fionnachtain go mba chomhartha chun críocha na rialachán é an struchtúr a bhí curtha in airde ag an gComhlacht Calafóirt agus dá réir go raibh dlite an comhartha a bheith curtha ar fáil i nGaeilge chomh maith.

Mar chuid den fhaireachán atá déanta againn ar chomhlíonadh mholtaí an imscrúdaithe cuireadh fianaise ar fáil dúinn go bhfuil céimeanna á nglacadh ag an gComhlacht Calafóirt chun comhartha i nGaeilge a chur in airde ag an gcalafort. Chuir sé aighneacht réamhphleanála faoi bhráid Rannóg Pleanála Chomhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath i leith an chomhartha sin ar an 30 Bealtaine 2019.



3. Dublin Port Company

This investigation involved a significant sign, in English only, erected by Dublin Port Company on the East Wall Road at the entrance to the port. I found that the structure erected by the Port Company was a sign for the purposes of the regulations and therefore provision of the sign in Irish was also required.

As part of the monitoring we have carried out on compliance with the investigation's recommendations, we were provided with evidence that the Port Company is taking the necessary steps to erect a sign in Irish at the port. It submitted a pre-planning submission regarding the sign to the Planning Section of Dublin City Council on 30 May 2019.

4. An Roinn Tithíochta, Pleanála agus Rialtais Áitiúil

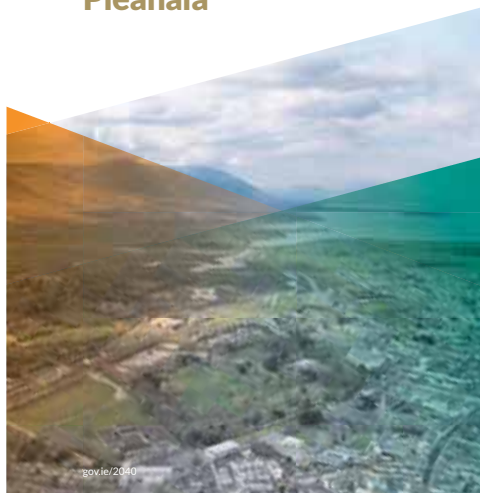
Bhain an t-imscrúdú seo le foilseachán de chuid na Roinne Tithíochta, Pleanála agus Rialtais Áitiúil, *An Creat Náisiúnta Pleanála*, agus suíomh gréasáin gaolmhar a bhí déanta i mBéarla amháin. Leag mé dualgas ar an Roinn réamhfhógra ceithre seachtaine a thabhairt do m'Oifig roimh an dáta beartaithe foilsithe i gcás aon doiciméad lena mbaineann an gealltanas ábhartha scéime. Mairfidh an riachtanas sin go ceann trí bliana ón dáta ar eisíodh an tuarascáil imscrúdaithe. Táim sásta go bhfuil an Roinn ag cloí leis na moltaí a rinne mé.



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Éire 2040 - An Tionscadal

**An Creat Náisiúnta
Pleanála**



4. Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government

This investigation related to a publication of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, *the National Planning Framework*, and an associated website that was in English only. I required the Department to give my Office four weeks' advance notification of the proposed date of publication of any document that is subject to the relevant commitment in the language scheme. This requirement will remain in place for a period of three years from the date the investigation report was issued. I am satisfied that the Department is complying with my recommendations.

5. Iarnród Éireann



Léirigh imscrúdú a rinne mé ar Iarnród Éireann nach raibh córais oiriúnacha ná córais dhóthanacha i bhfeidhm ag an eagraíocht chun a chinntiú go gcloítear leis na dualgais reachtúla faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003 agus faoin Acht Iompair, 1950 maidir le húsáid na dteangacha oifigiúla ar chomharthaí. I measc na gcásanna a scrúdaigh mé bhí úsáid na sintí fada ar chomharthaí áirithinte.

Tá faireachán leanúnach á dhéanamh ar chomhlíonadh mholtaí an imscrúdaithe seo agus muid i mbun cumarsáid rialta leis an eagraíocht. In ainneoin go bhfuil roinnt de mholtaí an imscrúdaithe curtha i gcrích go sásúil is cúis mhór díomá dom nach bhfuil sintí fada á léiriú go cruinn ar chomharthaí áirithinte go fóill. Is ábhar é seo a bhfuiltear i mbun plé le hIarnród Éireann go fóill ina leith.

