

Tuarascáil Bhliantúil Annual Report



20 20

Tuarascáil Bhliantúil

Annual Report

2020



**Don Aire Turasóireachta,
Cultúir, Ealaíon,
Gaeltachta, Spóirt
agus Meán:**

De réir alt 30 d'Acht na
dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003,
tá an Tuarascáil seo don
bhliain 2020 á cur i láthair
ag an gCoimisinéir Teanga.

Rónán Ó Domhnaill
An Coimisinéir Teanga
Márta 2021

**To the Minister for
Tourism, Culture,
Arts, Gaeltacht,
Sport and Media:**

In accordance with section
30 of the Official Languages
Act 2003, this Report for
2020 is presented by An
Coimisinéir Teanga.

Rónán Ó Domhnaill
An Coimisinéir Teanga
March 2021

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 neamhchlaon.

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.

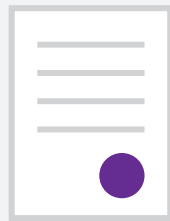
To provide clear and accurate information:

- 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 2020

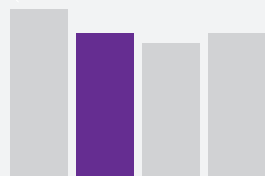


An Dara Céim de
Bhille na dTeangacha
Oifigiúla (Leasú), 2019
rite sa Dáil

Dhá mhór-imscrúdú a
bhaineann leis an
earnáil
oideachais



gearán a
bhain le
COVID-19



604

GEARÁN

íslíú 14% ar fhigiúr na
bliana seo caite (2019)



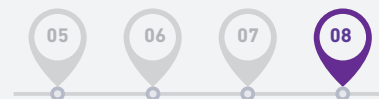
imscrúdú tugtha chun críche



imscrúdú
a bhain le
COVID-19



de na gearáin
ón nGaeltacht



Tuarascáil
Faireacháin
2019 foilsithe i mí

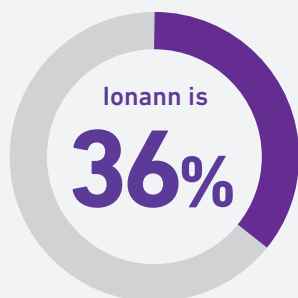
Lúnasa



Tháinig

33%

de na gearáin ó Bhaile Átha Cliath



de na scéimeanna teanga imithe
in éag faoi dheireadh 2020



ar líon na ngearán
ag tús na paidéime:
Feabhra/Márta/Aibreán

18 scéim
teanga
daingnithe
ag an Aire



Comhairle curtha
ar chomhlachtaí
poiblí ar

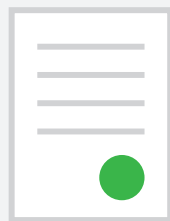
111 ócáid
éagsúil



FEIDHM DLÍ

tugtha do Sceideal nua Comhlachtaí Poiblí

Overview of 2020



Official Languages
(Amendment) Bill 2019
passes the second stage
in Dáil Éireann

Two major investigations
relating to the

education
sector



complaints
concerning
COVID-19



604

COMPLAINTS

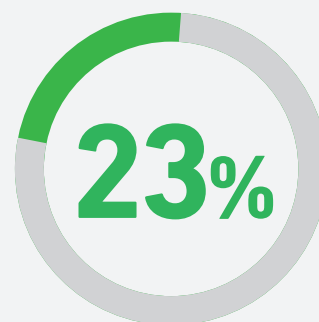
14% reduction
on 2019



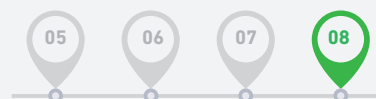
investigations concluded



Investigations
concerning
COVID-19



of complaints came
from the Gaeltacht



2019 Monitoring
Report
published in

August



33%

of complaints came from Dublin



in number of complaints
at the onset of the
COVID-19 pandemic:
February/March/April

18

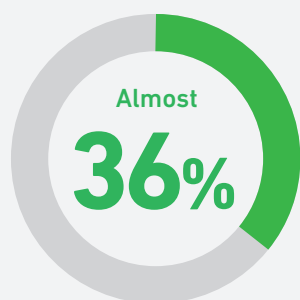
language
schemes
confirmed
by Minister



Advice given to
state bodies on

111

separate
occasions



of language schemes had
expired by year-end 2020



LEGAL STATUS

given to new Schedule of Public Bodies

RÉAMHRÁ

COVID-19

Nuair is mó an cruachás is ea is mó an cuidiú.
B'fhíor don seanfhocal úd le linn 2020 agus an saol mór i ngreim ag géarchéim shláinte, shóisialta agus eacnamaíoch.

Tá dúshlán mhóra á sárú ag seirbhísí stáit agus soláthar á dhéanamh dóibh siúd is mó a bhfuil cabhair de dhíth orthu. Is cinnte go dtiocfaidh an taithí seo chun tairbhe do sheirbhísí poiblí sa tréimhse atá romhainn. Is i gcúinsí den chineál seo, áfach, a fhaighimid léargas éigin ar a dhaingne atá reachtaíocht na gceart fréamhaithe i gcórais riaracháin an stáit agus ní taise d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla é.

“ *Bhain gearán amháin as chuile chúig ghearán a rinneadh liom i mbliana leis an ngéarchéim shláinte ...*

Bhain gearán amháin as chuile chúig ghearán a rinneadh liom i mbliana leis an ngéarchéim shláinte; ní raibh faisnéis á cur ar fáil i nGaeilge nó bhí moill lena cur ar fáil i nGaeilge i gcomparáid leis an mBéarla.

Ábhar amháin a rinne buairt do ghearánaigh ná comharthaí a bhí curtha in airde ag comhlachtaí poiblí faoi COVID-19 i mBéarla amháin, amhail is nár bh ann in aon chor do na rialacháin a rinneadh faoin Acht. Sin in ainneoin go bhfuil leaganacha Gaeilge curtha ar fáil ag an Roinn Sláinte de na comharthaí buí comhairle sláinte a bhfuil seanchleachtadh orthu faoi seo. Teip shuntasach fheiceálach is ea é ar bhundualgas reachtúil atá i bhfeidhm le breis agus deich mbliana faoin tráth seo.

Is ann don dualgas reachtúil eolas poiblí a chur ar fáil i nGaeilge de bhun na scéimeanna teanga a dhaingnítear faoin Acht. Braitheann an dualgas eolas a chur ar fáil i nGaeilge ar shuíomhanna gréasáin, seirbhísí idirghníomhacha ar líne nó bileoga eolais ar an ngealltanas a thugtar i scéim teanga an chomhlachta poiblí atá i gceist. Thagair mé cheana do laige seo na heaspa comhréire idir scéimeanna teanga i dTráchtairacht a d'fhoilsigh mé in 2017.

FOREWORD

COVID-19

Nuair is mó an cruachás is ea is mó an cuidiú
– *When the emergency is at its height, help is to be found in abundance.* The truth of that proverb was borne out in 2020 with the world in the grip of a health, social and economic crisis.

The state has been facing huge challenges providing for those who need it most. Valuable experience is being gained as these challenges are addressed which will be of benefit to the public service in the times ahead. Circumstances such as these provide some insight as to how securely rights legislation is embedded in the state administration and the Official Languages Act is no exception.

“ *One in five complaints I received this year related to the health crisis ...*

One in five complaints I received this year related to the health crisis; information wasn't available in Irish or there was a delay in providing it in Irish compared to English.

One such issue which upset complainants was public bodies erecting English-only signs regarding COVID-19, as if the regulations under the Act simply didn't exist. This is despite the fact that the Department of Health has provided Irish versions of the now familiar yellow public health signs. This is a substantial and visual failing of a basic statutory obligation which has been in place for over ten years.

The provision of public information in Irish and the associated statutory obligations are identified in language schemes as set out in the Act. The obligation to provide information in Irish on websites, online interactive services or information leaflets depends on the commitment given in the language scheme of the particular public body. I previously highlighted this lack of commonality between language schemes in a Commentary I published in 2017.

Sna cásanna ina raibh dualgas soiléir reachtúil i gceist agus a d'fhiosraigh m'Óifig, feictear dom go bhfuil téamaí coiteanna sna freagraí a tugadh: go mb'éigean gníomhú go práinneach agus, i gcúinsí fioreisceachtúla na géarchéime sláinte, cinneadh na dualgais reachtúla teanga a chur i leataobh, iad a chur ar atráth, nó níor tugadh aird ar na dualgais sin ar chor ar bith toisc go gcuirfeadh sé moill ar an ngníomh a chur i gcrích.

“ Níl an teidlíocht reachtúil seirbhís a fháil as Gaeilge ag brath ar thosca, tosaíochtaí nó acmhainn an chomhlachta phoiblí.

Níl an teidlíocht reachtúil seirbhís a fháil as Gaeilge ag brath ar thosca, tosaíochtaí nó acmhainn an chomhlachta phoiblí. Ní cheart go mbeadh coimhlínt idir na gníomhartha tromchúiseacha náisiúnta atá idir lámha agus dualgais i dtaca le cearta teanga. Is é croí na ceiste na hacmhainní a chuirtear ar fáil chun na dualgais teanga a chomhlíonadh.

Dá nglacfaí leis nach raibh dlite ar chomhlacht poiblí na seirbhísí seo a chur ar fáil go dátheangach ar an údar nárbh acmhainn dó é sin a dhéanamh gan moill a chur leo, d'fhéadfaí a fhorléiriú as sin go bhfuil an teidlíocht reachtúil seirbhís a fháil as Gaeilge ag brath ar thosca, príomhachtaí nó acmhainn an chomhlachta phoiblí. Ba dhócha, i gcás mar sin, nuair ba thábhachtaí agus ba phráinní an tseirbhís nó an chumarsáid, gur lú an seans go gcuirfí ar fáil as Gaeilge í.

I bhfocail an taighdeora i gCeanada, an tOllamh François Larocque: *“Caithfear a choinneáil san áireamh gur reachtaíocht é dlí ar nós Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla agus go bhfuil feidhm aige i gcónaí agus, b'fhéidir, feidhm níos mó in am éigeandála.”* (Aistriúchán ón bhFraincis)

Ba é an bhraistint fhairsing a bhí i measc an phobail a rinne teagmháil linn go raibh beag is fiú déanta den chéad teanga náisiúnta nó go raibh imeallú á dhéanamh ar an teanga agus lucht a labhartha ag comhlachtaí poiblí ar uairibh, tráth ar ghá an pobal ar fad a thabhairt le chéile in iarracht chomónta.

In the instances where there existed a clear statutory obligation which my Office consequently investigated, there was a commonality of themes in answers received: there was a need to take a particular action urgently and due to the extremely rare circumstances of the health emergency, decisions were taken to not give effect to statutory language obligations, to defer them, or to ignore them as it would delay whatever action was being undertaken.

“ The statutory duty to provide a service in Irish does not depend on the particular situation involved, the priorities or resources of the public body.

The statutory duty to provide a service in Irish does not depend on the particular situation involved, the priorities or resources of the public body. There should not be a conflict between the grave national actions underway and obligations regarding language rights. The nub of the issue is the resources available to comply with the language obligations.

If it were accepted that public bodies did not have to provide services or communicate bilingually on the basis that they couldn't do so without delaying their implementation, then it could be extrapolated that the statutory duty to provide a service in Irish depended on the particular situation involved and the priorities or resources of the public body itself. In that instance the more important and urgent the service or communication, the less chance there would be of receiving it in Irish.

In the words of Canadian researcher, Professor François Larocque: *“It must be remembered that a law like the Official Languages Act, by virtue of its statute, applies at all times and perhaps more in times of crisis.”*

The general feeling amongst those who contacted my Office was that the first official language was being brushed aside or that the language and Irish language speakers were being marginalised on occasion, at a time when bringing the public together in common purpose was required.

Is tráthúil mar atá Bille nua chugainn chun Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla a leasú. An bhfuil soláthar mar is ceart á dhéanamh chun seirbhísí trí Ghaeilge a chur ar fáil go héifeachtach do shaoránaigh an Stáit? Is í an cheist sin saincheist na tuarascála seo.

BILLE NA dTEANGACHA OIFIGIÚLA (LEASÚ)

Fáiltím roimh an bhfeidhm bhreise do m'Oifig atá leagtha síos i leasú molta ón Rialtas sa Bhille nua, is é sin gur féidir faireachán a dhéanamh ar fhorálacha in achtacháin eile a bhaineann le húsáid nó le stádas na Gaeilge mar theanga oifigiúil. Tabharfaidh an fheidhm bhreise seo, má ghhlactar léi i dTithe an Oireachtais, deis don Oifig a bheith níos réamhghníomhaí maidir le faireachán a dhéanamh ar na dualgais reachtúla teanga atá ar chomhlachtaí poiblí sa bhreis ar na dualgais theoranta in Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla féin.

“ *Tógadh céim chun cinn maidir le Bille Teanga leasaithe a achtú nuair a ritheadh an Dara Céim den Bhille i nDáil Éireann i mí na Samhna.* ”

Tógadh céim chun cinn maidir le Bille Teanga leasaithe a achtú nuair a ritheadh an Dara Céim den Bhille i nDáil Éireann i mí na Samhna. Léirigh mé imní ag deireadh 2019 go raibh ag teip ar an mBille dul i ngleic leis an easpa cinnteachta maidir le soláthar seirbhísí stáit trí Ghaeilge agus an easpa sprioc-amanna do chúrsaí earcaíochta, i measc nithe eile.

Cé gur moladh roinnt leasuithe ar an reachtaíocht ó shin, níor mhiste níos mó cinnteachta a chur faoin sprioc cainteoirí Gaeilge a earcú sa tseirbhís phoiblí agus rannpháirtíocht níos forleithne a chinntiú i gcás an Choiste Chomhairligh. Bheadh sé inmholtá an fhreagracht a shoiléiriú ó thaobh chur i bhfeidhm an phlean earcaíochta a bheidh á dhréachtú ag an gCoiste Comhairleach. Gan a leithéid a bheith sonraithe, d'fhéadfadh éiginnteacht a bheith ann amach anseo agus deacrachtaí feidhmithe dá réir.

It is timely that a new Bill to amend the Official Languages Act is being progressed. Is appropriate provision being made to ensure that services through Irish are being provided to the citizens of the State effectively? This is the topical theme of this Report.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES (AMENDMENT) BILL

I welcome the extra function bestowed on the Office in a Government amendment to the new Bill, namely, the function of monitoring other enactments regarding the use or the status of Irish as an official language. This new function, if accepted by the Houses of the Oireachtas, will enable the Office to be more proactive regarding the monitoring of the statutory language obligations in various enactments that public bodies should abide by, in addition to the limited obligations in the Official Languages Act itself.

“ *Progress was achieved regarding the enactment of a revised Language Bill when the Bill passed Second Stage in Dáil Éireann in November.* ”

Progress was achieved regarding the enactment of a revised Language Bill when the Bill passed Second Stage in Dáil Éireann in November. Towards the end of 2019 I expressed concern that the Bill did not address the lack of certainty regarding the provision of state services through Irish and the lack of deadlines for recruitment, amongst other matters.

Some amendments have been proposed since then, but more certainty is desirable in respect of the aim of recruiting extra Irish speakers to the public service and ensuring wider participation regarding the Advisory Committee. It would be advisable to clarify who will be responsible for implementation of the public services provision plan which will be drafted by the Advisory Committee. In the absence of such detail, there could be uncertainty in the future with consequent implementation challenges.

Beidh sé dúshlánach sprioc go mbeadh Gaeilge ag 20% d'earcaithe nua a bhaint amach in earnálacha áirithe, go háirithe agus muid ag teacht ó leibhéal chomh híseal faoi láthair, faoi bhun 1% go ginearálta. Caithfear tabhairt faoin obair ar bhealach eagraithe pleanáilte.

“ Tá molta agam go rialta foráil a chur sa Bhille le cinntiú gur oifigigh stáit le Gaeilge a bheidh ag cur seirbhísí ar fáil sa Ghaeltacht.

Tá sé ríthábhachtach freisin go ndéanfaí freastal sa phlean ar riachtanais phobal na Gaeltachta. Tá molta agam go rialta foráil a chur sa Bhille le cinntiú gur oifigigh stáit le Gaeilge a bheidh ag cur seirbhísí ar fáil sa Ghaeltacht.

