



etb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Dhún na nGall
*Donegal Education and
Training Board*

Official Languages Act 2003

Language Scheme 2021-2024

#WeAreDonegalETB

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background	2
1.1 Introduction	2
1.2 Preparation and Content of the Scheme	2
1.3 Commencement date of the Scheme	2
Chapter 2: Overview of Donegal Education and Training Board	3
2.1 Mandate and Mission	3
2.2 Customers and Stakeholders	4
2.3 Functional Areas of the Board	4
Chapter 3: Languages in which Services are currently provided	6
Chapter 4: Enhancing the provision of Irish Language Services	8
4.1 Means of Communication with the public	8
4.2 Media	8
4.3 Information Technology	9
Chapter 5: Enhancing the Provision of Irish Language Services in Gaeltacht Areas	10
5.1 Communications in Gaeltacht Areas	10
Chapter 6: Improving Language Capability	11
6.1 Recruitment and Selection	11
6.2 Training and Development	11
6.3 Needs Analysis and Assessment	12
Chapter 7: Monitoring and Review	12
Chapter 8: Publicising of Agreed Scheme	13

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

The Official Languages Act 2003 provides for the preparation by public bodies of a language scheme detailing the services which they will provide:

- through the medium of Irish,
- through the medium of English, and
- through the medium of Irish and English,

and the measures to be adopted to ensure that any service not currently provided by the body through the medium of the Irish language will be so provided within an agreed timeframe.

In accordance with section 14(3) of the Act, language schemes remain in force for a period of three years or until such time as a new scheme is confirmed by the Minister at the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media whichever is the later.

1.2 Preparation and Content of the Scheme

In the preparation of this scheme, due regard has been given to the Guidelines issued by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.. In addition, there has been a comprehensive process of consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Donegal Education and Training Board (ETB) is guided by the principle that the provision of Irish language services should be based on:

- the underlying level of demand for specific services in the Irish language,
- the importance of a proactive approach to the provision of such services, and
- the resources, including human and financial resources, and the capacity of the body concerned to develop or access the necessary language capability.

This scheme complements the principles of Quality Customer Service and our Customer Charter. It has been formulated with the intention of ensuring that all relevant obligations under the Official Languages Act, 2003 will be fully addressed by Donegal ETB on an incremental basis, through this and future schemes. The time and effort put in by all concerned in this process is acknowledged and appreciated.

1.3 Commencement date of the Scheme

This Scheme has been confirmed by the Minister of State at the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. It commences with effect from 01/04/2021 and shall remain in force for a period of three years or until a new scheme has been confirmed, whichever is the later.

Chapter 2: Overview of Donegal Education and Training Board

2.1 Mandate and Mission

Mission Statement

‘To promote, provide and support accessible and inclusive education and training which enables young people and adults to empower themselves to reach their full potential in a safe and caring environment’

Donegal ETB was established under the Education and Training Boards Act, 2013. The Board’s statutory remit is the provision of post primary, continuing, further and community education and training (and associated) services to the people of Donegal.

Geographically, the Board’s remit extends from Malin in the north of the county to Bundoran in the south, An Charraig in the south-west to the islands of Árainn Mhór and Toraigh in the northwest. Donegal is unique in that it is bordered on the west by the Atlantic Ocean, to the east by counties Derry, Tyrone and Fermanagh and to the south by Co. Leitrim with a border to the State of only twenty kilometres.

The Board provides a wide range of educational and training services in these areas. The associated educational services range from providing full-time post primary education in fifteen Post Primary Schools/Colleges, Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre, fourteen dedicated Further Education and Training Centres located throughout the county and provision for young people in numerous schools and community based centres.

The Board, through its Youth Services Programme, supports voluntary Youth Groups, Local Youth Projects and Youth Services to provide education, developmental and recreational programmes for young people.

Donegal Music Education Partnership provides quality, after-school, instrumental and vocal tuition on a wide range of instruments in numerous centres across the County, largely held in Donegal ETB’s network of school colleges and centres.

Donegal ETB is committed to the provision of integrated educational and associated services of the highest quality to meet the educational needs of the communities in Donegal.