6. Comhairle Contae Chorcaí



Cork County Council
Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

Rinne mé fionnachtain in imscrúdú ar Chomhairle Contae Chorcaí nár comhlíonadh an gealltanas a bhí tugtha ina scéim teanga go mbeadh ábhar statach an tsuímh gréasáin ar fáil i nGaeilge. Bhí an Chomhairle tar éis úsáid a bhaint as córas meaisínáistriúcháin chun an t-ábhar a chur ar fáil i nGaeilge ar an suíomh gréasáin nua a bhí forbartha aici.

Mar chuid den iniúchadh ar chur i bhfeidhm mholtaí an imscrúdaithe tá fianaise curtha ar fáil ag an gComhairle dom maidir leis na céimeanna atá glactha aici chun an t-ábhar statach a chur ar fáil go cruinn i nGaeilge. Níl an Chomhairle ag brath ar chóras meaisínáistriúcháin a thuilleadh agus tá dóchas againn go mbeidh sí géilliúil go hiomlán do ghealltanas ábhartha na scéime teanga sula i bhfad.

5. Iarnród Éireann



An investigation of Iarnród Éireann found that the organisation did not have appropriate or adequate systems in place to ensure adherence to the statutory duties under the Official Languages Act 2003 and the Transport Act 1950 concerning the use of official languages on signs. The issues I examined included the use of the *síneadh fada* on reservation signs.

We are continuing to monitor compliance of the recommendations of this investigation and are in regular communication with the organisation. While some of the recommendations made in the investigation have been satisfactorily implemented, I am very disappointed that the *síneadh fada* is not yet accurately displayed on reservation signs. This matter is still being discussed with Iarnród Éireann.

6. Cork County Council



Cork County Council
Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

In an investigation on Cork County Council I found that a commitment provided in its language scheme that the static content of its website would be available in Irish had been breached. The Council used a machine translation system to provide the Irish content on its newly developed website.

As part of the audit on the implementation of the recommendations of the investigation the Council has provided me with evidence of the steps taken to make the static material available in Irish. The Council is no longer relying on a machine translation system and we are confident that the relevant commitment of the language scheme will be fully complied with in the near future.

7. Amharclann na Mainistreach



Rinneadh gearán le m'Oifig i mí Feabhra 2017 go raibh réimse comharthaí in Amharclann na Mainistreach nach raibh ag cloí le riachtanais na rialachán ábhartha atá déanta faoin Acht. Nuair nár éirigh leis na hiarrachtaí neamhfhoirmiúla an cheist a shocrú, chinn mé dul i muinín imscrúdú foirmiúil. Bhí sé mar fhionnachtain ag an imscrúdú sin go raibh Amharclann na Mainistreach ag sárú an dualgaís reachtúil teanga atá daingnithe sna rialacháin.

Le linn an iniúchta ar chur i bhfeidhm mholtaí an imscrúdaithe cuireadh fianaise ar fáil dúinn go bhfuil na réimsí comharthaí ab ábhar don imscrúdú ceartaithe anois cé is moite den phríomhchomhartha lasmuigh den amharclann. Tá sé tugtha le fios ag an amharclann dúinn go bhfuil dearadh déanta ar leagan Gaeilge den chomhartha seo agus sampla de sin curtha faoi mo bhráid. Más mall is mithid agus beidh an príomhchomhartha seo, atá le crochadh lasmuigh den amharclann, in airde roimh thús an tsamhraidh agus é i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla.



7. The Abbey Theatre



A complaint was made to my Office in February 2017 that a range of signs in the Abbey Theatre were not compliant with the requirements of the relevant regulations made under the Act. When the informal attempts to resolve the matter were not successful, I decided to undertake a formal investigation. The investigation found that the Abbey Theatre was in breach of the statutory language obligation which had been confirmed in the regulations.

During the audit on the implementation of the recommendations made in the investigation we were provided with evidence that the range of non-compliant signs which were the subject of the investigation have now been corrected with the exception of the main sign outside the Abbey Theatre. The Abbey Theatre has informed us that it has

designed an Irish-language version of this sign and a sample has been provided to me. Better late than never, this main sign, to be erected outside the theatre before the beginning of summer, will be in Irish and in English.