TUILLADH COMHLACHTAÍ POIBLÍ FAOIN ACHT

I mbliana, tháinig lear mór comhlachtaí poiblí, thart ar leathchéad ina iomláine – an tÚdarás um Shábháilteacht ar Bhóithre, Uisce Éireann agus Eirgrid ina measc – faoi scáth Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla den chéad uair. Ní dhearnadh uasdátú ar Sceideal an Achta ó 2006 nó gur tugadh feidhm do sceideal nua trí ionstraim reachtúil i mí an Mheithimh i mbliana. Fáiltim roimhe sin. Chuir an Oifig seimineáir eolais éagsúla ar líne ar fáil do na comhlachtaí nua-ainmnithe faoi na dualgais atá orthu anois de thoradh iad a bheith faoi scáth an Achta.

IMSCRÚDUIHTE

Tugadh roinnt imscrúduithe suntasacha chun críche i rith na bliana.

Sháraigh an Roinn Oideachais an tAcht Oideachais agus a scéim teanga i mbliana nuair a cuireadh tairseach ar líne ar fáil i mBéarla amháin, chun go gcláródh mic léinn dara leibhéal do ghráid ríofa san Ardeistiméireacht.

It will be a challenge, in certain sectors, to reach the aim that 20% of new recruits are Irish speakers, especially coming from such a low level at present – below 1% in general. This work needs to be undertaken in an organised and planned way.

“ I have continuously recommended that a direct provision be inserted into the Bill to ensure that officials with Irish language competency shall provide services in the Gaeltacht.

It is vital also that the plan address the requirements of the Gaeltacht community. I have continuously recommended that a direct provision be inserted into the Bill to ensure that officials with Irish language competency shall provide services in the Gaeltacht.

MORE PUBLIC BODIES UNDER THE ACT

A large number of public bodies, approximately 50 in total – including the Road Safety Authority, Irish Water and Eirgrid – came under the auspices of the Official Languages Act for the first time this year. The Act's Schedule had not been updated since 2006 until a new schedule was enacted by statutory instrument in June of this year. I welcome this. The Office organised various online seminars for these newly nominated public bodies regarding the obligations now bestowed upon them under the Act.

INVESTIGATIONS

Several significant investigations were completed during the year.

The Department of Education breached the Education Act and its language scheme this year when an online portal to enable secondary level students register for calculated grades in the Leaving Certificate was made available in English only.

“ Chuir cinneadh na Roinne Oideachais gan rogha a thabhairt clárú trí Ghaeilge as do dhaltaí, do mhúinteoirí agus do thuismitheoirí araon.

Chuir cinneadh na Roinne Oideachais gan rogha a thabhairt clárú trí Ghaeilge as do dhaltaí, do mhúinteoirí agus do thuismitheoirí araon. Cuireadh leagan Gaeilge ar fáil nuair a osclaíodh an tairseach arís i mí Iúil ach i ndáiríre bhí an dochar déanta faoin tráth sin.

Rinneadh imscrúdú freisin ar Chomhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe de bharr comharthaí i mBéarla amháin de chuid na Comhairle a bhain le COVID-19 a bheith curtha in airde ar fud na cathrach. Arís, léirigh an t-imscrúdú nach raibh dualgas reachtúil a bhain leis an nGaeilge á chur san áireamh ag comhlacht poiblí nuair ba ghá in ainneoin an dualgas soiléir seo a bheith ann le os cionn deich mbliana anois.

Ar ábhar nach mbaineann le COVID-19, rinne mé imscrúdú ar an bhForas Taighde ar Oideachas. Léirigh an t-imscrúdú sin gur theip ar an bhForas Taighde ar Oideachas dualgais reachtúla teanga den Acht Oideachais, 1998 a chomhlíonadh. Chuir an Foras Taighde ar Oideachas scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge as an áireamh nuair a bhí sampla á roghnú do chaighdeánú trialacha léitheoireachta Béarla agus trialacha Matamaitice a bhí á bhforbairt aige do bhunscoileanna.

Tá achoimre iomlán ar na himscrúduithe ar leathanaigh 28–38 den tuarascáil.

GEARÁIN

Tháinig íslíú 14%, ó 704 go 604, ar líon na ngearán a rinneadh leis an Oifig i mbliana. Tháinig an líon is airde gearán ó Bhaile Átha Cliath agus tháinig aon cheathrú, beagnach, de na gearáin ó na ceantair Ghaeltachta.

Bhain 85% de na gearáin le sé réimse faoi leith:

- forálacha i scéimeanna teanga
- comharthaíocht agus stáiseanáireacht
- freagra i mBéarla ar chumarsáid i nGaeilge
- cumarsáid i scríbhinn leis an bpobal le faisnéis a thabhairt

“ The decision by the Department of Education not to provide a choice to register in Irish was a matter of anger and disappointment for students, parents and teachers.

The decision by the Department of Education not to provide a choice to register in Irish was a matter of anger and disappointment for students, parents and teachers. At a later stage, the portal was made available in Irish but frankly the damage had been done at that point.

I also conducted an investigation into Galway City Council due to a complaint that signs in English only relating to COVID-19 were being displayed all over the city. The investigation showed that the statutory obligation regarding the use of Irish was not being considered by a public body as necessary despite a clear obligation being in place for more than ten years now.

On non-related COVID-19 matters, I conducted an investigation into the Education Research Centre. This investigation demonstrated that the Education Research Centre failed to implement a statutory language obligation in the Education Act 1998. The Education Research Centre excluded schools teaching through the medium of Irish in samples being chosen to standardise a norm for English reading tests and Maths tests for primary schools.

A full summary of all the investigations is available on pages 28–38 of this report.

COMPLAINTS

The number of complaints received by the public this year fell 14%, from 704 to 604. The highest number of complaints came from Dublin and almost a quarter of complaints were made by people living in Gaeltacht areas.

85% of complaints related to six specific areas:

- provisions in language schemes
- signage and stationery
- answers in English to correspondence in Irish
- communication with the public for the purpose of furnishing information

- achtacháin eile a bhaineann leis an nGaeilge, agus
- fadhb le húsáid ainm agus sloinne i nGaeilge

Fearacht blianta roimhe seo, fuarthas comhréiteach ar fhorghór mór na ngearán a rinneadh tríd an gcóras neamhfhoirmiúil réitithe gearán 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.

“ Faraor, bhí beagnach 60% de na gearáin a rinneadh leis an Oifig nach raibh ar ár gcumas a fhiosrú mar nach raibh sárú ar dhualgais reachtúla i gceist iontu.

Faraor, bhí beagnach 60% de na gearáin a rinneadh leis an Oifig nach raibh ar ár gcumas a fhiosrú mar nach raibh sárú ar dhualgais reachtúla i gceist iontu. Is ábhar imní agus suntais céatadán ard na ngearán seo. Léiriú is ea é ar laigí sonracha na reachtaíochta reatha: go bhfuil seirbhísí stáit a bhfuil éileamh orthu as Gaeilge agus nach bhfuil soláthar á dhéanamh orthu.

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. Is trua, de thoradh na paindéime, nach raibh deis níos mó é sin a dhéanamh in 2020.

Mar sin féin, thug mé roinnt mhaith óráidí ar théamaí a bhain le cearta teanga ag ócáidí poiblí. Rinne mé roinnt léirithe freisin do chomhlachtaí poiblí ar na riachtanais a bhaineann le feidhmiú an Achta.

Ceapadh beirt nua ar Choiste Iniúcháireachta Inmheánaí agus Riosca na hOifige: saineolaí teanga, an Dr Áine Nic Niallais, agus saineolaí airgeadais, Micheál Ó Cinnéide. Táim an-bhuíoch díobh as an obair a dhéanann siad go deonach mar bhaill luachmhara den Choiste.

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

- other enactments relating to the Irish language, and
- problems relating to the use of one's name and address in Irish

Similar to other years, the vast majority of complaints were resolved through the informal complaints resolution process or through providing advice to the complainants. I appreciate the cooperation my Office received from public bodies dealing with complaints in this way.

“ Unfortunately, just under 60% of complaints made to the Office couldn't be investigated as there wasn't a breach of legislation.

Unfortunately, just under 60% of complaints made to the Office couldn't be investigated as there wasn't a breach of legislation. The high percentage of such complaints is noteworthy and worrying. It clearly shows the patent weakness of the present legislation: that there is a demand for state services through Irish which are not being provided for.

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. It is a shame that, due to the pandemic, there weren't more such opportunities in 2020.

That said, I delivered a number of speeches relating to language rights at public events. I also made regular presentations to public bodies regarding the implementation of the Act.

There were two new appointees to the Office's Internal Audit and Risk Committee: language expert, Dr Áine Nic Niallais, and financial expert, Micheál Ó Cinnéide. I am very grateful for the work they do voluntarily as valuable members of the 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. I'd like especially

ndúthracht agus a ndíograis. Ba mhaith liom iarStiúrthóir na hOifige, Colm Ó Coisdealbha, a lua. Ba mhór agam a chabhair agus a thacaíocht le linn mo chéad téarma oifige.

Is mian liom buíochas a ghabháil freisin le hÓrla de Búrca, a d'fheidhmigh mar Stiúrthóir Eatramhach san Oifig le linn na géarchéime sláinte; ba mhór agam a stuaim ar an stiúir. Cuirim fáilte mhór chomh maith roimh Shéamas Ó Concheanainn a ceapadh ina Stiúrthóir ar an Oifig i mí Mheán Fómhair 2020. Cuireann a údarás agus a dhíograis go mór le hobair na hOifige.

FOCAL SCOIR

B'onóir mhór dom gur athcheapadh mé i mo Choimisinéir Teanga mí an Mhárta 2020. Cuirim mo bhuíochas in iúl don Rialtas a d'ainmnigh mé, do Dháil Éireann agus Seanad Éireann a ghlac leis an ainmniúchán, agus d'Uachtarán na hÉireann a cheap mé go foirmiúil. Beidh mé ag súil, faoi dheireadh, gurb í 2021 an bhliain a n-achtófar Bille leasaithe nua a chinnteoidh cearta teanga an tsaoránaigh ar bhealach níos cuimsithí.

to mention the former Director of the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga, Colm Ó Coisdealbha. His help and support during my first term of office was invaluable.

I'd also like to thank Órla de Búrca who served as Interim Director in the Office during the health crisis: I greatly appreciate her prudent leadership. Finally, I also welcome Séamas Ó Concheanainn who was appointed as Director of this Office in September 2020. His authority and diligence add greatly to the work of the team.

CONCLUSION

I was hugely honoured to be reappointed as Coimisinéir Teanga in March 2020. I would like to thank the Government who nominated me, Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann for recommending the nomination and the President of Ireland who formally appointed me. I hope that 2021 is finally the year that an amended bill will be enacted which is fit for purpose and will ensure the language rights of citizens in a more comprehensive way.



Rónán Ó Domhnaill, an Coimisinéir Teanga, ag labhairt dó os comhair Chomhchoiste na Gaeilge, na Gaeltachta agus Phobal Labhartha na Gaeilge. Rónán Ó Domhnaill, An Coimisinéir Teanga, addressing the Joint Committee on the Irish Language, Gaeltacht and Irish-speaking Community.

SEIRBHÍSÍ EOLAIS AGUS CUMARSÁIDE

COMHAIRLE DO CHOMHLACHTAÍ POIBLÍ

Fáiltíonn an Oifig i gcónaí roimh an deis comhairle a chur ar chomhlachtaí poiblí maidir lena gcuid freagrachtaí faoin Acht. D'fhág an nuashonrú a rinneadh ar na comhlachtaí poiblí a thagann faoi scáth an Achta i mí an Mheithimh 2020 go raibh obair bhreise le déanamh sa réimse seo i mbliana. Rinneadh uasdátú ar shonraí na gcomhlachtaí poiblí agus cuireadh seimíneáir eolais ar fáil do na comhlachtaí poiblí a tugadh faoi scáth na reachtaíochta den chéad uair. Tá an obair sin fós ar bun.

Rinne oifigigh ó chomhlachtaí poiblí teagmháil le hOifig an Choimisinéara Teanga ar 111 ócáid éagsúil, íslíú 9% ón mbliain seo caite. Bhain trian de na fiosrúcháin sin, thart ar 34%, le comhairle i dtaca le comharthaíocht, stáiseanóireacht agus fógartí taifeadta béil; bhain 29% de na fiosrúcháin le gealltanais scéimeanna teanga agus bhain 8% le dualgais i dtaca le foilseacháin.

Bíonn an Oifig réamhghníomhach ina cuid iarrachtaí go dtuigfeadh comhlachtaí poiblí gur féidir teagmháil a dhéanamh linn más mian leo aon soiléiriú a fháil faoi na dualgais atá le comhlíonadh faoin Acht. Le linn na bliana reáchtáladh cruinnithe aonarach ar líne 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.

Cuidíonn comhairle agus eolas cruinn le comhlachtaí poiblí a gcuid dualgas faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla a chomhlíonadh ar bhealach níos éifeachtaí.

ÓCÁIDÍ

- Oscailt & Eochairchaint Chumann na bPobal Teanga Ollscoile (The Association of University Language Communities). Ollscoil Mhá Nuad.
- Coiste Oireachtais na Gaeilge, na Gaeltachta agus Phobal Labhartha na Gaeilge.
- Comhrá na gCoimisinéirí i dteannta iarChoimisinéir Teanga na Breataine Bige, Meri

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

ADVICE TO PUBLIC BODIES

The Office always welcomes the opportunity to offer advice to public bodies regarding their obligations under the Act. The updating of the list of public bodies covered by the Act in June 2020 resulted in additional work in this area during the year. Details of public bodies were updated and online seminars were provided to the public bodies which have come under the auspices of the Act for the first time. This work is ongoing.

Officials from public bodies contacted the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga on 111 separate occasions, a decrease of 9% on the previous year. A third of these enquiries, approximately 34%, related to requests for advice on the language requirements associated with signage, stationery and recorded oral announcements. A further 29% of enquiries related to compliance with commitments provided in language schemes, with 8% of enquiries relating to publications.

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 individual online meetings were held with different public bodies to discuss the general obligations under the Act or its application in relation to proposed projects or projects that were underway.

Accurate advice and information assists public bodies to comply more effectively with their obligations under the Official Languages Act.

EVENTS

- Opening & Keynote Speech. Conference of the Association of University Language Communities. Maynooth University.
- Oireachtas Committee on the Irish Language, Gaeltacht & the Irish Speaking Community.
- *Conversation with Commissioners* in attendance with the former Welsh Language Commissioner,

Rónán Ó Domhnaill, an Coimisinéir Teanga, agus Jack Chambers, Aire Stáit na Gaeltachta agus Spóirt, in Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga, an Spidéal.

Rónán Ó Domhnaill, An Coimisinéir Teanga, and Jack Chambers, Minister of State for the Gaeltacht and Sport, in the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga, An Spidéal.



Hews, agus Rapóirtéir Speisialta de chuid na Náisiún Aontaithe, Fernand de Varennes. Béal Feirste.

- Seoladh *Sruth na Teanga*. Compántas Branar. Aerfort na Gaillimhe. Gaillimh 2020.
- Seoladh leabhrán ar chearta teanga de chuid Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn. Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh.
- Cur i láthair ar Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla do Chomhairle Contae Chorcaí.
- Tae Beag Áras an Uachtaráin.
- Cur i láthair ag ceardlann pleanála teanga a d'eagraigh Údarás na Gaeltachta. Ar líne.
- I láthair ag seoladh an leabhair *Irish Speakers, Interpreters and the Courts* leis an Dr Mary Phelan. Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath. Á sheoladh ag an mBreitheamh sa Chúirt Achomhairc, Úna Ní Raifeartaigh.
- I láthair ag seoladh an leabhair *New Speakers of Irish in the Global Context* leis an Ollamh Bernadette O'Rourke agus an Dr John Walsh. Ar líne.

Thug baill foirne de chuid na hOifige 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 2020. 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 dháilínse. Is bealach ríthábhachtach é le heolas údarásach a choinneáil leis an bpobal agus cinntítear freisin go bhfuiltear 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.

Meri Hews, and the United Nations Special Rapporteur, Fernand de Varennes. Belfast.