2.2 Customers and Stakeholders

The outcome of the work of the Board impacts on a wide array of people, ranging from post primary students, learners with special needs, adult learners, second chance learners and local communities, especially those in rural and disadvantaged areas. Primarily, the Board's customer base and key clients are:

- Board and Committees (Members)
- Communities throughout the county
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs
- Department of Education
- Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
- Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
- Employees of the Board
- Employee Representative Trade Unions
- Government Departments and Affiliates
- Health Services Executive (North-West)
- Local Authorities
- Parents and Guardians
- Social Partners, including the community and voluntary sector and employee representatives
- State Agencies
- Students and Apprentices
- Voluntary, Youth and Sporting Organisations

2.3 Functional Areas of the Board

The functional areas of the Board comprise:

a) External Role

- Further Education and Training Centres
- Adult Guidance and Information Service
- Back to Education Initiative
- Basic Education Services
- Community Education Support Program
- Training Service
- Donegal Music Education Partnership
- Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre
- Post Primary Schools and Colleges
- Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme

- Youth Work Services
- Youthreach

b) Internal Support Units

- Corporate Services Division
- Estates Management Section
- Finance Division
- Human Resources Division
- IT Division
- Procurement Section

Chapter 3: Languages in which Services are currently provided

This chapter sets out the position in relation to service provision by individual Schools/Colleges/Centres within Donegal Education and Training Board

Name of Service	In English only	In Irish only	Bilingually
Second Level Schools and Colleges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coláiste Chineál Eoghain, Bun Cranncha ▪ Coláiste Ailigh, Leitir Ceanainn 		√	
Further Education and Training Centres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Donegal Town ▪ Letterkenny ▪ Milford ▪ Ballyshannon ▪ Bunrana ▪ Centre for Education, Letterkenny ▪ Letterkenny (BTEI and VTOS) ▪ Lifford Youthreach ▪ Glengad Youthreach 	√		
Adult Learner Guidance Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Letterkenny 	√		
Second Level Schools and Colleges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Abbey Vocational School, Donegal Town ▪ Deelee College, Raphoe ▪ Errigal College, Letterkenny ▪ Magh Éne College, Bundoran ▪ Mulroy College, Milford ▪ Finn Valley College, Stranorlar ▪ St. Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs ▪ Crana College, Bunrana ▪ Moville Community College, Moville 	√		
	√		

Gartan Outdoor Education and Training Centre			
Administrative Offices, Ard O'Donnell, Letterkenny Corporate Services Human Resources Finance Division ICT Estates Management Procurement			√
Service Provision in Gaeltacht areas	In English only	In Irish only	Bilingually
Basic Education Services In Gaeltacht areas			√
Community Education Support Services In Gaeltacht areas			√
Further Education and Training Centres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ionad FET, Gort an Choirce • Ionad Oiliúna, Gaoth Dobhair 		√	
Second Level Schools and Colleges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coláiste Pobail Cholmcille, Oileán • Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, Béal An Átha Móir 		√	
Second Level Schools and Colleges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Oileán Árann Mhóir • Coláiste na Carraige, An Charraig 			√

Chapter 4: Enhancing the provision of Irish Language Services

In addition to the mandatory requirements under the Official Languages Act, 2003, this chapter sets out the commitments by Donegal ETB to enhance the provision of Irish language services and communication with the public through Irish.

4.1 Means of communication with the public

- Respond in Irish to correspondence received in Irish.
- Respond in Irish to callers who wish to speak in Irish, where possible, or offer to have the call returned within 1 working day by a member of staff who can deal with queries in Irish.
- Publish corporate publications in Irish and English.
- Provide information to staff on the requirement of the Official Languages Act 2003 and their responsibilities under the Department's Irish Language Scheme.
- Reception staff will give the name of the public body in Irish and in English. Customers will be greeted firstly in Irish and then in English. An up to date list of staff members who can provide a service through Irish will be made available.
- Bilingual staff will make customers aware that they are willing to conduct business in Irish, if required. Such staff will have their pre-recorded personal telephone greetings in bilingual form.
- 20% of live announcements will be bilingual
- A bilingual or Irish version of the information leaflets and brochures most commonly used will be available.
- There will be a bilingual or Irish version of the most commonly used application forms available.
- All new application forms will be made available in Irish, or bilingually.