Seoladh Ghradam
Sheosaimh Uí Ógartaigh
Launch of Gradam
Sheosaimh Uí Ógartaigh



SCÉIMEANNA TEANGA

SCÉIMEANNA DAINGNITHE

Dhaingnigh an tAire Cultúir, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta sé chéadscéim teanga, sé dhara scéim teanga, ocht dtríú scéim teanga agus ceithre cheathrú scéim teanga le linn na bliana 2019. Faoi dheireadh na bliana bhí 138 scéim teanga daingnithe agus i bhfeidhm. Tá liosta de na comhlachtaí poiblí a bhfuil scéim teanga dá gcuid daingnithe ag an Aire le fáil ar shuíomh gréasáin na hOifige – www.coimisineir.ie

SCÉIMEANNA IN ÉAG

Bhí 68 scéim teanga, as 138 san iomlán, imithe in éag faoi dheireadh na bliana 2019. In éagmais scéim teanga nua a bheith aontaithe ag na comhlachtaí poiblí, ní raibh aon dualgas orthu na seirbhísí a chuirtear ar fáil don phobal trí Ghaeilge a threisiú.

DRÉACHTSCÉIMEANNA

Ag deireadh na bliana 2019, bhí 125 dréachtscéim teanga fós le daingniú ag an Aire Cultúir, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta.

- 42 céad-dréachtscéim, 49 dara dréachtscéim, 21 tríú dréachtscéim, 12 cheathrú dréachtscéim agus 1 chúigiú dréachtscéim.

Tá os cionn deich mbliana caite ó iarradh ar 15 de na comhlachtaí poiblí sin scéim a ullmhú agus os cionn cúig bliana i gcás 32 comhlacht poiblí eile.

LANGUAGE SCHEMES

SCHEMES CONFIRMED

The Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht confirmed six new language schemes, six second language schemes, eight third language schemes and four fourth language schemes during 2019. By the end of the year, 138 language schemes were confirmed and implemented. A list of public bodies with confirmed language schemes by the Minister is available on this Office's website – www.coimisineir.ie.

SCHEMES EXPIRED

Of the 138 language schemes, 68 had expired by year-end 2019. This meant that, in the absence of a new language scheme, no additional commitments in relation to improved services in Irish were required of those public bodies.

DRAFT SCHEMES

By the end of 2019, 125 draft language schemes remained to be confirmed by the Minister for Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht.

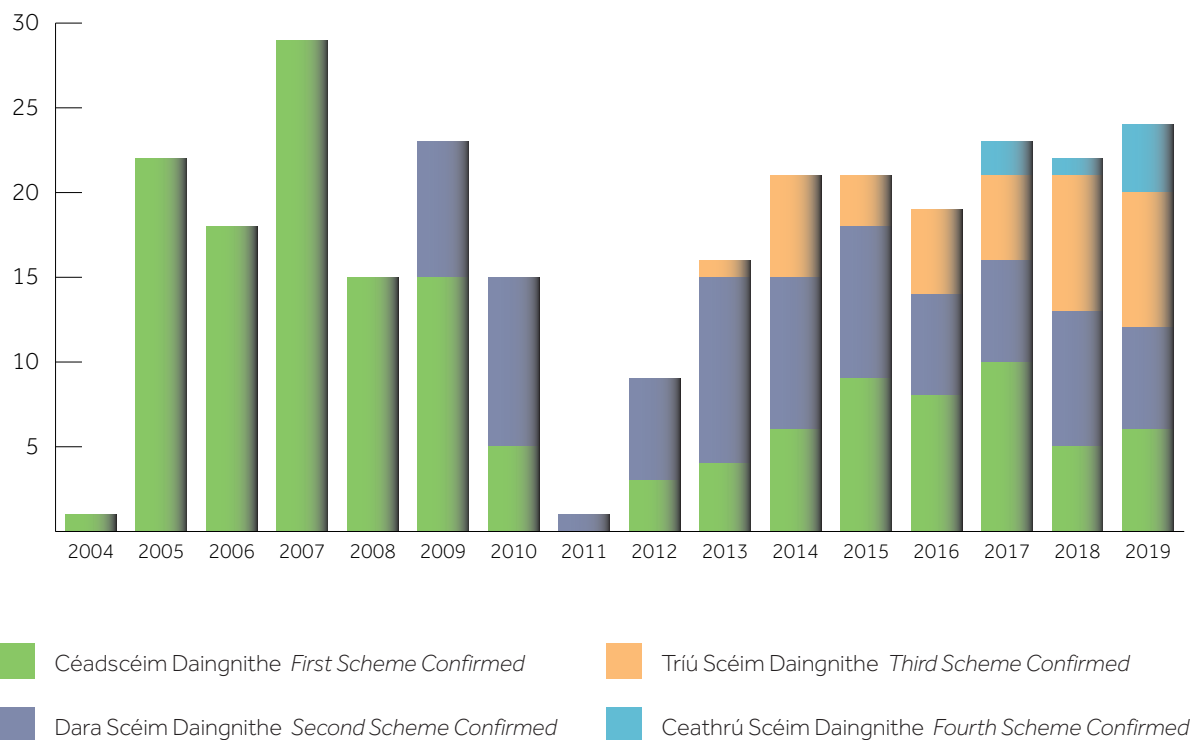
- 42 first draft schemes, 49 second draft schemes, 21 third draft schemes, 12 fourth draft schemes, and 1 fifth draft scheme.