- Launch of *Sruth na Teanga*. Branar Theatre Company. Galway Airport. Galway 2020.
- Launch of language rights booklet by the Union of Students in Ireland. NUI Galway.
- Presentation on the Official Languages Act for Cork County Council.
- Tae Beag Áras an Uachtaráin.
- Presentation at a language planning workshop organised by Údarás na Gaeltachta. Online.
- Attended launch of Dr Mary Phelan's *Irish Speakers, Interpreters and the Courts* by Ms. Justice Úna Ní Raifeartaigh, Court of Appeal. DCU.
- Attended launch of *New Speakers of Irish in the Global Context* by Professor Bernadette O'Rourke and Dr John Walsh. Online.

Staff in the Office gave a presentation to a language planning workshop organised by Údarás na Gaeltachta and at a seminar hosted by Cumann na nOifigeach Forbartha Gaeilge, the Irish Language Development Officers' Association.

MEDIA

I had a considerable amount of contact with the media during 2020. I always make every effort to accommodate all media requests relating to matters concerning Irish language legislation under my remit. I believe it is vital to provide authoritative updates to the public and it also ensures that we are accountable to the public. In that context, I would like to thank the journalists who were in contact with the Office during the year.

CUMAINN

CUMANN NA nOMBUDSMAN

Is cumann de na hoifigí ombudsman ar fad in Éirinn agus sa Ríocht Aontaithe 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 huair 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 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.

CUMANN IDIRNÁISIÚNTA NA gCOIMISINÉIRÍ TEANGA

Feidhmíonn an Cumann mar ghréasán luachmhar do Choimisinéirí Teanga ar fud na cruinne. Tá 11 Choimisinéir Teanga nó Ombudsman ina mbaill reatha den Chumann le ballraíocht ó Éirinn, ó Ceanada, ón mBreatain Bheag, ó Thír na mBascach, ón gCatalóin, ón gCosaiv agus ón mBeilg. Is minic a bhíonn go leor de na dúshlán teanga chéanna ag baint lenár gcuid oibre in ainneoin éagsúlacht mhór na timpeallachta ina bhfeidhmíonn na heagraíochtaí éagsúla.

Tae Beag in Áras an Uachtaráin: Uachtarán na hÉireann, Micheál D. Ó hUiginn, agus a bhean, Sabina, agus Rónán Ó Domhnaill, an Coimisinéir Teanga.

Tae Beag in Áras an Uachtaráin: President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, and his wife, Sabina, and Rónán Ó Domhnaill, An Coimisinéir Teanga.



ASSOCIATIONS

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

This is an association of all the ombudsman offices in Ireland and the United Kingdom. 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 Chair of the Forum in 2017. The Irish Ombudsman Forum, of which there are seven members, meets on a quarterly basis.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LANGUAGE COMMISSIONERS

The Association 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. We face many of the same linguistic challenges in our work despite the distinct environmental variety in which the various organisations operate.

GEARÁIN

Le linn na bliana 2020 fuarthas 604 gearán, íslíú 14% ar líon na ngearán a fuarthas le linn na bliana 2019 (704). Díol suntais é gur tháinig an t-íslíú is mó ar líon na ngearán le linn mhíonna Feabhra, an Mhárta agus Aibreáin, na trí mhí thosaigh den phaindéim. 134 gearán a rinneadh sa tréimhse chéanna in 2019 le hais 73 gearán in 2020.

Is ó Chontae Bhaile Átha Cliath is mó a tháinig na gearáin, mar is iondúil, ach tháinig líon suntasach freisin ó Chontaetha na Gaillimhe, Chiarraí, Chill Chainnigh agus Dhún na nGall. Tháinig tuairim agus an ceathrú cuid díobh (23%) ón nGaeltacht, ardú ar sciar na bliana anuraidh (18%).

Fearacht blianta roimhe seo, fuarthas comhréiteach ar chuid mhór de na gearáin tríd an gcóras neamhfhoirmiúil réitithe gearán nó trí chomhairle a chur ar ghearánaigh. I gcásanna den chineál sin 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. Tá achoimre ar na cásanna nár réitíodh tríd an gcóras neamhfhoirmiúil réitithe gearán agus inar críochnaíodh imscrúduithe foirmiúla ina leith sa chaibidil chuí thíos.

Tá réimse na ngearán fairsing agus ilghnéitheach. Bíonn an modh réitithe i dtuilleamaí dhearcadh an chomhlachta poiblí ar an ngearán. Bíonn comhoibriú maith le fáil go hiondúil ó fhormhór na gcomhlachtaí poiblí.

Bhain 85% de na gearáin le sé réimse faoi leith:

- forálacha i scéimeanna teanga
- comharthaíocht agus stáiseanáireacht
- freagra i mBéarla ar chumarsáid i nGaeilge
- cumarsáid i scríbhinn leis an bpobal le faisnéis a thabhairt
- achtacháin eile a bhaineann leis an nGaeilge, agus
- fadhb le húsáid ainm agus sloinne i nGaeilge

Cuimsíonn scéimeanna teanga in os cionn 130 comhlacht poiblí réimse leathan gealltanais maidir le seirbhísí a chur ar fáil. Is leis an réimse seo a bhaineann an líon is airde gearán.

COMPLAINTS

My Office received 604 complaints during the year, a decrease of 14% on the number of complaints received in 2019 (704). It is notable that the greatest reduction in the number of complaints took place during February, March and April, the first three months of the pandemic. 134 complaints were made during that period in 2019, compared with 73 complaints in 2020.

The greatest number of complaints was received from County Dublin, as usual, although a significant amount was received also from Counties Galway, Kerry, Kilkenny and Donegal. About a quarter (23%) of the complaints came from the Gaeltacht, an increase on last year (18%).

As in previous years, my Office resolved the majority of complaints through the informal complaints process or through providing advice to complainants. 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. Summaries of cases that were not resolved in this informal manner and in respect of which formal investigations were completed are provided in the relevant chapter below.

The range of complaints is wide and varied. The approach required in dealing with them often depends on the attitude of the public body concerned. Most public bodies are cooperative.

85% of the complaints related to six particular areas:

- provisions contained in language schemes
- signage and stationery
- response in English to communications in Irish
- communication with the public to provide information
- other enactments relating to the Irish language, and
- difficulty in using names and surnames in Irish

Language schemes in over 130 public bodies encompass a wide variety of commitments made to provide services. The highest number of

Baineann sciar mór de na gearáin le comharthaíocht agus stáiseanáireacht 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 bhunúsach seo a bheith i bhfeidhm ó 2004. Feictear do na comhfhreagraithe gur cleachtas maslach atá sna cásanna sin maidir leis an rogha theanga atá déanta acu.

Bíonn deacrachtaí ag daoine a n-ainm agus a seoladh i nGaeilge a úsáid i ngnóthaí leis an Stát ar fháthanna éagsúla. Ba chóir go n-aimseofaí meicníocht a thacódh agus a shimpléodh an tslí rompu siúd a mbaineann na ndeacrachtaí seo leo. Tá súil againn go n-éascóidh an reachtaíocht leasaithe atá le hachtú i mbliana réiteach éigin ar an ábhar gearáin seo.

Baineann céatadán suntasach de na gearáin le forálacha d'achtacháin eile a bhaineann le stádas nó le húsáid na Gaeilge, úsáid na Gaeilge ar chomharthaí tráchta san áireamh. Is sa *Lámhleabhar do Chomharthaí Tráchta* a leagtar síos na dualgais i leith úsáid na Gaeilge ar chomharthaí tráchta. Bhí titim ar líon na ngearán ar an ábhar seo i mbliana de bharr na srianta taistil a bhí i bhfeidhm, meastar. Bhí tionchar nach beag ag an bpaindéim ar an ardú ar líon na ngearán i dtaca le cora poist. Tá cur síos gairid thíos ar shamplaí de ghearáin a bhain le soláthar eolais, comharthaí agus eile i nGaeilge le linn na paindéime, ionas go dtabharfaí léargas ar chur chuige na n-eagras stáit ar an ábhar.

Is ceart a rá nár bhain gearáin uile na bliana seo le sárú dualgas reachtúil. Bhain cuid díobh le gnó a dhéanamh trí Ghaeilge ar bhealaí éagsúla nach gcuimsítear in aon dualgas reachtúil. Cuirtear comhairle dá réir ar fáil don ghearánach sna cásanna úd atá áirithe i measc na 357 cás inar tugadh comhairle don phobal le linn na bliana. Is ionann iad agus 59% de na ceisteanna ar fad a cuireadh faoi bhráid m'Oifige. Ina fhianaise sin, tá sciar seirbhísí agus faisnéise a bhfuil éileamh áirithe orthu as Gaeilge agus nach bhfuil soláthar á dhéanamh dóibh go fóill.

complaints relates to this area. A significant number of complaints relate to signage and stationery due to 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. Correspondents regard such incidents as offensive practice in respect of the language choice they have made.

People encounter difficulties in using their name and address in Irish for various reasons when dealing with the State. Some mechanism should be found to support and facilitate those to whom these difficulties pertain. We would hope that the amended legislation to be enacted this year would go some way towards resolving this issue.

A substantial percentage of complaints related also to the provisions of other enactments concerning the status or use of Irish, including the use of Irish on road signs. The obligations on roads authorities in respect of road traffic signage are set out in the *Traffic Signs Manual*. There was a reduction in the number of complaints received in respect of road signs this year, not surprisingly, in light of the restrictions on travel during the pandemic. The pandemic had an effect on the increase in the number of complaints in respect of mailshots. A brief account is provided below of examples of complaints which concerned the provision of information, signage and other matters in Irish during the pandemic, to give an insight into the approach of the public bodies on the matter.

It should be said that not all the complaints received by my Office during the years relate to infringements of statutory obligations. Some of these related to difficulties when conducting business through Irish that are not covered by any statutory provision. The complainant is advised accordingly in these cases which are included in the 357 cases in which advice was given to the public during the year. This constitutes 59% 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

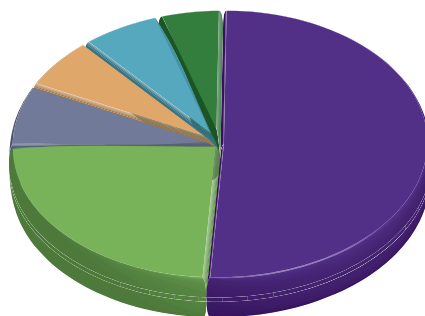
Gearáin le linn 2020 Complaints during 2020

	2019	2020
Gearáin <i>Complaints</i>	301	247
Comhairle tugtha <i>Advice given</i>	403	357
Iomlán <i>Total</i>	704	604

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

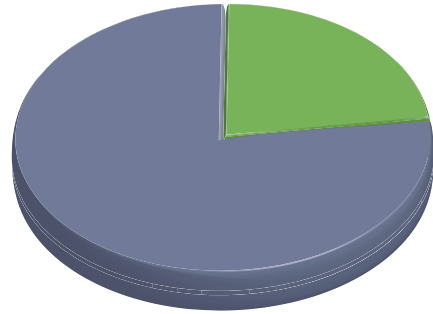


	2019	2020
Foráil de scéim teanga (san áireamh: cártaí aitheantais, suíomhanna gréasáin agus foirmeacha) <i>Provision of a language scheme (including identity cards, websites and forms)</i>	37.5%	36.1%
Easpa Gaeilge ar chomharthaíocht & stáiseanóireacht <i>Lack of Irish on signage and stationery</i>	27.4%	23.8%
Achtacháin eile a bhaineann le stádas nó le húsáid na Gaeilge <i>Other enactments relating to the use or status of Irish</i>	3.3%	7.5%
Freagraí i mBéarla ar chumarsáid i nGaeilge <i>Replies in English to correspondence in Irish</i>	6.7%	6.3%
Fadhb le hainm agus/nó le seoladh i nGaeilge <i>Problem with use of name and/or address in Irish</i>	6.7%	6.3%
Bileoga nó ciorcláin i mBéarla amháin <i>Leaflets or circulars in English only</i>	–	5.0%
Easpa Gaeilge ar chomharthaí bóthair <i>Lack of Irish on road signs</i>	8.9%	3.5%
Foilsíú doiciméad áirithe <i>Publication of certain documents</i>	2.8%	2.3%
Eile (cúiseanna aonair) <i>Other (individual issues)</i>	6.7%	9.2%
Iomlán <i>Total</i>	100%	100%

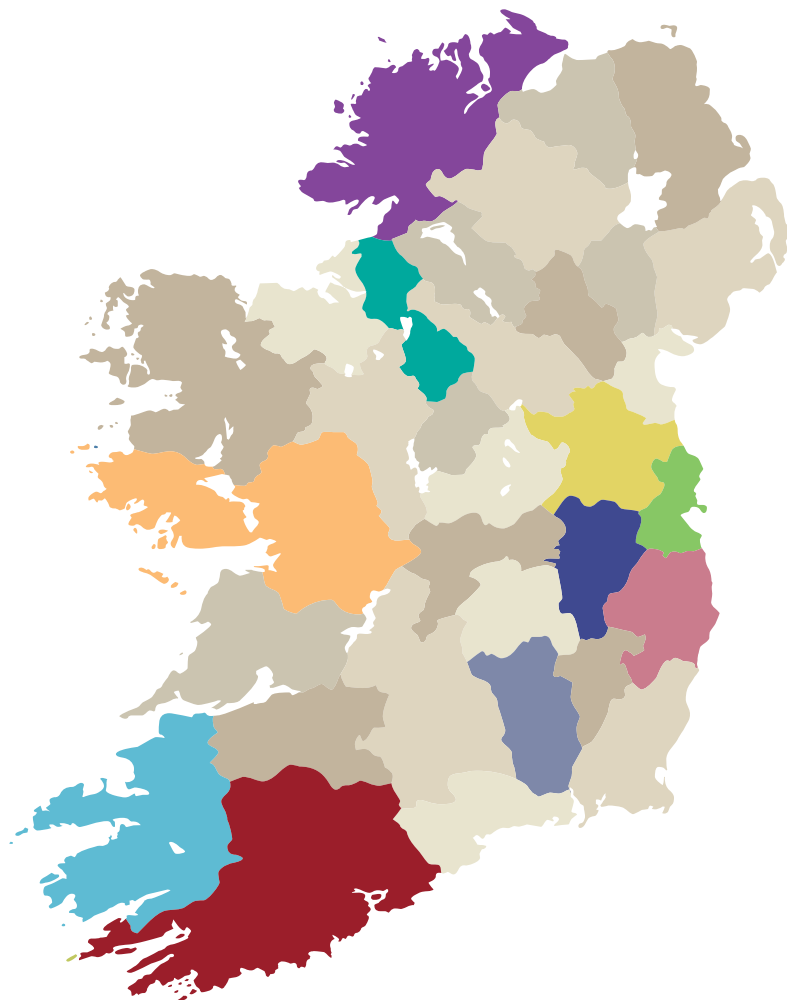
Gearáin: An Ghaeltacht agus lasmuigh den Ghaeltacht

Complaints: Gaeltacht and non-Gaeltacht

	2019	2020
 An Ghaeltacht <i>Gaeltacht</i>	18%	23%
 Lasmuigh den Ghaeltacht <i>Non-Gaeltacht</i>	82%	77%
Iomlán Total	100%	100%



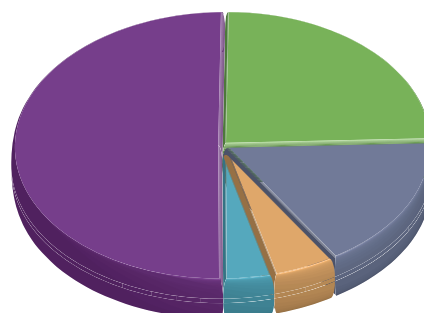
Gearáin de réir contae Complaints by county



	2019	2020
 Baile Átha Cliath <i>Dublin</i>	35.3%	33%
 Gaillimh <i>Galway</i>	15.3%	20%
 Ciarraí <i>Kerry</i>	4.2%	6%
 Cill Chainnigh <i>Kilkenny</i>	8.9%	5.5%
 Corcaigh <i>Cork</i>	3.5%	4%
 Dún na nGall <i>Donegal</i>	4.1%	3.5%
 Cill Dara <i>Kildare</i>	2.5%	3%
 An Mhí <i>Meath</i>	1.7%	3%
 Cill Mhantáin <i>Wicklow</i>	2.5%	2.5%
 Liatroim <i>Leitrim</i>	3.2%	2.3%
Eile <i>Other</i>	18.8%	17.2%
Iomlán Total	100%	100%

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

	2019	2020
Ranna & oifigí rialtais Government departments & offices	13.2%	24.5%
Údaráis áitiúla Local authorities	34.9%	16.5%
Údaráis sláinte Health authorities	3.9%	5.0%
Údaráis oideachais Education authorities	10.9%	3.8%
Eagraíochtaí eile stáit Other state organisations	37.1%	50.2%
Iomlán Total	100%	100%



GEARÁIN PHAINDEIM COVID-19

Tá sochaí na hÉireann i ngreim ag an ngéarchéim shláinte, shóisialta agus eacnamaíoch a bhaineann le paindéim COVID-19 ó mhí an Mhárta 2020. Aithnítear go bhfuil dúshlán mhóra roimh chomhlachtaí poiblí an Stáit soláthar a dhéanamh do riachtanais agus leas an phobail. Is i gcúinsí den chineál seo, áfach, a fhaightear léargas ar a dhaingne atá géilliúlacht do reachtaíocht atá fréamhaithe i gcórais riaracháin comhlachtaí poiblí amhail Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla.