4.2 Media

- All press releases will be issued bilingually. The objective will be to issue this material simultaneously.
- An Irish speaking spokesperson(s) will be available for interviews with the Irish language media.
- We will include 15% of Irish content in English speeches. It is expected that this will at least include greetings at the beginning and end of speeches in addition to occasional references in Irish to the subject and/or the occasion in question.
- Preference is that speeches pertaining to the Gaeltacht/taking place in the Gaeltacht shall be in Irish only, followed where necessary with a summary in English for non-Irish Speakers who may be in attendance.

4.3 Information Technology

- eolas@donegaletb.ie is a dedicated email address for queries in Irish which is available on the website.
- The standard email footers such as disclaimers will be bilingual.
- The static material on Donegal ETB's website will be available bilingually. There will be a navigational link from a page in the English version of the website to the relevant page in the Irish version.
- An Irish language page has been developed on the intranet and will include basic guidance regarding the provision of Irish language services and the availability of Irish language resources.
- The static material on any secondary website of Donegal ETB will be available bilingually.
- New computer system being installed will be capable of handling the Irish language.
- Any online and interactive services that the public body itself develops will be made available bilingually. New online and interactive services will be made available on a bilingual basis.
- The Donegal ETB website shall include a bilingual statement from the Chief Executive affirming the Board's determination to implement the commitments entered into in the Board's language scheme.
- We now have bilingual taglines
 - #WeAreDonegalETB / #IsMuidETBDhúnnanGall
 - #GoFurtherWithDonegalETB / #CéimChunTosaighleETBDhúnnanGall
- Donegal ETB conducts the majority of its public meetings in the English language only. However, it is the policy of the Board that any public meetings held in the Gaeltacht, or dealing with Gaeltacht issues will be either conducted through Irish or bilingually. In the case of public meetings dealing with Irish language issues generally, such meetings may be either conducted through Irish or bilingually.
- Contributions in Irish or English will be welcome at public meetings organised by or on behalf of the public body.

Chapter 5: Enhancing the Provision of Irish Language Services in Gaeltacht Areas

Enhancing the provision of Irish language services in Gaeltacht areas and ensuring that Irish becomes the working language in offices located in Gaeltacht areas.

5.1 Communications in Gaeltacht Areas

Donegal ETB endeavours, in every way that it can, to appoint teaching staff who are capable of providing the full curriculum subject choices effectively through the medium of Irish. Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022 (published by the Department of Education and Skills in 2016) and further developments in this regard are monitored and scrutinised by the Board and the Chief Executive.

The Board is committed to doing all it can to nurture and strengthen the Gaeltacht of Co. Donegal and will make every effort to ensure that all services pertaining to the Gaeltacht shall be delivered through the medium of Irish.

List of Board's Schools and Centres providing services in Irish

- Coláiste Pobail Cholmcille, Oileán Thoraí
- Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, Béal An Átha Móir
- Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Oileán Árainn Mhóir
- Coláiste na Carraige, An Charraig
- Ionad FET, Gort an Choirce
- Ionad Oiliúna, Gaoth Dobhair

Outside of Gaeltacht areas School services through Irish are also provided by:-

- Coláiste Chineál Eoghain, Bun Cranncha
- Coláiste Ailigh, Leitir Ceanainn

Donegal ETB will work progressively towards Irish becoming the working language of all its offices located in the Gaeltacht by the end of the Board's second Scheme.

It is the policy of Donegal Education and Training Board to appoint administrators and all other employees in its Gaeltacht Schools/Colleges/Centres who will be capable of dealing with members of the public who wish to conduct their business with the Board through Irish.

All documentation pertaining to Gaeltacht regions shall be provided in Irish only, or bilingually and the Board shall endeavour to convene all of its meetings for the Gaeltacht community through the medium of Irish.

