



An Roinn

Cultúr, Ealaíon  
agus Fóillíochta

Department of

Culture, Arts  
and Leisure

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# Tograí faoi choinne Bille Gaeilge

## Proposals for an Irish Language Bill

Tuairisc  
Chomhairliúcháin | Consultation  
Report

Nollaig | December 2015

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# Ábhar | Contents

1.	<b>Intreoir</b> Introduction	1
2.	An Próiseas Comhairliúcháin The Consultation Process	2
3.	Torthaí an Chomhairliúcháin Findings from the Consultation	5
4.	Measúnacht Tionchair Chomhionannais (EQIA) Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)	43
	Tagairtí   References	49

## IARSCRÍBHINNÍ | ANNEXES

A	Samplaí de Litreacha Feachtais agus Achainíocha Examples of Campaign Letters and Petitions
B	Liosta Eagraíochtaí a chuir tuairimí in iúl List of Organisations that responded
C	Torthaí an Chomhairleacháin – Cairteacha Results of the Consultation – Charts
D	Na Tograí The Proposals

Comhairliúchán ar Thograí faoi choinne Bille Gaeilge  
Consultation on Proposals for an Irish Language Bill

## 1. Intreoir

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- 1.1. Rinne an Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta (RCEF) comhairliúchán ar **Tograí faoi Choinne Bille Gaeilge** thar thréimhse 12 sheachtain ó 10ú Feabhra go dtí 5ú Bealtaine 2015.
- 1.2. Tugtar sa tuairisc seo anailís ar an chomhairliúchán, lena n-áirítear staitisticí ar an leibhéal tacaíochta do reachtaíocht a bhaineann leis an Ghaeilge, le cois gach ceann de na tograí a mionsonraíodh sa doiciméad comhairliúcháin. Tá achoimre chuimsitheach ann fosta de na barúlacha a cuireadh in iúl agus de na téamaí comhchoiteanna a d'eascair as na freagairtí.
- 1.3. Cuimsítear sa tuairisc fosta toradh na Measúnachta Tionchair Comhionannais, a bhí mar chuid den doiciméad comhairliúcháin.

## 1. Introduction

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- 1.1. The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) carried out a consultation on **Proposals for an Irish Language Bill** over a 12 week period from 10 February to 5 May 2015.
- 1.2. This report provides an analysis of the consultation, including statistics on the level of support for Irish language legislation, as well as for each of the proposals detailed in the consultation document. There is also a comprehensive summary of the comments received and the common themes that emerged from the responses.
- 1.3. The report also includes the result of the Equality Impact Assessment, which was included in the consultation document.

## 2. An Próiseas Comhairliúcháin

### Cur chuige an chomhairliúcháin

- 2.1 Tharraing RCEF aird réimse leathan d'eagrais agus de dhaoine aonair ar an chomhairliúchán. Cuireadh in iúl do líon mór eagrais Ghaeilge gurbh ann don chomhairliúchán agus iarradh orthu pobal na Gaeilge a spreagadh le páirt a ghlacadh ann. Cuireadh in iúl fosta do gach CTR agus do gach páirtí áitiúil polaitíochta, chomh maith leo siúd atá ar liosta comhairliúcháin Alt 75 an Aonaid Comhionannais. Cuimsíodh ailt faoin chomhairliúchán in dhá eagrán den nuachtlitr mhíosúil a dáileadh ar thart ar 10,000 duine atá cláraithe le *Líofa*.
- 2.2 Cuireadh doiciméad comhairliúcháin, a foilsíodh go dátheangach i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla, ar shuíomh gréasáin RCEF agus dáileadh cóipeanna clóbhuailte ag cruinnithe poiblí agus cuireadh ar fáil iad do ghrúpaí agus do dhaoine aonair, má iarradh iad.
- 2.3 Ar dháta an tseolta, fógraíodh an chomhairliúchán sna nuachtáin áitiúla - The Irish News, Belfast Telegraph, agus News Letter. Le linn an chomhairliúcháin, chuir Libraries NI póstaer faoin chomhairliúchán ar fud a ngréasán leabharlann, leabharlanna taistil san áireamh.
- 2.4 D'oibrigh RCEF i gcomhpháirt le Conradh na Gaeilge agus Foras na Gaeilge leis an chomhairliúchán a chur chun cinn agus le sraith de chruinnithe poiblí a éascú. D'eagraigh Conradh na Gaeilge, i gcomhpháirt le grúpaí áitiúla, cruinnithe comhairliúcháin trína chuid Fóram Gnímh agus d'ardaigh Foras na Gaeilge an fheasacht trí shraith ceardlann. Rinne Scoil Theanga agus Litríocht na Gaeilge Ollscoil Uladh Mhig Aoidh ócáid chomhairliúcháin a thionól fosta. Thionól grúpaí eile cruinnithe poiblí fosta; mar shampla, thionól POBAL ócáid chomhairliúcháin i mBéal Feirste, ar ar fhreastail saineolaithe idirnáisiúnta teanga, mar atá an tOllamh Robert Dunbar agus an tOllamh Colin Williams. D'fhreastail oifigigh de