Ó thús na paindéime go deireadh 2020, rinneadh gearáin le m'Oifig 86 uair faoi ghníomhartha comhlachtaí poiblí a bhain le paindéim COVID-19 ar shlí éigin.

	Líon Márta –Nollaig 2020	Cásanna a bhain le COVID	%
Gearáin	212	52	24.5%
Comhairle don phobal	302	34	11.3%
Iomlán	514	86	16.7%

Gearáin agus comhairle don phobal a bhain le COVID-19 idir Márta agus Nollaig 2020.

Bhain 20% de na gearáin a fiosraíodh le comhlachtaí poiblí le linn 2020 le COVID ach uaireanta rinneadh gearáin a bhain le gnó a dhéanamh as Gaeilge nach gcuimsítear in aon dualgas reachtúil. Cuirtear comhairle dá réir ar fáil don ghearánach.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC COMPLAINTS

Since March 2020, society in Ireland has struggled with a health, economic and social emergency precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Without question, the State's public bodies face great challenges in providing for the needs and welfare of the community. Circumstances such as these, however, provide an insight into how firmly compliance with legislation such as the Official Languages Act is embedded in the administration of public bodies.

Since the pandemic began until the end of 2020, complaints were made on 86 occasions concerning activities of public bodies that pertained in one way or another to the COVID-19 pandemic.

	Total March –December 2020	Cases pertaining to COVID	%
Complaints	212	52	24.5%
Advice to the public	302	34	11.3%
Total	514	86	16.7%

Complaints and advice to the public pertaining to COVID-19 from March to December 2020.

20% of all the complaints raised with public bodies during 2020 pertained to COVID, but in some instances difficulties were encountered in doing business through Irish that are not covered by any statutory obligation. In such cases, the complainant is advised accordingly.

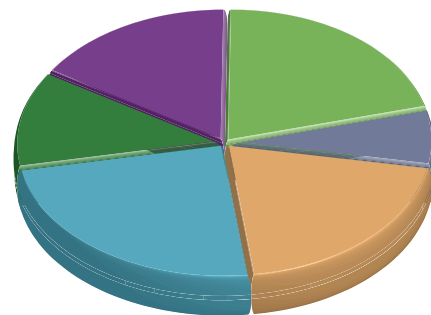
Bhain bunáite na ngearán le modhanna cumarsáide éagsúla chun eolas a chur ar fáil don phobal, idir chomharthaí, leabhráin eolais, shuíomhanna gréasáin agus fógraíocht sna meáin agus an tslí nár soláthraíodh ábhar don phobal as Gaeilge. Ba sciar suntasach de na gearáin córais idirghníomhacha chun clárú nó chun iarratais a dhéanamh ar líne.

The majority of these cases concerned various means of communication to provide information to the public, including signs, information booklets, websites, advertising through the media and the lack of provision through Irish. Online interactive systems for registering or making applications also constituted a significant share of the complaints.

Gearáin agus comhairle don phobal a bhain le COVID

Complaints and advice to the public concerning COVID

Comharthaí <i>Signs</i>	21%
Fógraíocht <i>Advertising</i>	7%
Suíomhanna gréasáin <i>Websites</i>	20%
Cumarsáid i scríbhinn leis an bpobal i gcoitinne <i>Communicating in writing with the general public</i>	24%
Foirmeacha agus foirmeacha ar líne <i>Forms and online forms</i>	12%
Eile <i>Other</i>	16%



Ábhar na ngearán agus na comhairle a bhain le COVID-19 le linn 2020.

The types of complaints and advice concerning COVID-19 during 2020.

Cumarsáid i scríbhinn leis an bpobal i gcoitinne

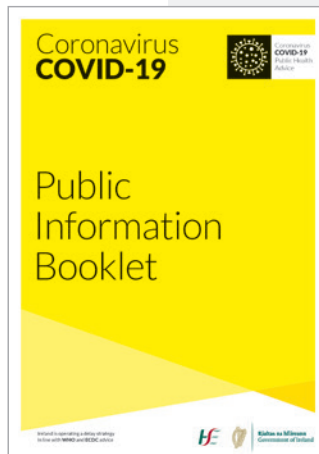
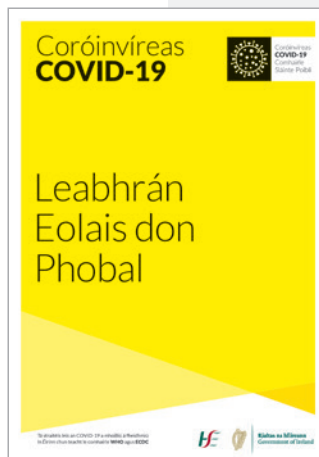
Bhain cuid shuntasach de na gearáin a fuarthas le dhá leabhrán a ndearna an Roinn Sláinte agus an Roinn Tithíochta, Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachtá dáileadh orthu chuig gach teach sa Stát. Faoi alt 9(3) d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, ní mór don chomhlacht poiblí a chinntiú gur i nGaeilge, nó i mBéarla agus i nGaeilge, a dhéanfaidh sé aon chumarsáid i scríbhinn leis an bpobal i gcoitinne chun faisnéis a thabhairt don phobal. Sa dá chás seo foilsíodh agus dáileadh leabhrán eolais i mBéarla amháin agus bhain moill le foilsiú agus dáileadh leagain Gaeilge de na leabhráin. Is cosúil gur sháraigh an dá Roinn an dualgas reachtúil toisc nár táirgeadh leabhrán dátheangach in am trátha. Ní raibh socrúithe sásúla i bhfeidhm sna ranna sin chun a chinntiú go gcomhlíonfaí an dualgas reachtúil i gcás práinne.

Communicating in writing with the general public

A significant portion of the complaints made concerned the distribution of two information booklets to every house in the State by the Department of Health and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Under section 9(3) of the Official Languages Act, where a public body communicates in writing with the general public to provide information to the public, the public body must ensure the communication concerned is in the Irish language or in both the Irish and English languages. In both these cases, an information booklet was published and distributed in English only and there was a subsequent delay in the publication and distribution of an Irish-language version. It would appear that both Departments contravened a statutory obligation by not producing a bilingual booklet in a timely manner. Satisfactory arrangements were not in place in those departments to ensure that the statutory requirement could be fulfilled in urgent circumstances.

An Roinn Sláinte

Thug an Roinn Sláinte le fios go raibh leabhrán eolais i nGaeilge a bhain le Covid 19 á ullmhú, go raibh i gceist go scaipfí ar gach teach sa Ghaeltacht é, agus go raibh sé dearbhaithe ag an bPost go raibh ar a chumas é sin a dhéanamh. Dheimhnigh an Roinn go raibh an leagan Béarla á eisiúint go náisiúnta de bharr go raibh práinn ag baint leis ach go raibh an leagan Gaeilge curtha chuig an gclódóir faoin tráth sin. Mhínigh m'Oifig an dualgas atá ann aon chumarsáid i scríbhinn leis an bpobal i gcoitinne a dhéanamh go comhuaineach i ngach ceann de na teangacha oifigiúla. Thug an Roinn le fios dúinn go ndáilfí an leagan Gaeilge den leabhrán ar gach teach sa Stát tamall i ndiaidh an leagain Béarla. Rinneadh sraith gearán le m'Oifig nuair a fuarthas an leagan Béarla agus cuireadh in iúl d'aon duine a rinne teagmháil linn go mbeadh leagan Gaeilge á chur ar fáil.

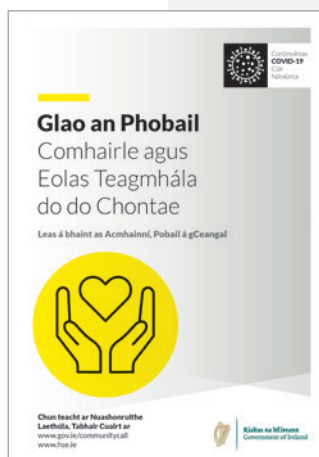


An Roinn Tithíochta, Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht

Rinneadh gearán le m'Oifig gur i mBéarla amháin a bhí an leabhrán eolais 'Community Call' á seachadadh chuig gach teach sa Stát.

Dhearbhaigh an Roinn Tithíochta, Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht go raibh an leabhrán náisiúnta 'Glao Pobail – Comhairle agus Eolas Teagmhála do do Chontae' foilsithe aici mar chuid de fhreagairt an Rialtais do phaindéim COVID-19.

Tugadh le fios go ndearnadh an téacs Béarla a dhréachtú agus an Rialtas ag seoladh an tionscnaimh 'Glao Pobail' (Déardaoin, 2 Aibreán). Dúradh gur oibrigh an Roinn go dian chun an leabhrán a thabhairt chun críche agus a chur i gcló go práinneach mar gheall ar chúinsí na paindéime. Foilsíodh an leabhrán Béarla ar an 6 Aibreán agus cuireadh á aistriú go Gaeilge é gan mhoill ina dhiaidh sin. Bhí leagan Gaeilge



Department of Health

The Department of Health advised that an Irish-language Covid-19 information booklet was being prepared, that it was intended to distribute it to every house in the Gaeltacht and that An Post had advised that it was in a position to do so. The Department confirmed that the English version was being issued nationwide due to the urgency involved, but that the Irish version had been sent to the printer. My Office explained the obligation that exists to communicate in writing with the general public in both official languages simultaneously. The Department reverted to us advising that the Irish version of the leaflet would now be distributed to every house in the country some time subsequent to the distribution of the English version. Numerous complaints were made to my Office when the English-language version was received, and we advised anyone who contacted us that an Irish version would be issued.

Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

Complaints were made to the Office that the information booklet 'Community Call' was being distributed in English only to every house in the State.

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage confirmed that the national booklet, 'Community Call – Advice and Contact Information for your County' had been published by it as part of the Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It was advised that the text in English was drafted as the Government launched the 'Community Call' project (Thursday, 2 April). We were informed that the Department had worked hard to finalise the leaflet and print it urgently due to the circumstances pertaining to the pandemic. The English version was published on 6 April and was sent immediately for translation to Irish. The Irish version was finalised on 10 April and was published on gov.ie the same

tugtha chun críche ar an 10 Aibreán agus bhí na leaganacha Gaeilge agus Béarla den leabhrán ar fáil ar gov.ie agus housing.gov.ie faoin 10 Aibreán.

I dtaca le dáileadh an leabhráin, d'áitigh an Roinn go raibh achar ama dian faoina raibh uirthi an leabhrán a sholáthar dá comhpháirtí dáileacháin, an Post, le go seachnófaí moill seachadta roimh dheireadh seachtaine na Cásca. Ní bheadh an leabhrán faighte ag teaghlaigh go ceann seachtain ní ba dhéanaí dá bhfanadh an Roinn ar leagan dátheangach den leabhrán. Chreid an Roinn go raibh sé ríthábhachtach an tsoiléireacht agus an t-eolas a sholáthar do theaghlaigh a luaithe agus ab fhéidir sna cúinsí a bhí ann.

Ina dhiaidh sin chuir an Roinn siar clóbhuailadh an leagain chrua den leabhrán Gaeilge toisc gur fhógair an Rialtas go raibh síneadh le cur le tréimhse na srianta agus go mba ghá dá bharr an t-eolas sa leabhrán a thabhairt suas chun dáta. Deimhníodh ar an 15 Bealtaine go raibh leagan uasdátaithe Gaeilge á chur i gcló agus go seachadfaí chuig an bPost é ar an 18 Bealtaine, le dáileadh chomh luath agus ab fhéidir ina dhiaidh sin. Tugadh le fios go raibh an leagan nuashonraithe den leabhrán, sa dá theanga, le fáil ar housing.gov.ie agus ar gov.ie.

Dhearbhaigh an Roinn gur tuigeadh na hoibleagáidí Gaeilge atá uirthi faoin Acht maidir le haon fhoilseachán clóite den chineál céanna amach anseo.

Comharthaíocht

Bhain líon suntasach eile de na gearáin le linn na bliana le comharthaí faoi COVID-19. Tá na rialacháin faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla maidir le húsáid na Gaeilge agus an Bhéarla ar chomharthaí comhlachtaí poiblí i bhfeidhm ó 2009.

Cuireadh comharthaí in airde i mBéarla amháin ar fud na tíre de thoradh phaindéim COVID-19 (comharthaí comhairle sláinte, comharthaí treoracha,

day and both the English and Irish versions of the booklet were available from gov.ie and from housing.gov.ie on 10 April.

As regards distribution, the Department informed us that it was given a tight timeframe by which it had to provide the leaflet to its distribution partner, An Post, to avoid delays in distribution prior to the Easter weekend. The booklet would have been received by families about a week later than they did, if it waited until a bilingual version was available. The Department stated that it believed that it was imperative to provide clarity and information to families as soon as possible in the circumstances.

Following this the Department postponed the printing of the hard copy of the Irish version due to the announcement by the Government that the period of the restrictions was being extended and thus the information in the booklet needed to be updated. The Department confirmed on 15 May that the updated Irish version was being printed and that they would be delivered to An Post on 18 May, to be distributed as soon as possible after that date. It was advised that the revised version of the leaflet, in both languages, was available on gov.ie and housing.gov.ie.

The Department confirmed that it understood its Irish language obligations under the Act in respect of future publications.

Signage

Another significant portion of the complaints made to my Office during the year concerned signage relating to COVID-19. The regulations made under the Official Languages Act concerning the use of the Irish and English languages on signs have been in operation since 2009.

Signs in English only were erected all over the country as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic



scaradh sóisialta, áiseanna poiblí a bheith dúnta agus araile), amhail is nárbh ann do na rialacháin sin in aon chor.

I measc na gcomhlachtaí poiblí a ndearnadh gearáin liom ina leith, bhí Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall, an tÚdarás Náisiúnta Iompair, Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte, Coillte, Bonneagar Iompair Éireann, Amharclann na Mainistreach, Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath, an Post, Comhairle Contae Chiarraí, Óglaigh na hÉireann, Comhairle Contae Chorcaí agus Comhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe. Leanadh den ghnáthphróiseas le gearáin a fhiosrú i ngach cás, agus thángthas ar réiteach neamhfhoirmiúil i gcás gach ceann acu, seachas i gcás Chomhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe. Tá cur síos ar an imscrúdú a rinneadh sa chás sin ar fáil níos déanaí sa tuarascáil seo.

Eolas ar líne nó á scaipeadh ar ghrúpaí; foirmeacha agus córais idirghníomhacha ar líne

Níl aon dualgas ginearálta i bhforálacha Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla maidir le húsáid na Gaeilge ar shuíomhanna gréasáin nó i gcás soláthar foirmeacha. Braitheann na dualgais teanga atá ar chomhlachtaí poiblí ar ghealltanais a gcuid scéimeanna teanga, agus mar atá ráite agam cheana, ní léir dom go bhfuil an córas sin oiriúnach dá fheidhm.