To facilitate these endeavours and an effective service in all Schools/Colleges/Centres through the medium of the Irish language, Donegal ETB will continue to seek sanction and funding from the Department of Education and Skills to appoint a Timire Gaeilge (Irish Language Officer) with the appropriate qualifications, knowledge and skills.

Chapter 6: Improving Language Capability

6.1 Recruitment and Selection

The recruitment of staff with the appropriate level of competence in the Irish language in each area of work of Donegal ETB will be the primary means of optimising the availability of services through Irish. Our recruitment policy, which is subject to the framework of agreed national recruitment procedures, will have regard to the need to improve Irish language capability on an incremental basis.

From the commencement of this Scheme, all new staff will be provided with an induction pack containing a copy of our agreed scheme in order to ensure that they are made aware of our commitments under the legislation.

Employment application forms will include a question regarding the applicant's competency in Irish.

Interviews through Irish or English will be available, subject to advance notice by the candidate of his/her language choice. Language choice will not apply in cases where Irish is an essential requirement for the post in question; the interview will be held through the medium of Irish to ensure that the candidate selected has a sufficient level of Irish.

6.2 Training and Development

Donegal ETB is committed to making available opportunities for staff to attend appropriately accredited Irish language training courses, as resources permit. All staff will be advised of facilities/opportunities to improve their competency in Irish.

Appropriate continual professional development, both formal and informal will be offered to the Board's staff to encourage them to improve their Irish language capabilities.

Opportunities to develop the Irish language competence of staff will be provided. In conjunction with Irish language education providers, appropriate arrangements will be made for the provision of Irish language training and certification in order to:

- support staff in maintaining and developing their proficiency in the Irish language,
- enhance the capacity of staff to meet the Irish language obligations of their duties, and
- provide an accredited proficiency testing regime for staff.

Access to information on language resources will be facilitated and shared on the staff intranet Irish page. Staff will be made aware of language resources such as www.tearma.ie,

www.focloir.ie, www.teanglann.ie and www.abair.ie, www.potafochal.com, as well as WinGléacht, the electronic version of the Ó Dónaill Irish- English dictionary.

Staff will be encouraged to participate in cultural language activities.

Staff will be made aware of the concept of the proactive agreement - proactively offering services in Irish to the public.

Donegal ETB has a number of Training and Development Policies for various categories of staff to facilitate and encourage staff to apply for funding of courses such as Diplomas and Degrees in Irish, translation courses, courses in spoken and written Irish, and others not specified, which would impact positively on the general management and administrative staff capability to offer a high level of service in the Irish language.

6.3 Needs Analysis and Assessment

Members of staff will continue to be provided with chances to avail of and express their interest in future training opportunities.

A staff survey was completed in 2019 and stemming from the feedback both an accredited Irish language course and a conversational Irish course are being offered to staff. There has been a good uptake on this which we hope will continue to increase.

Chapter 7: Monitoring and Review

The implementation of the scheme will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis by the Chief Executive of Donegal Education and Training Board, his/her Senior Management Team and/or any other designated person(s) including Coiste na Gaeilge.

Coiste na Gaeilge is the point of contact for the scheme and can be contacted through eolas@donegaletb.ie

Chapter 8: Publication of Agreed Scheme

This scheme will be published both internally and externally, through a press release initially. A bilingual version of the scheme will be made available on our website and circulated to all staff (together with the Guidebook to the Official Languages Act) and appropriate agencies. Other means to publicise the scheme may also be used.

In addition, we will take every opportunity in our day to day interaction with customers to promote and publicise the services we provide in Irish through the following means:

- directly informing customers on a proactive basis of the option of conducting business with us through Irish, for example, by the display of notices at reception areas indicating the Irish language services that are available;
- signifying on selected guidelines, leaflets and application forms that these documents are also available in Irish, unless presented bilingually;
- giving equal prominence to Irish and English publications and materials;
- promotion of the Irish Language on the corporate website.

A copy of the agreed scheme will be forwarded to the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga.

The Irish Language version of this scheme is the official version.