More than ten years have elapsed since 15 of these public bodies were asked to prepare a scheme and more than five years in the case of 32 of these public bodies.

Bliain inar daingníodh an chéad Scéim Teanga Year in which first Language Scheme was confirmed

Bliain <i>Year</i>	Scéimeanna <i>Schemes</i>
2004	1
2005	22
2006	18
2007	29
2008	15
2009	15
2010	5
2011	0
2012	3
2013	4
2014	6
2015	9
2016	8
2017	11
2018	5
2019	6
	157
Scéimeanna dímholta <i>Schemes superseded</i>	2
Scéimeanna as feidhm <i>Lapsed schemes</i>	17
Iomlán <i>Total</i>	138

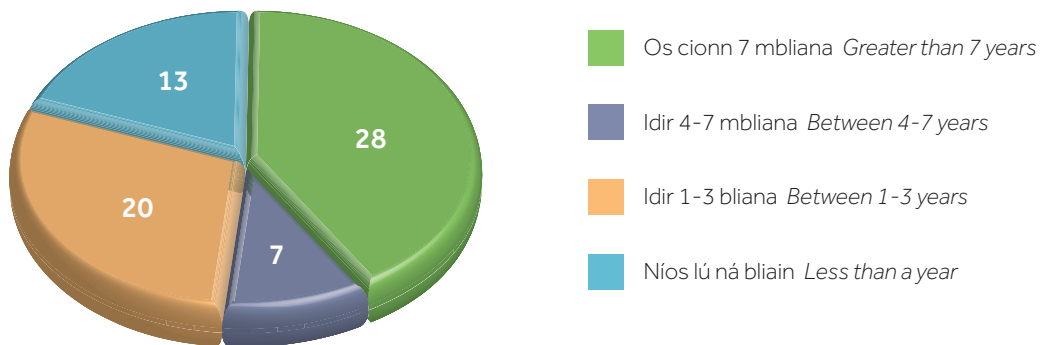
Scéimeanna Daingnithe ag an Aire Schemes Confirmed by the Minister



Scéimeanna imithe in éag Schemes expired



Líon na scéimeanna in éag de réir a dtréimhse in éag The number of schemes expired and the period since they expired



Tá eolas breise maidir leis na scéimeanna teanga daingnithe agus le hiarratais ar dhréachtscéimeanna a ullmhú le fáil ar shuíomh gréasáin Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga ag www.coimisineir.ie

Additional information regarding confirmed language schemes and requests to prepare language schemes is available on the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga website at www.coimisineir.ie

CÚRSAÍ AIRGEADAIS

Cuireadh buiséad €810,000 ar fáil don Oifig don bhliain 2019 agus tarraingíodh anuas €808,347 den airgead sin.

Tá ráitis airgeadais na hOifige don bhliain 2019 ullmhaithe don Ard-Reachtaire Cuntas agus Ciste lena n-íniúchadh de réir fho-alt 8(2) den Dara Sceideal d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003.