Rinneadh gearáin liom faoin gceannnteideal seo maidir leis an Roinn Oideachais, an Roinn Leanaí agus Gnóthaí Óige, Roinn an Taoisigh, an Roinn Sláinte, an Bord um Fhaisnéis do Shaoránaigh, an tÚdarás um Shábháilteacht ar Bhóithre agus an Roinn Gnóthaí Fostaíochta agus Coimirce Sóisialaí. Rinneadh teagmháil leis na comhlachtaí poiblí tríd an gcóras neamhfhoirmiúil réitithe gearán. Níos minice ná a mhalairt, cuireadh leagan Gaeilge den eolas a bhí á lorg ar fáil ar iarratas, fiú i gcásanna nach raibh dualgas reachtúil ann é sin a sholáthar. Is mór agam comhoibriú na gcomhlachtaí poiblí sa mhéid sin.

Áirítear an aip rianaithe teagmhálaithe a chuir Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte ar fáil sa réimse gearán seo. Socraíodh an aip a chur ar fáil

(health advice signs, directional signs, social distancing, public amenities closed etc.) as if the regulations never existed.



Fingal County Council, the National Transport Authority, the Health Service Executive, Coillte, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, the Abbey Theatre, Dublin City Council, An Post, Kerry County Council, the Defence Forces, Cork County Council and Galway City Council were amongst those in respect of which

complaints were made. The normal process for resolving complaints was followed in each case, and an informal resolution was reached in all cases, with the exception of Galway City Council. An account on the investigation carried out in that instance is available later in this report.

Information provided online or distributed to groups; forms and online interactive systems

There are no general obligations in the direct provisions of the Official Languages Act concerning the use of Irish on websites or in the provision of forms. The language obligations on public bodies in respect of providing information online depends on what is committed to in their language schemes. I have previously stated that I do not believe that the language scheme system is fit for purpose.

Complaints were made to me under this category in respect of the Department of Education, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, the Department of An Taoiseach, the Department of Health, the Citizens' Information Board, the Road Safety Authority, and the Department of Employment Affairs and Welfare. Contact was made with the relevant public bodies through the informal complaints resolution process. More often than not, an Irish-language version of the information was made available on request, even in cases where there was no legal obligation to do so. I appreciate the cooperation of the public bodies in that respect.

The contact-tracing app provided by the Health Service Executive pertains to this category. It was decided to provide the app in Irish, for the most

i nGaeilge den chuid is mó, cé nach raibh dualgas reachtúil i gceist. B'amhlaidh a tharla i gcás na bhfoirmeacha agus na gcóras idirghníomhach ar líne. Sa chás nach raibh dualgas reachtúil i gceist, áfach, agus nach raibh an comhlacht poiblí sásta an t-ábhar a sholáthar i nGaeilge, níorbh fhéidir leis an Oifig dul ní b'fhaide leis an scéal.

Sa chaibidil faoi na himscrúduithe a rinneadh in 2020, cuirtear síos ar imscrúdú a rinneadh ar an Roinn Oideachais toisc nár cuireadh ar fáil as Gaeilge tairseach ar líne chun clárú do ghráid ríofa na hArdteistiméireachta.

Fógraíocht / cláir theilifíse

Rinneadh roinnt gearán le m'Oifig gur i mBéarla amháin nó i mBéarla den chuid is mó a bhí fógraíocht á déanamh i dtaca le paindéim COVID-19. Toisc nach ndearnadh aon rialachán go dtí seo faoin reachtaíocht i dtaca le cúrsaí fógraíochta, ní raibh aon dualgas reachtúil á shárú sna cásanna seo, seachas má bhí tagairt d'fhógraíocht i scéim teanga an chomhlachta phoiblí a bhí i gceist. Tugadh le fios, mar sin féin, do na comhlachtaí poiblí cuí go raibh gearáin déanta linn ar an ábhar.

Maidir le cláir theilifíse, rinneadh teagmháil linn i dtús thréimhse phaindéim COVID-19 mar nár chosúil go raibh aon soláthar á dhéanamh do scoileanna a mhúineann trí mheán na Gaeilge nuair a rinneadh cinneadh ranganna a chur ar fáil ar RTÉ le linn na chéad thréimhse dianghlása. Socraíodh go luath ina dhiaidh sin go ndéanfaí freastal ar na scoileanna a mhúineann trí mheán na Gaeilge trí ranganna a sholáthar ar TG4, socrú a réitigh an cheist.

Achtacháin eile a bhaineann le stádas nó le húsáid na dteangacha oifigiúla

Bhain na gearáin a fuairamar sa réimse seo leis an Acht Oideachais, 1998, agus an dualgas atá ar an Roinn faoin Acht sin seirbhísí taca a sholáthar i nGaeilge do scoileanna Gaeilge agus Gaeltachta agus d'aon scoil eile a lorgaíonn soláthar den chineál sin. Bhain na gearáin le hábhar a scaip na hIonaid Oideachais agus le cúrsaí a thairg siad, le painéal múinteoirí agus le gráid ríofa. Réitíodh na gearáin go neamhfhoirmiúil sa chás go raibh dualgas reachtúil á shárú. I gcás na nIonad Oideachais rinneadh socrúithe fadtéarmacha de thoradh na ngearán a rinneadh.

part, although there was no statutory obligation to do so. A similar result was achieved in respect of the forms and the online interactive systems. Where a legal obligation did not exist, however, and where the public body was not prepared to provide the material in Irish, the Office could not progress the matter.

In the chapter dealing with investigations carried out in 2020, an investigation is described where the Department of Education failed to provide an Irish-language version of an online portal provided for Leaving Certificate applicants to register for calculated grades.

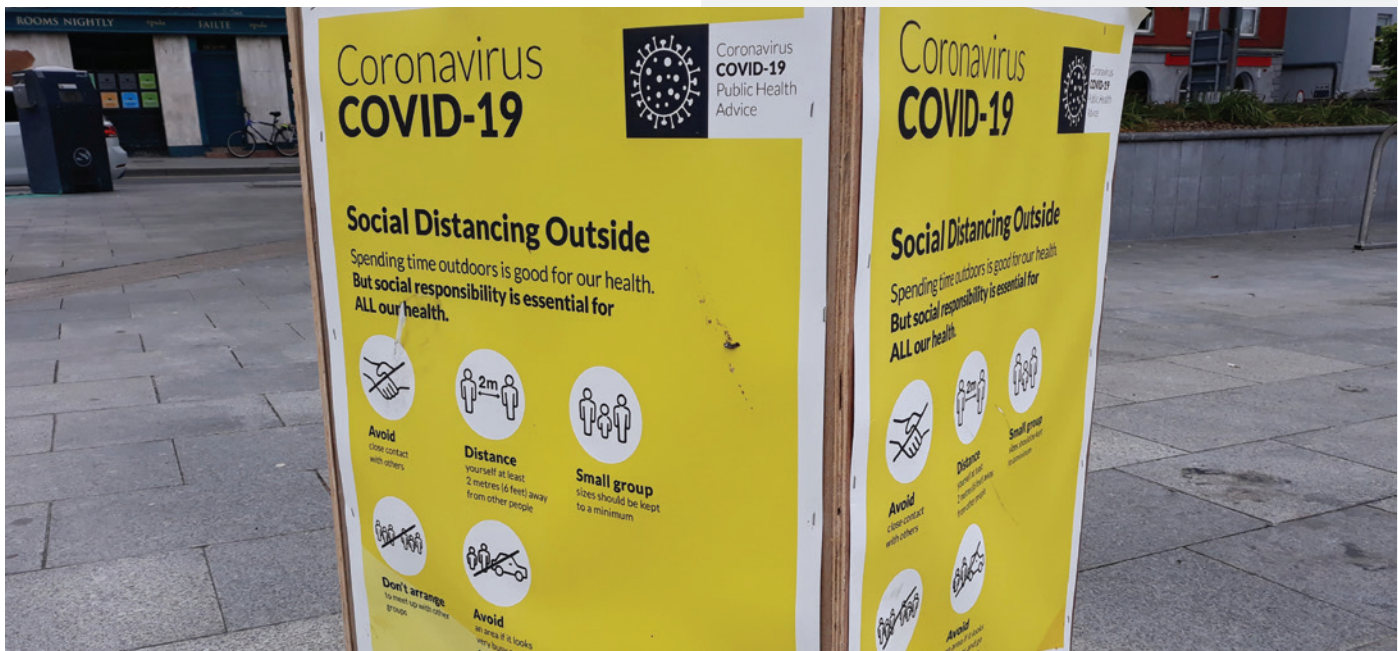
Advertising / television programmes

A number of complaints were made to my Office that the advertisements in respect of the COVID-19 pandemic were in English only or mainly in English. As no regulations have been made to date in respect of advertisements under the legislation, no statutory obligation was breached in these cases, except in instances where reference had been made to advertisements in a language scheme. Nevertheless, we did advise the relevant public bodies that we had received complaints on the matter.

As regards television programmes, contact was made with us in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic as it appeared that no provision was being made for schools that teach through the medium of Irish when a decision was made to provide classes on RTÉ during the first lockdown period. An arrangement was made shortly afterwards that schools teaching through Irish would be accommodated by providing classes on TG4, an arrangement which resolved the issue.

Other enactments relating to the status or use of the official languages

The complaints we received in this area concerned the Education Act 1998, and the obligation on the Department under that Act to provide support services in Irish to Irish-medium and Gaeltacht schools, as well as to any other school requesting such support. The complaints concerned material distributed by the Education Centres and courses they offered, a teachers panel and calculated grades. The complaints were resolved informally in any case where there was a statutory obligation. In the case of the Education Centres, long-term arrangements were made as a result of the complaints received.



Ó thús phaindéim COVID-19, tá earnálacha den státhóras i mbun feachtais chumarsáide le heolas riachtanach a chur ar fáil chun muintir na hÉireann a ghríosú chun dul i ngleic le dúshlán as cuimse. Bhraith go leor de na gearánaithe go raibh leithcheal á dhéanamh ar an nGaeilge nó ar lucht a labhartha sa dioscúrsa náisiúnta in aimsir éigeandála. Is cinnte go mbaineann a leithéid de bhraistint den chuspóir náisiúnta ardú a chur ar líon na ndaoine a labhraíonn an Ghaeilge gach lá.

Os a choinne sin, aithním le buíochas an comhoibriú a fuair m'Óifig ó fhormhór na gcomhlachtaí poiblí a rabhthas i dteagmháil leo agus a ghlac leis gur chóir an tseirbhís nó an t-eolas a bhí faoi chaibidil a chur ar fáil sa dá theanga, go mór mór sna cásanna nár léir go raibh aon dualgas sonrach reachtúil i gceist lena leithéid a dhéanamh.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, sectors of the public service have been involved in communication campaigns to provide essential information to the people of Ireland and to encourage them to cooperate in countering an enormous challenge. A perception exists amongst many complainants that the national language and the people who speak it were marginalised or excluded from national discourse during such an emergency. Such a perception surely detracts from the national goal of increasing the number of people who speak Irish on a daily basis.

On the other hand, I acknowledge with gratitude the cooperation received from the majority of public bodies contacted who recognised that the provision of the service or information in both languages was appropriate, especially in the cases where there was no clear statutory requirement to do so.

IMSCRÚDUI THE

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 ar 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 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 2020. Is cuntais ghairide iad na hachomairí 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 2020:

Líon na n-imscrúduithe	2019	2020
Tugtha ar aghaidh ón mbliain roimhe	2	2
Imscrúduithe seolta	5	6
Iomlán idir lámha	7	8
Tugtha ar aghaidh go dtí an chéad bhliain eile	2	4
Iomlán críochnaithe	5	4

INVESTIGATIONS

The core functions of An Coimisinéir Teanga include initiating an investigation if it is considered that a contravention of any provision of the Act or any other enactment relating to the use or status of an official language may have occurred. I can investigate on my own initiative, pursuant to a complaint, or at the request of the Minister.

An investigation is a formal process in which a possible failure in legislative compliance is presented to the public body. The public body is given an opportunity to present its case and all relevant records must be made available to me. Having received and weighed all the information I issue an investigation report containing findings and recommendations, if appropriate, to the relevant parties. A party to an investigation, or any person affected by my decision and recommendations, can appeal on a point of law to the High Court.

This report contains a summary of the investigations completed during 2020. These summaries are truncated accounts and the authoritative versions of these investigations are contained in the official reports. The number of investigations initiated and completed during 2020 is summarised as follows:

Number of investigations	2019	2020
Carried over from previous year	2	2
Investigations launched	5	6
Total dealt with	7	8
Carried over to the following year	2	4
Total completed	5	4

ACHOIMRÍ AR IMSCRÚDITHE 2020

An Roinn Oideachais

Níor cuireadh ar fáil as Gaeilge an tairseach ar líne maidir le gráid ríofa do dhaltáí na hArdteistiméireachta 2020 le linn don tairseach sin a bheith ar oscailt (i mBéarla) idir an 26 agus an 29 Bealtaine 2020, ná níor cuireadh ar fáil as Gaeilge na treoracha maidir le húsáid na tairsí sin do phríomhoidí agus do dhaltáí na scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge go comhuaineach leis na treoracha sin i mBéarla.



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

“... nach raibh fáil ar leagan Gaeilge den chóras clárúcháin do ghráid ríofa a cuireadh ar fáil do dhaltáí na hArdteistiméireachta i mí na Bealtaine 2020.

Rinneadh dhá gearán liom nach raibh fáil ar leagan Gaeilge den chóras clárúcháin do ghráid ríofa a cuireadh ar fáil do dhaltáí na hArdteistiméireachta i mí na Bealtaine 2020. Tairseach ar líne a bhí i gceist chun cur ar chumas daltaí clárú do ghráid ríofa toisc go raibh scrúduithe na hArdteistiméireachta curtha siar.

Faoi fho-alt 7(2)(d) den Acht Oideachais, 1998, is feidhm de chuid an Aire Oideachais “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” agus áirítear mar sheirbhís taca faoin Acht sin seirbhís chun “mic léinn a mheasúnú”. Anuas air sin, tugadh gealltanais i Scéim Teanga na Roinne go dtabharfaí isteach aon chóras nua idirghníomhach go comhuaineach i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla. Chinn mé, dá bhrí sin, imscrúdú a dhéanamh ar an ábhar.

SUMMARIES OF 2020 INVESTIGATIONS

Department of Education

The online portal for calculated grades for 2020 Leaving Certificate students was not provided in Irish while that portal was open (in English) between 26 and 29 May 2020, nor were instructions provided in Irish for its use to the principals and pupils to schools providing Irish-medium education simultaneously with the provision of such instructions in English.

“... no Irish-language version of the registration system for calculated grades provided for Leaving Certificate students in May 2020 had been made available.

Two complaints were made to me that no Irish-language version of the registration system for calculated grades provided for Leaving Certificate students in May 2020 had been made available. This was an online portal to enable students to register for calculated grades as the Leaving Certificate examinations had been postponed.

Under subsection 7(2)(d) of the Education Act, 1998, the functions of the Minister for Education include “to provide support services through Irish to recognised schools which provide teaching through Irish and to any other recognised school which requests such provision.” Under the Act, a service for “the assessment of students” is considered a support service. The Department’s Language Scheme also made a commitment to introduce any new interactive system simultaneously in Irish and English. I therefore decided to investigate the matter.

“ ... mhínigh an Roinn go ndearnadh cinneadh nach raibh an t-am ann lena aistriú go Gaeilge. Má tá aon taifead ar marthain den chinneadh sin (nó go raibh soláthar leagain Gaeilge de san áireamh roimhe sin), níor cuireadh ar fáil don imscrúdú é.

Rinneadh an leagan Béarla den tairseach ar líne a fhorbairt ina iomláine i dtús báire agus ansin mhínigh an Roinn go ndearnadh cinneadh nach raibh an t-am ann lena aistriú go Gaeilge. Má tá aon taifead ar marthain den chinneadh sin (nó go raibh soláthar leagain Gaeilge de san áireamh roimhe sin), níor cuireadh ar fáil don imscrúdú é.

Tosaíodh ag tógáil na tairsí ar an 14 Bealtaine. Ina theannta sin, rinneadh gearáin gur i mBéarla amháin a seoladh imlitreacha a bhain le húsáid na tairsí seo chuig príomhoidí iar-bhunscoileanna atá ag teagasc trí Ghaeilge, ar an 25 Bealtaine 2020, imlitreacha a bheadh le dáileadh ar dhaltaí na hArdteistiméireachta. Cuireadh an córas ar fáil do scoláirí idir an 26 Bealtaine agus an 29 Bealtaine.

Sa fhreagra ón Roinn Oideachais ar an imscrúdú, glacadh leis gur leagan i mBéarla amháin de Thairseach na nGrád Ríofa do Scoláirí a cuireadh ar fáil idir an 26 agus an 29 Bealtaine. Glacadh leis freisin gur i mBéarla amháin a cuireadh ar fáil na himlitreacha gaolmhara do scoileanna agus do mhic léinn ar an 25 Bealtaine. Soiléiríodh, áfach, gur eisíodh leaganacha Gaeilge de na himlitreacha sin ar an 26 Bealtaine.

Míníodh, áfach, gur osclaíodh an tairseach arís ar an 20 Iúil chun deis a thabhairt do scoláirí glacadh le rogha na ngrád ríofa agus go raibh “an feidhmchlár ar fáil go comhuaineach i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla, agus cuireadh na doiciméid ghaolmhara go léir ar fáil go dátheangach.”

“ ... glacadh an cinneadh an tairseach a oscailt i gcomhair clárú trí mheán an Bhéarla amháin.

“ ... the Department explained that a decision was made that there was no time to translate it into Irish. If any record of that decision exists (or that the provision of an Irish version had previously been taken into account), it was not made available to the investigation.

The English version of the online portal was initially developed in full and then the Department explained that a decision was made that there was no time to translate it into Irish. If any record of that decision exists (or that the provision of an Irish version had previously been taken into account), it was not made available to the investigation.

The construction of the portal started on 14 May. In addition, complaints were made because circulars relating to the use of this portal were sent in English only to principals of post-primary schools teaching through Irish, on 25 May 2020, circulars which were for distribution to Leaving Certificate students. The system was made available to students between 26 May and 29 May.

In the Department of Education's response to the investigation, it admitted that the Calculated Grades Portal had been made available in English only when that portal was open between 26 and 29 May. It was also accepted that the related circulars sent to schools and students had been made available in English only, on 25 May. It was clarified that the Irish versions of these circulars were issued on 26 May.

It was explained that the portal was reopened on 20 July to give students the opportunity to accept the calculated grades option and that “the application was available simultaneously in Irish and English, and all related documents were made available bilingually.”

“ ... the decision was taken to open the portal for registration through English only.

Dúradh go ndearna an Roinn gach uile iarracht doiciméid agus faisnéis a bhain le próiseas na nGrád Ríofa a chur ar fáil i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla tráth a bhfoilsithe, ach dá ndéanfaí an tairseach féin agus na teoracha mionsonraithe a bhain léi a aistriú go Gaeilge, *“chuirfí moill ar an tréimhse chlárúcháin do gach scoláire agus dhéanfaí na príomh-amlínte sa phróiseas foriomlán a bhrú siar.”* Nuair a cuireadh san áireamh *“an brú agus an strus atá ar scoláirí agus na dúshlán atá rompu mar thoradh ar COVID-19, go háirithe iad siúd a bhí chun na scrúduithe teistiméireachta a dhéanamh i mblíana”*, glacadh an cinneadh an tairseach a oscailt i gcomhair clárú trí mheán an Bhéarla amháin.

Níl aon dabht ann ach gur cruóg thar a bheith eisceachtúil a bhí i gceist sa chás seo don Roinn Oideachais de dheasca phaindéim COVID-19 agus í ag freastal ar riachtanais oideachais aos óg na tíre. Chun a chinntiú go gcomhlíontar dualgas reachtúil, níor mhór na socruithe a bheith i bhfeidhm agus na hacmhainní a bheith ar fáil chun é a chomhlíonadh faoi ghearrfhógra, más gá sin. Níl an dliteanas ag brath ar thréimhse áirithe a bheith ar fáil inar féidir réamhphleanáil a dhéanamh. Níl teidlíocht reachtúil seirbhís nó cumarsáid a fháil as Gaeilge teagmhasach ar thosca, tosaíochtaí nó acmhainn an chomhlachta phoiblí.

Bhí ceanglas reachtúil ar an Roinn an tairseach agus na doiciméid tacaíochta d’úsáid na tairsí céanna a chur ar fáil i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla araon. Níor chomhlíon an Roinn an ceanglas sin.

Príomh-mholtaí an imscrúdaithe

Mhol mé don Roinn go gcinnteodh sí go gcloítear feasta lena dualgais reachtúla maidir le haon chóras idirghníomhach nua a thabhairt isteach i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla araon agus go gcinnteodh an Roinn go ndéantar soláthar leaganacha Gaeilge a áireamh mar chuid lárnach den phróiseas pleanála faoina gcruthaítear iad.

Imscrúdú seolta: 26 Meitheamh 2020

Tuarascáil eisithe: 10 Nollaig 2020

The Department said it had made every effort to make documents and information relating to the Calculated Grades process available in Irish and English at the time of publication, but if the portal itself and its detailed instructions were to be translated into Irish, *“the registration period would be delayed for all students resulting in the main timelines in the overall process being pushed back.”* Considering *“the pressure and stress that students are facing and the challenges they face due to COVID-19, especially those who were to take the leaving certificate exams this year”*, the decision was taken to open the portal for registration through English only.

In meeting the education needs of the country’s young people, there is no doubt that this matter was a situation of exceptional urgency for the Department of Education as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure compliance with a statutory obligation, arrangements must be in place and resources available to ensure compliance at short notice, if necessary. The obligation is not dependent on the availability of a certain period within which advance planning can be carried out. The statutory entitlement to a service or communication through Irish is not contingent on the circumstances, priorities or the resources of the public body.

The Department had a statutory requirement to provide the portal and supporting documents for the use of that portal in both Irish and English. The Department failed to fulfil this requirement.

Main recommendations of the investigation

I recommended to the Department that it ensures henceforth that its statutory obligations in relation to the introduction of any new interactive systems in Irish and English are fully complied with and that the Department ensures that the provision of Irish-language versions is included as an integral part of the planning process through which these systems are created.

Investigation launched: 26 June 2020

Report issued: 10 December 2020

Comhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe

I mí Iúil 2020, rinneadh gearán liom go raibh líon an-mhór comharthaí i mBéarla amháin curtha in airde ag Comhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe ar fud na cathrach (ar fhógair an Chomhairle féin í a bheith ina cathair dhátheangach). Ba chomharthaí iad a bhain le paindéim COVID-19 (comharthaí comhairle sláinte, comharthaí treoracha, scaradh sóisialta, áiseanna poiblí a bheith dúnta agus araile) a cuireadh in airde ó mhí an Mhárta 2020 i leith.

Tá dualgais reachtúla i bhfeidhm faoi úsáid na Gaeilge agus an Bhéarla ar chomharthaí comhlachtaí poiblí faoi na Rialacháin atá déanta faoi fho-alt 9(1) d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003. Chinn mé, dá bhrí sin, imscrúdú a dhéanamh ar an ábhar.

“ ... ghlac Comhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe leis go ndearna sí neamhaird den riachtanas comharthaí a chur in airde i nGaeilge nó i Gaeilge agus i mBéarla agus nár comhlíonadh an dualgas reachtúil sa chás.

Ina freagra ar an imscrúdú, ghlac Comhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe leis go ndearna sí neamhaird den riachtanas comharthaí a chur in airde i nGaeilge nó i Gaeilge agus i mBéarla agus nár comhlíonadh an dualgas reachtúil sa chás. D'iarr an Chomhairle Cathrach go gcuirfí san áireamh gur tharla an sárú seo nuair a bhí an eagraíocht “ag oibriú faoi chúinsí nár tharla riamh cheana i lár phaindéim dhomhanda shláinte a raibh mar thoradh air go raibh ar chéatadán suntasach dár bhfoireann cianoibriú ar dhóigh bainistiú géarchéime.”

Chuir an Chomhairle Cathrach in iúl nach raibh aon taifead ina seilbh (meamram, moladh, treoir ná miontuairiscí) a bhain le comharthaíocht dhátheangach a sholáthar (nó gan iad a sholáthar), nó cloí leis na rialacháin faoi chomharthaí a rinneadh faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla. Níor cuireadh ar fáil don imscrúdú aon fhianaise go raibh na coinníollacha teanga sin ag déanamh scime don Chomhairle Cathrach. Rinneadh dearmad comharthaí dátheangacha a

Galway City Council



In July 2020, a complaint was made to me that Galway City Council had erected a very large number of signs in English only at locations throughout the city (which the Council itself declared to be a bilingual city). These signs were erected since March 2020 in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic (health advice signs, directional signs, social distancing, closure of public amenities etc.)

Statutory duties are in place in relation to the use of Irish and English on signage of public bodies under the regulations made under subsection 9(1) of the Official Languages Act 2003. I therefore decided to investigate the matter.

“ ... Galway City Council accepted that it had neglected the requirement to erect signs in Irish or Irish and English and that the statutory obligation in this case had not been met.

In its response to the investigation, Galway City Council accepted that it had neglected the requirement to erect signs in Irish or Irish and English and that the statutory obligation in this case had not been met. The City Council requested that it be taken into account that this contravention occurred when the organisation was “operating under unprecedented circumstances in the middle of a global health pandemic which resulted in a significant percentage of our staff operating remotely in crisis management mode.”

The City Council indicated that it did not hold any records (memorandum, recommendation, guidance or minutes) relating to the provision (or non-provision) of bilingual signage or compliance with regulations pertaining to signage made under the Official Languages Act. No evidence was provided to the investigation that these language conditions were considered by the City Council. The erection of bilingual signage was

chur in airde. Neamart córasach i gcleachtais riaracháin na Comhairle Cathrach fad is a bhaineann sé le reachtaíocht teanga ba bhunchúis leis an teip.

Shainaithin an Chomhairle Cathrach, de thoradh an imscrúdaithe, áfach, *"bearnaí do-ghlactha... i gcleachtais chumarsáide laethúla"* na heagraíochta agus chuir sí in iúl go raibh bearta á gcur i bhfeidhm chun dul i ngleic leis na laigí ina cultúr oibriúcháin.

Príomh-mholtaí an imscrúdaithe

Mhol mé don Chomhairle Cathrach na comharthaí a cuireadh in airde de thoradh na paindéime a athrú ionas go gcloítear leis na dualgais teanga a leagtar síos sna rialacháin agus go gcinnteodh an Chomhairle go gcloífear go hiomlán agus go cuí feasta leis na dualgais sin i gcás aon comharthaí nua.

Ina theannta sin, mhol mé don Chomhairle Cathrach nósanna imeachta riaracháin nó oibriúcháin a chur i bhfeidhm a bheidh chun mo shástachta maidir le dearadh agus ordú comharthaí nua chun cloí feasta leis na dualgais reachtúla.

Imscrúdú seolta: 15 Deireadh Fómhair 2020

Tuarascáil eisithe: 22 Nollaig 2020

simply omitted. This failure was caused by systematic neglect in the administrative practices of the City Council in relation to language legislation.

However, as a result of the investigation, the City Council identified *"unacceptable gaps... in daily communication practices"* of the organisation and indicated that measures were being put in place to address these weaknesses in its operating culture.

Main recommendations of the investigation

I advised the City Council to change the signs erected due to the pandemic so as to comply with the language obligations laid down in the regulations and that the Council ensure that those obligations are adhered to fully and appropriately henceforth for any new signage.

I have also advised the City Council to put in place administrative or operational procedures to my satisfaction with regard to the design and order of new signs to comply in future with the statutory obligations.

Investigation launched: 15 October 2020

Report issued: 22 December 2020

An Foras Taighde ar Oideachas

Sa bhliain 2018, d'fhorbair an Foras Taighde ar Oideachas trialacha nua measúnaithe do bhunscoileanna i léitheoireacht an Bhéarla agus sa Mhatamaitic – Trialacha Nua Dhroim Conrach. Bhí idir thrialacha ar líne agus trialacha páipéir i gceist sa tionscnamh seo. I mí Mheán Fómhair 2019, rinneadh gearán le m'Oifig nár cuireadh san áireamh aon scoil ina raibh an teagasc trí mheán na Gaeilge (gaelscoil ná scoil Ghaeltachta) sa sampla tástála nuair a bhí na trialacha seo á gcaighdeánú agus go raibh na caighdeáin sin bunaithe ar thorthaí sampla náisiúnta de dhaltáí a bhí ag freastal ar scoileanna a bhí ag teagasc trí Bhéarla amháin. Tráth a raibh an luath-thumoideachas lán-

**Foras Taighde ar
Oideachas
Educational
Research Centre**

Educational Research Centre

In 2018, the Educational Research Centre developed new assessment tests for primary schools in English reading and in Mathematics – the New Drumcondra Tests. This initiative involved both online and paper tests. In September 2019, my Office received a complaint that no Irish-medium schools (gaelscoil or Gaeltacht school) were included in the test sample during the standardisation of these tests and that these standards were based on the results of a national sample of pupils attending schools teaching through English only. At a time when Irish-

Ghaeilge á mholadh do na scoileanna Gaeilge (i gcomhthéacs an Pholasaí don Oideachas Gaeltachta), shíl an gearánach go raibh an grúpa suntasach seo scoileanna á chur as an áireamh le linn an phróisis faoina gcuirfí ar fáil uirlis mheasúnaithe a bhí le bheith in oiriúint do bhunscoileanna uile an Stáit.

“ ... rinneadh gearán le m’Oifig nár cuireadh san áireamh aon scoil ina raibh an teagasc trí mheán na Gaeilge (gaelscoil ná scoil Ghaeltachta) sa sampla tástála nuair a bhí na trialacha seo á gcaighdeánú ...

An tAcht Oideachais, 1998

Faoi alt 6 den Acht Oideachais, ceanglaítear ar gach duine a mbeidh baint aige nó aici leis an Acht a chur i ngníomh, aird a bheith aige nó aici ar na cuspóirí an Achta sin, lena n-áirítear:

(i) cuidiú le réadú beartas agus cuspóirí náisiúnta i ndáil le leathadh an dátheangachais i sochaí na hÉireann agus go háirithe go mbainfí úsáid níos mó as an nGaeilge ar scoil agus sa phobal;

(j) cuidiú leis an nGaeilge a choinneáil mar phríomhtheanga an phobail i limistéir Ghaeltachta;

(k) riachtanais teanga agus chultúrtha mac léinn a chur chun cinn ag féachaint do roghanna a dtuismitheoirí;

Ina theannta sin, faoi fho-alt 7(2)(d) den Acht, is feidhm de chuid an Aire Oideachais:

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;

Tar éis dom an gearán a rinneadh liom a fhiosrú ar bhonn neamhfhoirmiúil leis an bhForas, chinn mé imscrúdú a sheoladh faoi alt 21(f) d’Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla chun fionnachtain nó fionnachtana a dhéanamh ar chomhlíonadh na bhforálacha thuasluaite de chuid an Achta Oideachais.

medium early immersion education was being proposed for Irish-medium schools (in the context of the Policy on Gaeltacht Education), the complainant felt that this significant group of schools was being excluded during the process whereby an assessment tool was provided suitable for all primary schools in the State.

“ ... my Office received a complaint that no Irish-medium schools (gaelscoil or Gaeltacht school) were included in the test sample during the standardisation of these tests ...

Education Act 1998

Under section 6 of the Education Act, every person connected with the implementation of the Act is required to have regard to the objects of that Act, including:

(i) to contribute to the realisation of national policy and objectives in relation to the extension of bi-lingualism in Irish society and in particular the achievement of a greater use of the Irish language at school and in the community;

(j) to contribute to the maintenance of Irish as the primary community language in Gaeltacht areas;

(k) to promote the language and cultural needs of students having regard to the choices of their parents;

In addition, under subsection 7(2)(d) of the Act, the functions of the Minister for Education include the following:

to provide support services through Irish to recognised schools which provide teaching through Irish and to any other recognised school which requests such provision;

Having queried the Centre on an informal basis about the complaint made to me, I decided to launch an investigation under section 21(f) of the Official Languages Act to make a finding or findings on compliance with the above-mentioned provisions of the Education Act.

“ ... míníodh go ndearnadh stratam ar leith de na scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge chun a chinntiú go gcuirfí as an áireamh iad chun críche na samplála.