A luaithe agus is féidir tar éis an iniúchta, déanfaidh an Coimisinéir Teanga cóip de na cuntais sin, nó de cibé sleachta as na cuntais sin a shonróidh an tAire Cultúir, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta, mar aon le tuarascáil an Ard-Reachtaire Cuntas agus Ciste maidir leis na cuntais, a chur i láthair an Aire.

Beidh cóipeanna de na doiciméid sin á leagan faoi bhráid Thithe an Oireachtais ag an Aire. Foilseofar freisin iad ar shuíomh gréasáin na hOifige seo.

ÍOCAÍOCHTAÍ PRASA

I gcomhréir le cinntí Rialtais a rinneadh ar an 2 agus an 8 Márta 2011 agus ar an 28 Márta 2017, leagadh dualgas ar eagraíochtaí stáit córais chuí a fheidhmiú ionas go n-íocfaí sonraisc bhailí laistigh de 15 lá ón dáta a fhaightear iad. Tá dualgas ar eagraíochtaí stáit chomh maith tuairisc ráithiúil maidir leis an ábhar seo a fhoilsiú ar a suíomh gréasáin.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

A budget of €810,000 was provided for my Office for 2019 and €808,347 of that money was drawn down.

The financial statements of the Office for 2019 have been prepared for audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General in accordance with subsection 8(2) of the Second Schedule of the Official Languages Act 2003.

As soon as possible after the audit, a copy of those accounts or of such extracts from those accounts as the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht may specify shall be presented to the Minister together with the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General on the accounts.

Copies of those documents shall be laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas by the Minister. They will also be published on this Office's website.

PROMPT PAYMENTS

In accordance with Government decisions made on the 2nd and 8th of March 2011 and on the 28th of March 2017, public bodies are required to have appropriate systems in place to ensure that valid invoices are paid within 15 days from the date they are received. Public bodies are also required to publish a quarterly report on this matter on their website.

TUAIRISC AR ÍOCAÍOCHTAÍ PRASA PROMPT PAYMENTS REPORT

Tréimhse Clúdaithe: 1 Eanáir – 31 Nollaig 2019 *Period Covered: 1 January – 31 December 2019*

Sonraí Details	Uimhir Number	Luach (€) Value (€)	Céatadán (%) de líon iomlán na n-íocaíochtaí a rinneadh Percentage (%) of total number of payments made
Líon na n-íocaíochtaí a rinneadh laistigh de 15 lá <i>Number of payments made within 15 days</i>	219	109,024	100%
Líon na n-íocaíochtaí a rinneadh laistigh de thréimhse idir 16 lá agus 30 lá <i>Number of payments made within a period of 16 days to 30 days</i>			
Líon na n-íocaíochtaí a rinneadh sa bhreis ar 30 lá <i>Number of payments made in excess of 30 days</i>			
Líon iomlán na n-íocaíochtaí sa tréimhse Total number of payments made in the period	219	109,024	100%

NOCHTADH COSANTA

Tá an t-eolas seo a leanas á thabhairt i gcomhréir le halt 22(1) den Acht um Nochtadh Cosanta, 2014.

Ní dhearnadh aon nochtadh cosanta le hOifig an Choimisinéara Teanga le linn na bliana 2019.

DUALGAS NA hEARNÁLA POIBLÍ UM CHOMHIONANNAS AGUS CEARTA AN DUINE

Leagtar dualgas ar chomhlachtaí poiblí faoin Acht fá Choimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta an Duine agus Comhionannas, 2014 aird chuí a thabhairt ar shaincheisteanna a bhaineann le cearta an duine agus le comhionannas. Tá an Oifig seo ag glacadh cur chuige réamhghníomhach leis an dualgas sin a chur i bhfeidhm.

Le linn na bliana 2019, chinntíomar go ndearna foireann uile na hOifige cúrsa oiliúna ar líne i dtaca le rochtain, chun feachtas na heagraíochta a ardú. Tá sé beartaithe oiliúint a chur ar fhostaithe nua ar bhonn leanúnach.

PROTECTED DISCLOSURE

The following information is provided in accordance with section 22(1) of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014.

No protected disclosures were made to the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga during 2019.