Rinneadh na trialacha a chaighdeánú trína riar ar shampla náisiúnta ionadaíoch de scoileanna agus de dhaltáí chun noirm na dtrialacha a shocrú. Léiríodh sna doiciméid a cuireadh ar fáil don imscrúdú, i dteannta an fhreagra, gur cuireadh san áireamh ocht stratam scoileanna a bhain le líon na ndaltaí agus comhdhéanamh inscne na ndaltaí chun sampla ionadaíoch a chruthú. Maíodh sa fhreagra nach n-áirítear na scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge mar stratam nó strataim ar leith, ach ina ainneoin sin, míníodh go ndearnadh stratam ar leith de na scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge chun a chinntiú go gcuirfí as an áireamh iad chun críche na samplála. Cinneadh é sin a dhéanamh, a dúradh, toisc go raibh brú ó thaobh ama de agus gur braithheadh go gcuirfeadh aistriú na dtrialacha Matamaitice go Gaeilge i gcomhair na tástála moill ar an tástáil sin.

Cé nár ghá na trialacha léitheoireachta Béarla a bhí á dtástáil a aistriú go Gaeilge, cuireadh as an áireamh na scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge toisc gur baineadh úsáid as an sampla céanna chun an dá thriail (Matamaitic agus Béarla) a chaighdeánú.

Leag an Foras an-bhéim ar an bpointe gurbh é seo an chéad uair dó a bheith ag forbairt trialacha ar líne agus ar pháipéar araon agus dúradh gur chóir a chur san áireamh chun críche an imscrúdaithe gur chuir forbairt na dtrialacha brú ollmhór ar thaighdeoirí an Fhorais ó thaobh gach rud a chur ar líne agus tacaíocht a thabhairt do scoileanna chun na trialacha a riar.

“ Ba é tuairim an Fhorais, áfach, nach raibh aon tionchar diúltach ag an gcinneadh sin ...

Ba é tuairim an Fhorais, áfach, nach raibh aon tionchar diúltach ag an gcinneadh sin mar gur léirigh taighde maidir le caighdeán sa chóras oideachais nach mbíonn ach difríochtaí beaga idir meánscoir na ndaltaí sna scoileanna a fheidhmíonn trí mheán na Gaeilge agus iad siúd a fhreastalaíonn ar scoileanna eile.

“ ... it was explained that a separate stratum was created for the Irish-medium schools to ensure their exclusion for sampling purposes.

The tests were standardised by administering them to a representative national sample of schools and pupils in order to set test norms. The documents made available, together with the answer provided to the investigation, indicated that eight strata of schools, relating to the number of pupils and their gender composition, were taken into account in the creation of a representative sample. The response stated that Irish-medium schools are not considered to be a separate stratum or strata, but despite this it was explained that a separate stratum was created for the Irish-medium schools to ensure their exclusion for sampling purposes. This course of action was decided upon, it was said, due to time pressure and because it was felt that the translation of the Maths tests into Irish for testing would delay that testing.

Although it was not necessary to translate the English reading tests into Irish, the Irish-medium schools were excluded as the same sample was used to standardise both tests (Maths and English).

The Centre emphasised that this was the first time that both online and paper-based tests were developed and noted that it should be taken into account for the purpose of the investigation that the development of the tests had put enormous pressure on its researchers in providing everything online and supporting schools in administering the tests.

“ The Research Centre was of the opinion, however, that this decision had no negative impact ...

The Research Centre was of the opinion, however, that this decision had no negative impact as research into standards in the education system indicated that only small differences exist between the average scores of pupils in Irish-medium schools and those attending other schools.

Anuas air sin, áitíodh dá gcuirfí na scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge san áireamh le linn na tástála píolótaí agus an chaighdeánaithe ba ghá forbairt na dtrialacha a chur siar go ceann bliana. Ba mhó an buntáiste do dhaltaí na scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge agus Béarla araon, i dtuairim an Fhorais, na trialacha a bheith faoi réir agus curtha ar fáil bliain ní ba thúisce. Níor cuireadh in iúl dom, áfach, go ndearnadh a leithéid de chinneadh ag an am sin, agus, go deimhin, dúradh go raibh an próiseas “ar aon dul leis an gcur chuige a úsáideadh go minic roimhe seo chun trialacha a chaighdeánú.”

“Chun an dualgas reachtúil a chomhlíonadh, níor mhiste na scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge a bheith san áireamh (seachas as an áireamh) mar bhun-réamhshocrú in aon fhorbairt ábhartha.

Níor leor teacht ar an tuairim nach ndéanfadh gníomhaíocht áirithe dochar do chuspóirí an Achta Oideachais. Ba léir dom gur éiligh úsáid an bhriathair “cuidiú” i bhfoclaíocht an Achta nach mór cur chuige gníomhach ionchuimsitheach a ghlacadh a chuidíonn go dearfach le réadú na mbeartas agus na gcusóirí náisiúnta i dtaca leis an nGaeilge agus le caomhnú na Gaeilge sa Ghaeltacht. Ba léir dom chomh maith go raibh ról an-lárnach ag na scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge i leathadh an dátheangachais i sochaí na hÉireann, caomhnú na Gaeilge mar phríomhtheanga sa Ghaeltacht agus freastal ar riachtanais teanga agus chultúrtha mac léinn. Chun an dualgas reachtúil a chomhlíonadh, níor mhiste na scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge a bheith san áireamh (seachas as an áireamh) mar bhun-réamhshocrú in aon fhorbairt ábhartha.

Seirbhísí taca

Ba cheann de na ceisteanna a scrúdaíodh san imscrúdú ar sháraigh an Foras an dualgas reachtúil seirbhísí taca trí Ghaeilge a sholáthar do scoileanna aitheanta sa tslí ar forbraíodh na trialacha. Chuir an Foras síos ar na céimeanna a ghlacadh chun caighdeán an leagain Gaeilge a chinntiú agus an tseirbhís taca a chur ar fáil sa dá theanga tráth an ama chéanna. Níor theip ar an bhForas an dualgas a bhaineann le seirbhísí taca as Gaeilge a chur ar fáil do scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge a chomhlíonadh.

In addition, it was argued that the inclusion of Irish-medium schools during piloting and standardisation would have required postponing the development of the tests for one year. The preparation and provision of the tests a year earlier, in the Centre’s view, would be far more beneficial to students of both Irish-medium and English-medium schools. However, I was not informed that such a decision had been taken at that time, and indeed, it was stated that the process was “similar to the approach that has often been used in the past in order to standardise tests.”

“In order to meet the statutory obligation, the inclusion (instead of the exclusion) of Irish-medium schools should be the default position in any relevant development.

It would not be sufficient to conclude that a particular activity would not prejudice the objectives of the Education Act. It was clear that the use of the verb “assist” in the wording of the Education Act requires the adoption of an active and inclusive approach that contributes positively to the achievement of national policies and objectives in relation to the Irish language and the preservation of Irish in the Gaeltacht. It was also clear to me that Irish-medium schools played a very central role in the spread of bilingualism in Irish society, the preservation of Irish as the main language in the Gaeltacht and the meeting of language and cultural needs. In order to meet the statutory obligation, the inclusion (instead of the exclusion) of Irish-medium schools should be the default position in any relevant development.

Support service

One of the questions examined in the investigation was whether the Centre had contravened this statutory obligation in the manner in which the tests were developed. The Centre described the steps taken in ensuring the quality of the Irish language version and in providing the support service in both languages simultaneously. The Centre did not fail to fulfil the obligation to provide support services in Irish to Irish-medium schools.

Príomh-mholtaí an imscrúdaithe

Moladh don Fhoras Taighde ar Oideachas aird a thabhairt feasta ar na dualgais reachtúla teanga atá daingnithe sna forálacha i bhfo-ailt 6 (i), (j) agus (k) den Acht Oideachais, 1998 nuair a bhíonn trialacha measúnaithe á gcaighdeánú aige do bhunscoileanna agus an bealach a bhfuil sé i gceist aige a chinntiú go gcuirfear na forálacha thuasluaite i bhfeidhm feasta a chur in iúl dom taobh istigh de shé mhí ó dháta an imscrúdaithe.

Imscrúdú seolta: 6 Nollaig 2019

Tuarascáil eisithe: 11 Samhain 2020

Ospidéal Beaumont

Idir na blianta 2015 agus 2019, rinneadh seacht gcinn de ghearáin liom go raibh sárú á dhéanamh ag Ospidéal Beaumont, Baile Átha Cliath ar dhualgais reachtúla de chuid Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003. Rinneadh gearán liom gur i mBéarla amháin a bhí tuarascáil bhliantúil an Ospidéil á foilsiú ar an suíomh gréasáin. Rinneadh trí ghearán maidir le comharthaí éagsúla san Ospidéal nó ar champas an Ospidéil. Rinneadh gearán le m'Oifig go raibh closfhógraí i mBéarla amháin le cloisteáil san Ospidéal agus iad á dtarchur trí chóras callaireachta poiblí agus rinneadh gearán eile gur i mBéarla amháin a bhí teachtaireachtaí ar an gcóras freagartha gutháin nuair a ghlaigh an gearánach ar uimhir ghutháin de chuid an Ospidéil.

D'fhiosraigh m'Oifig na gearáin ar an mbonn neamhfhoirmiúil le hOspidéal Beaumont ach ba é bunúdar an imscrúdaithe seo ná an easpa dul chun cinn a rinne m'Oifig, in ainneoin iarrachtaí leanúnacha, réiteach neamhfhoirmiúil a fháil ar na gearáin bhailí a rinneadh. Níor thug an tOspidéal aon fhreagra ar na fiosruithe sin.

Rinne mé cinneadh, dá bharr sin, imscrúdú a sheoladh ar an 25 Iúil 2019 agus lorg mé freagra faoin 16 Lúnasa 2019. Níor chuir an tOspidéal freagra ar an imscrúdú ar fáil go dtí an 18 Nollaig 2019. Ghlac an tOspidéal leithscéal as an moill ach níor tugadh aon mhíniú ar an bhfáth nár tugadh freagra ar chuid mhór cumarsáide ón Oifig seo roimh an imscrúdú nó lena linn.

Main recommendations of the investigation

A recommendation was made to the Educational Research Centre to have regard to the statutory language obligations set out in the provisions of subsections 6 (i), (j) and (k) of the Education Act 1998 when standardising assessment tests for primary schools and to appraise me within six months of the date of the investigation of how it intends ensuring that the above provisions are implemented.

Investigation launched: 6 December 2019

Report issued: 11 November 2020

Beaumont Hospital

Between 2015 and 2019, seven complaints were made to me that Beaumont Hospital, Dublin had breached language obligations contained in the Official Languages Act, 2003. A complaint was made to me that the Hospital's annual report was published on its website exclusively in English. Three complaints were made regarding various signs in the Hospital or on the Hospital campus. Complaints were made to my Office that oral announcements in English only were to be heard in the Hospital transmitted through a public address system and a further complaint was made that messages on the telephone answering system were in English only when the complainant called one of the Hospital's telephone numbers.

My Office queried the complaints on an informal basis with Beaumont Hospital but the cause of this investigation was the lack of progress made by my Office, despite ongoing efforts, in informally resolving the valid complaints made. The Hospital did not reply to these queries.

Consequently, on 25 July 2019 I decided to launch an investigation, and sought a reply by 16 August 2019. Despite the ongoing efforts of my Office, the Hospital did not provide an answer to the investigation until 18 December 2019. The Hospital apologised for the delay but did not explain why many communications from my Office were not responded to before or during the investigation.

Tuarascáil bhliantúil

Faoi alt 10(b) d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla leagtar dualgas ar chomhlachtaí poiblí aon tuarascáil bhliantúil a fhoilsiú go comhuaineach i ngach ceann de na teangacha oifigiúla. Sa fhreagra a cuireadh ar fáil dom, thug an tOspidéal le fios go bhfoilseofaí Tuarascáil Bhliantúil 2019 i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla i mí an Mhárta 2020. Is é an tátal a bhain mé as an bhfreagra sin go raibh an tOspidéal ag glacadh leis nár comhlíonadh an dualgas reachtúil go nuige sin.

Comharthaí

Faoi mhír 6(1) de na rialacháin atá déanta faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Uimhir 391 de 2008), ní mór comharthaí a chuireann comhlacht poiblí in airde (nó a chuirtear in airde thar a cheann) a bheith i nGaeilge nó i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla. Bhí formhór na gcomharthaí sin a ndearnadh gearáin fúthu i mBéarla amháin. Bhí cuid díobh dátheangach ach bhí an chosúlacht orthu nach raibh an téacs i nGaeilge orthusan chomh mór ná chomh feiceálach leis an téacs i mBéarla. Deimhníodh i bhfreagra an Ospidéil go raibh suirbhé déanta ar chomharthaí poiblí an Ospidéil agus go gcuirfí comharthaí nua i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla ina n-áit a luaithe agus ab fhéidir.

Fógairtí taifeadta béil

Chuir an tOspidéal in iúl go raibh teachtaireacht i nGaeilge curtha ar an gcóras callaireachta poiblí ag an bpríomhbhealach isteach. Maidir leis an gcóras freagartha gutháin, míníodh, de bharr aois an chórais, nár bhféidir aon teachtaireacht taifeadta bhreise a chur air. Bhí iarratas déanta ag an Ospidéal le Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte, áfach, chun córas nua freagartha gutháin a chur ina áit a chuirfeadh ar a chumas fógairtí a thaifeadadh i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla.

“ Tá líon teoranta dualgas ar gach uile chomhlacht poiblí faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla agus sna rialacháin atá déanta faoin Acht sin agus is féidir iadsan a chomhlíonadh gan mórán costais ná dua ach tabhairt fúthu ar shlí chórasach, stuama.

Annual report

Under section 10(b) of the Official Languages Act public bodies are required to publish any annual report simultaneously in each of the official languages. In the response I received, the Hospital indicated that the 2019 Annual Report would be published in Irish and in English in March 2020. My conclusion from that reply was that the Hospital was accepting that the statutory obligation had not been complied with hitherto.

Signage

Under section 6(1) of the regulations made under the Official Languages Act (No. 391 of 2008), signs erected by a public body (or erected on its behalf) must be in Irish or in Irish and in English. Most of the signs complained about were in English only. Some of them were bilingual but with the text in Irish appearing to be less prominent or less visible than the text in English. The Hospital's response confirmed that a survey had been carried out on the Hospital's public signage and that these signs would be replaced by new signs in Irish and in English as soon as possible.

Recorded oral announcements

The Hospital indicated that a message in Irish had been placed on the public address system at the main entrance. Regarding the telephone answering system, it was explained that due to the age of the system no additional recorded messages could be included. However, the Hospital had applied to the Health Service Executive to replace it with a new telephone answering system which would enable it to record announcements in both Irish and English.

“ All public bodies are tasked with a limited number of obligations under the Official Languages Act and in regulations made under that Act and these can be carried out with little or no cost or effort if undertaken in a systematic and coherent manner.

Mar Choimisinéir Teanga is feidhm de mo chuid gach ar féidir a dhéanamh chun a chinntiú go gcomhlíonann comhlachtaí poiblí forálacha Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla. Tá líon teoranta dualgas ar gach uile chomhlacht poiblí faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla agus sna rialacháin atá déanta faoin Acht sin agus is féidir iadsan a chomhlíonadh gan mórán costais ná dua ach tabhairt fúthu ar shlí chórasach, stuama.

Príomh-mholtaí an imscrúdaithe

Mhol mé don Ospidéal:

- cloí feasta leis an dualgas reachtúil maidir le foilsiú comhuaineach aon tuarascála bliantúla i ngach ceann de na teangacha oifigiúla.
- na comharthaí a ndearnadh gearán fúthu a athrú nó a leasú de réir mar ba ghá agus cloí go hiomlán feasta leis na forálacha reachtúla teanga i gcás aon comharthaí nua atá á gcur in airde aige.
- cloí feasta leis na dualgais reachtúla teanga i dtaca le fógaírtí taifeadta béil agus go mbeadh gach uile chóras fógaírtí taifeadta i gcomhréir leis na dualgais reachtúla taobh istigh de dhá bhliain ó dháta eisiúna na tuarascála.
- go ndéanfaí socruithe chun plé go cuí agus go tráthúil le gearáin faoi sháruithe ar an reachtaíocht teanga.

Imscrúdú seolta: 25 Iúil 2019

Tuarascáil eisithe: 25 Feabhra 2020

As Coimisinéir Teanga, my functions include doing everything in my power to ensure that public bodies comply with the provisions of the Official Languages Act. All public bodies are tasked with a limited number of obligations under the Official Languages Act and in regulations made under that Act and these can be carried out with little or no cost or effort if undertaken in a systematic and coherent manner.

Main recommendations of the investigation

I recommended to the Hospital:

- to comply henceforth with the statutory obligation in relation to the simultaneous publication of any annual report in each of the official languages.
- to alter or amend as necessary the signs complained of and to ensure that any new signs erected comply fully with the statutory language provisions.
- ensures that the statutory language obligations in relation to recorded oral announcements transmitted through public address systems are complied with and that all recorded notification systems comply with the statutory obligations within two years of the date of issue of the report.
- that arrangements be made for the proper and timely handling of complaints concerning contraventions of language legislation.

Investigation launched: 25 July 2019

Report issued: 25 February 2020

Erin Mac an tSaoir, Oifigeach na Gaeilge, Comhaltas na Mac Léinn, OÉ Gaillimh; Clíodhna Ní Dhufaigh, Leas-Uachtarán don Ghaeilge, Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn; Aimee Ní Chonaing, Reachtaire, Cumann Gaelach OÉ Gaillimh; Rónán Ó Domhnaill, an Coimisinéir Teanga.
Erin Mac an tSaoir, Irish Language Officer, NUI Galway Students' Union; Clíodhna Ní Dhufaigh, Vice-President for Irish, Union of Students in Ireland; Aimee Ní Chonaing, Auditor, An Cumann Gaelach, NUI Galway; Rónán Ó Domhnaill, An Coimisinéir Teanga.



FAIREACHÁN

Is ar fhorálacha Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003 amháin a díríodh 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 na dteangacha oifigiúla.

Leanadh den mhúnla nua faireacháin ar cuireadh tús leis in 2018 agus ullmhaíodh plean 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) dualgais 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 díríodh an chuid is mó d'obair faireacháin na bliana:

- Faireachán ar chur i bhfeidhm moltaí arna ndéanamh in imscrúduithe.
- Faireachán ar shuíomhanna gréasáin agus córais idirghníomhacha de chuid na n-údarás áitiúil.
- Faireachán ar chur i bhfeidhm dhualgais dhíreacha Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003 agus forálacha scéimeanna teanga i gcás ceithre cinn de na Boird Oideachais agus Oiliúna.

Fearacht na bliana 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.

MONITORING

The monitoring work focused only on the provisions of the Official Languages Act 2003, 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 official languages.

The new monitoring procedure which commenced in 2018 was continued and 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 stationery, signage 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 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 four Education and Training Boards.

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.

SCÉIMEANNA TEANGA

SCÉIMEANNA DAINGNITHE

Dhaingnigh an tAire Turasóireachta, Cultúir, Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spórt agus Meán **sé** dhara scéim teanga, **cúig** tríú scéim teanga, **cúig** cheathrú scéim teanga agus **dhá** chúigiú scéim teanga le linn na bliana 2020. Níor daingníodh aon chéadscéim teanga in 2020. Faoi dheireadh na bliana bhí **138** scéim teanga daingnithe agus i bhfeidhm. Tá liosta de na comhlachtaí poiblí a bhfuil scéim teanga daingnithe ag an Aire ina leith le fáil ar shuíomh gréasáin na hOifige: www.coimisinéir.ie

SCÉIMEANNA IN ÉAG

Bhí **73** scéim teanga, as **138** san iomlán, imithe in éag faoi dheireadh na bliana 2020. 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 2020, bhí **131** dréachtscéim teanga fós le daingniú ag an Aire Turasóireachta, Cultúir, Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spórt agus Meán:

- **42** céad-dréachtscéim, **48** dara dréachtscéim, **25** tríú dréachtscéim, **15** cheathrú dréachtscéim agus **1** cúigiú dréachtscéim.

I gcás **21** de na comhlachtaí poiblí sin tá os cionn deich mbliana caite ó iarradh orthu scéim a ullmhú agus os cionn cúig bliana caite i gcás **67** comhlacht poiblí eile.

LANGUAGE SCHEMES

SCHEMES CONFIRMED

The Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media confirmed **six** second language schemes, **five** third language schemes, **five** fourth language and **two** fifth language schemes during 2020. There was no first language scheme confirmed in 2020. By the end of the year, **138** language schemes were confirmed and implemented. A list of public bodies with language schemes confirmed by the Minister is available on this Office's website: www.coimisineir.ie

SCHEMES EXPIRED

Of the **138** language schemes, **73** had expired by year-end 2020. 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 2020, **131** draft language schemes remained to be confirmed by the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.

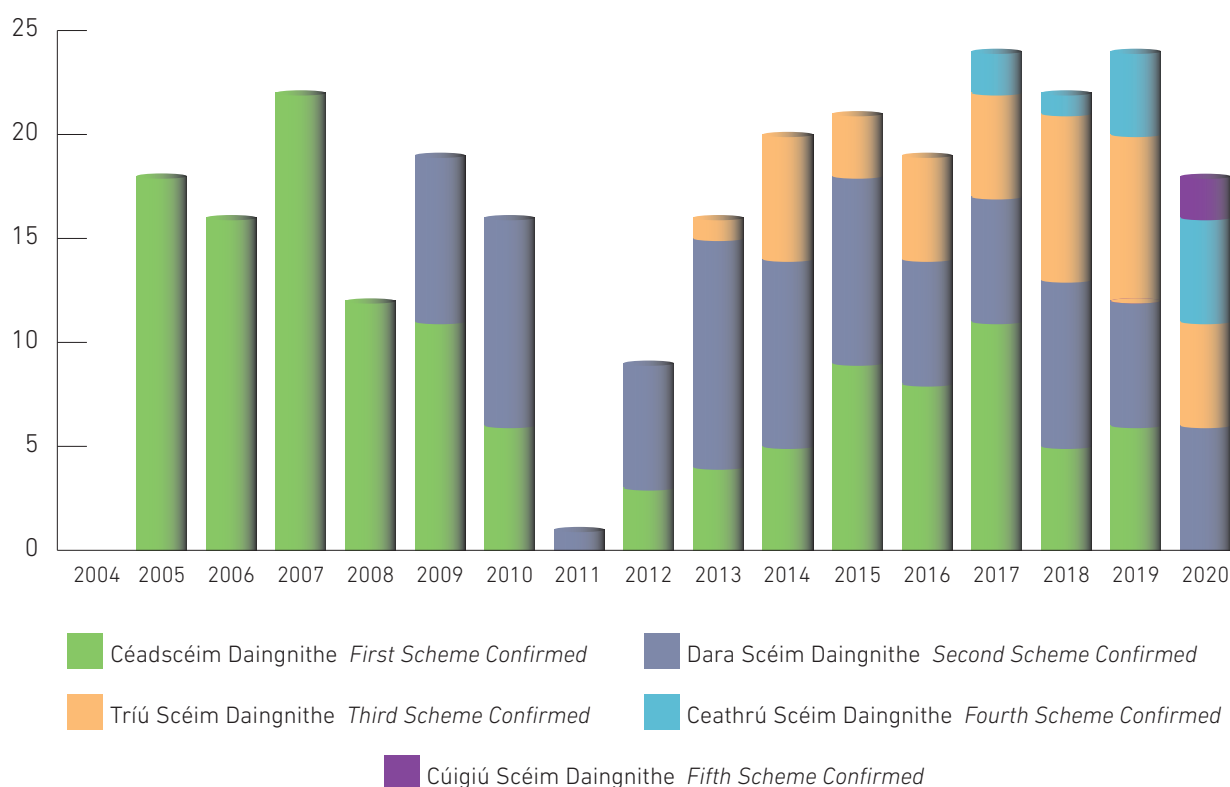
- **42** first draft schemes, **48** second draft schemes, **25** third draft schemes, **15** fourth draft schemes, and **1** fifth draft scheme.

More than ten years have elapsed since **21** of these public bodies were asked to prepare a scheme and more than five years in the case of **67** of these public bodies.

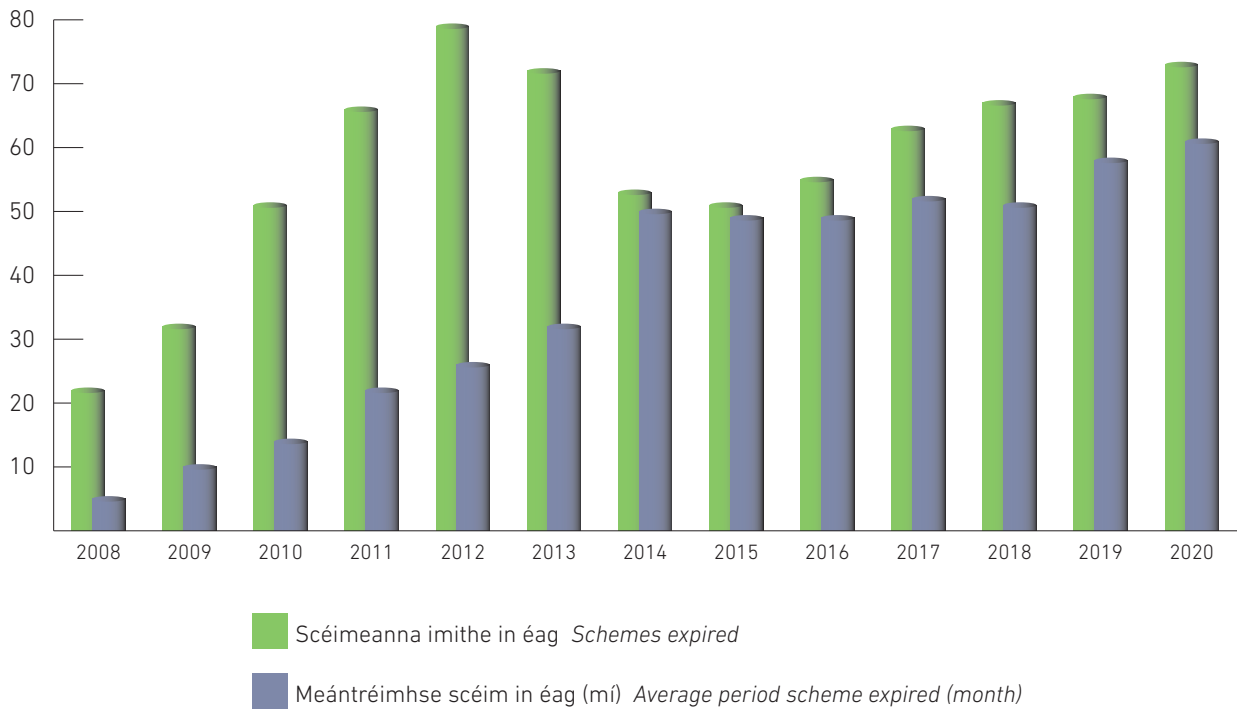
Bliain ar daingníodh an chéad Scéim Teanga Year in which first Language Scheme was confirmed

Bliain <i>Year</i>	Scéimeanna <i>Schemes</i>
2004	0
2005	17
2006	16
2007	22
2008	12
2009	14
2010	6
2011	0
2012	3
2013	4
2014	5
2015	9
2016	8
2017	11
2018	5
2019	6
2020	0
	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



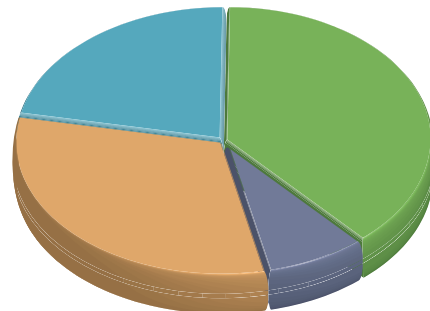
Scéimeanna imithe in éag Schemes expired



Líon na scéimeanna in éag de réir a dtréimhse in éag

Number of schemes expired and the period since they expired

Os cionn 7 mbliana Greater than 7 years	28
Idir 4-7 mbliana Between 4-7 years	6
Idir 1-3 bliana Between 1-3 years	23
Níos lú ná bliain Less than a year	16



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.coimisinéir.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 soláthar €845,000 ar fáil don Oifig don bhliain 2020 agus tarraingíodh anuas €821,155 den bhuiséad sin.

Tá ráitis airgeadais na hOifige don bhliain 2020 ullmhaithe don Ard-Reachtaire Cuntas agus Ciste lena n-íniúchadh de réir fho-alt 8(2) den Dara Sceideal a ghabhann le hAcht 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 Turasóireachta, Cultúir, Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán, 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

Tá 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

An allocation of €845,000 was provided to this Office for 2020 and €821,155 of that budget was drawn down.

The financial statements of the Office for 2020 have been prepared for audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General in accordance with subsection 8(2) of the Second Schedule to 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 Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media may specify, shall be presented by An Coimisinéir Teanga 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

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 2020 *Period Covered: 1 January – 31 December 2020*

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>	245	170,722	100%
Líon na n-íocaíochtaí a rinneadh laistigh de thréimhse idir 16 lá agus 30 lá <i>Number of payments made within 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	245	170,722	100%

ÚSÁID FUINNIMH

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

Forbhreathnú 2020

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

D'úsáid an Oifig 63.18 MWh leictreachais, ardú 5% ar úsáid na bliana 2019.

Gníomhartha a rinneadh in 2020

Leanadh de na beartais a bunaíodh cheana: féachtar chuige go múchtar fearais oifige nuair is cuí agus deimhnítear go bhfuil gach fearas múchta san 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 2021

Leanfar de na beartais sábhála fuinnimh atá tionscanta cheana féin. Déanfar monatóireacht rialta ar úsáid leictreachais i gcaitheamh na bliana 2021.

ENERGY USAGE

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

Overview 2020

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 including the heating and aeration of the building, water heating, lighting and the use of office equipment.

The Office used 63.18 MWh of electricity, an increase of 5% on 2019 consumption.

Actions taken in 2020

The established energy-saving practices were continued: ensuring that all equipment is turned off as appropriate and ensuring 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 2021

The Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga will continue the energy-saving policies already initiated. Electricity consumption will be monitored on a regular basis during 2021.

Rónán Ó Domhnaill, an Coimisinéir Teanga, ag seoladh *Sruth na Teanga* leis an gcompántas Branar le linn Gaillimh 2020. Rónán Ó Domhnaill, An Coimisinéir Teanga, launching *Sruth na Teanga* by Branar theatre company as part of Galway 2020.



Niall Comer, Uachtarán Chonradh na Gaeilge; Julian de Spáinn, Ard-Rúnaí Chonradh na Gaeilge; Rónán Ó Domhnaill, an Coimisinéir Teanga; Fernand de Varennes, Rapporteur Speisialta na Náisiún Aontaithe ar Ghnéithe Mionlaigh; Conchúr Ó Muadaigh, Bainisteoir Abhcóideachta Chonradh na Gaeilge; Cuisle Wilson, Oifigeach Tionscadail Chonradh na Gaeilge; Meri Huws, iarChoimisinéir Teanga, an Bhreatain Bheag.

Niall Comer, President, Conradh na Gaeilge; Julian de Spáinn, General Secretary, Conradh na Gaeilge; Rónán Ó Domhnaill, An Coimisinéir Teanga; Fernand de Varennes, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues; Conchúr Ó Muadaigh, Advocacy Manager, Conradh na Gaeilge; Cuisle Wilson, Project Officer, Conradh na Gaeilge; Meri Huws, former Welsh Language Commissioner.



NOCHTADH COSANTA

Tugtar an t-eolas seo a leanas 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 2020.

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 shaincheistanna 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.

Chun feasacht na heagraíochta a ardú, tá oiliúint rochtana ar líne déanta ag foireann uile na hOifige. Cuirfear oiliúint ar fhostaithe nua de réir mar is gá.

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 2020.

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.

To increase awareness within the organisation, we ensured that all staff of the Office undertook access training online. Training shall be provided for new employees as required.

FOIREANN STAFF



An Coimisinéir Teanga

Rónán Ó Domhnaill



Stiúrthóir *Director*

Séamas Ó Concheanainn



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 Sheoighe



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 hUigín, Rónán Ó Domhnaill mar Choimisinéir Teanga. Athcheapadh é don dara téarma i mí an Mhárta 2020.

On 12 March 2014, the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, appointed Rónán Ó Domhnaill as Coimisinéir Teanga. He was reappointed for a second term in March 2020.

Is é an leagan Gaeilge buntéacs na Tuarascála seo.

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

NÓTAÍ | NOTES

[illegible]

NÓTAÍ | NOTES

[illegible]

An Coimisinéir Teanga

An Spidéal, Gaillimh, Éire.

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