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS DUTY

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 places a duty on public bodies to have due regard to human rights and equality issues. This Office is adopting a proactive approach to implementing this obligation.

During 2019, we ensured that staff undertook access training online, to increase awareness within the organisation. It is proposed to provide training for any new employees on an ongoing basis.

An Coimisinéir Teanga, Rónán Ó Domhnaill, agus Coimisinéir an Gharda Síochána, Drew Harris
An Coimisinéir Teanga, Rónán Ó Domhnaill, and the Commissioner of An Garda Síochána, Drew Harris



ÚSÁID FUINNIMH

Tá an t-eolas seo a leanas á thabhairt i gcomhréir le forálacha I.R. 542 de 2009.

Forbhreathnú ar úsáid fuinnimh sa bhliain 2019

Baineann iomlán an fhuinnimh le leictreachas a úsáideann Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga i bhfoirgneamh na hOifige sa Spidéal, Co. na Gaillimhe. Cuimsíonn sé sin an fuinneamh a úsáidtear i gcomhair théamh agus aerú an fhoirgnimh, téamh uisce, soilse agus trealamh oifige.

Tháinig laghdú ar úsáid fuinnimh Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga sa bhliain 2019. D'úsáid an Oifig 60.17 MWh leictreachais, íslíú 7.9% ar úsáid na bliana 2018.

Gníomhartha a rinneadh in 2019

Leanadh de na beartais a bunaíodh cheana: féachtar chuige go múchtar fearais oifige nuair nach mbíonn gá leo agus deimhnítear ag deireadh an lae oibre go bhfuil gach fearas múchta don oíche agus nuair nach mbítear san oifig. Cuirtear úsáid fuinnimh san áireamh mar chritéar nuair a bhíonn trealamh leictreonach á roghnú don oifig nó tairiscintí ar threalamh á meas.

Gníomhartha atá beartaithe do 2020

Leanfar de na beartais sábhála fuinnimh atá tionscanta cheana féin agus déanfar monatóireacht rialta ar úsáid leictreachais i gcaitheamh na bliana 2020.

ENERGY USAGE

The following information is provided in accordance with the provisions of S.I. 542 of 2009.

Overview of energy usage in 2019

The use of electricity in the office building in An Spidéal, Co. Galway constitutes the total energy consumption of the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga. This includes the heating and aeration of the building, water heating, lighting and the use of office equipment.

There was a decrease in the amount of energy consumed by the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga in 2019. The Office used 60.17 MWh of electricity, a decrease of 7.9% on 2018 consumption.

Actions taken in 2019

The established energy-saving practices were continued: ensuring that all equipment is turned off when not in use and examining the office at the end of every working day to ensure that lights and equipment are switched off overnight and when the building is not occupied. Energy consumption is used as a criterion in choosing electronic equipment and in evaluating tenders for equipment.

Actions planned for 2020

The Office will continue the energy-saving policies already initiated and it is intended to monitor electricity consumption on a regular basis during 2020.

FOIREANN STAFF



An Coimisinéir Teanga

Rónán Ó Domhnaill



Stiúrthóir *Director*

Colm Ó Coisdealbha



Bainisteoir Cumarsáide *Communications Manager*

Órla de Búrca



Bainisteoir Imscrúduithe *Investigations Manager*

Éamonn Ó Bróithe



Bainisteoir Géilliúlachta *Compliance Manager*

Eileen Seoighe



Bainisteoir Gnóthaí Corparáideacha *Corporate Affairs Manager*

Nóirín Sheoige



Oifigeach Feidhmiúcháin *Executive Officer*

Gráinne Ní Shúilleabháin



Oifigeach Feidhmiúcháin *Executive Officer*

Deirdre Nic Dhonncha



Oifigeach Cléireachais *Clerical Officer*

Ciara Dolphin

Ar an 12 Márta 2014, cheap Uachtarán na hÉireann, Micheál D. Ó hUigínn, Rónán Ó Domhnaill mar Choimisinéir Teanga.

On 12 March 2014, the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, appointed Rónán Ó Domhnaill as Coimisinéir Teanga.

Is é an leagan Gaeilge buntéacs na Tuarascála seo.

The Irish language version is the original text of this Report.

NÓTAÍ | NOTES

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NÓTAÍ | NOTES

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An Coimisinéir Teanga

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