## 2. The Consultation Process

### The approach to the consultation

- 2.1 DCAL brought the consultation to the attention of a wide range of organisations and individuals. A large number of Irish language organisations were notified and asked to encourage the Irish language community to participate in the consultation. All MLAs and local political parties were also notified, as were those on the Equality Unit's Section 75 consultation list were also notified. Articles about the consultation were included in two editions of the monthly newsletter that was distributed to about 10,000 people who have signed up to *Líofa*.
- 2.2 A consultation document, produced bilingually in Irish and English, was placed on DCAL's website and printed copies distributed at public meetings and provided to groups and individuals, on request.
- 2.3 On the launch date, the consultation was advertised in local newspapers – The Irish News, Belfast Telegraph, and News Letter. During the consultation, Libraries NI displayed posters about the consultation throughout its library network, including mobile libraries.
- 2.4 DCAL worked in partnership with Conradh na Gaeilge and Foras na Gaeilge to promote the consultation and facilitate a series of public meetings. Conradh na Gaeilge, in partnership with locally based groups, organised consultation meetings through its An Fóram Gnímh (Action Forums) and Foras na Gaeilge raised awareness at a series of workshops. The Ulster University Magee School of Irish Language and Literature also hosted a consultation event. Public meetings were also held by other groups; for example, POBAL held a consultation event in Belfast, which included international language experts Professors Robert Dunbar and Colin Williams. DCAL officials attended many of these meetings to provide clarification on

chuid RCEF ar chuid mhór de na cruinnithe seo le soiléiriú a thabhairt ar na tograí, ceisteanna a fhreagairt agus freagairtí a spreagadh.

- 2.5 Bhí siad sin ar mhian leo barúil a thabhairt faoi na moltaí in ann é a dhéanamh ar líne trí shuíomh gréasáin RCEF nó trí fhoirm in-íoslódála a chomhlánú. Chuir RCEF ar fáil fosta cóipeanna páipéir den fhoirm do ghrúpaí Gaeilge le dáileadh ar dhaoine ag a gcuid cruinnithe. Is í nGaeilge agus i mBéarla a bhí na foirmeacha ar fáil agus fáiltíodh roimh fhreagairtí don chomhairliúchán i gceachtar den dá theanga. Lena chois sin, ghlac RCEF le freagairtí a cuireadh isteach i réimse leathan d'fhoirmáidí. Mar shampla, chuir Conradh na Gaeilge a cheistneoir féin ar fáil ar líne agus bhí réimse de litreacha agus foirmeacha feachtais ann fosta, cuid acu ar son na moltaí, cuid acu ina n-éadan. Tá samplaí díobh cuimsithe in Iarscríbhinn A.
- 2.6 Bhí RCEF i bhfách go mór fosta le dearcadh páistí agus daoine óga a chluinstin agus, chuige sin, d'oibrigh oifigigh leis an Ghréasán Rannpháirtíochta le doiciméid chomhairliúcháin a fhoilsiú, i mBéarla agus i nGaeilge, a bhí curtha in oiriúint don aos óg. Dáileadh iad seo ar scoileanna agus ar ghrúpaí óige.
- 2.7 Ag deireadh an chomhairliúcháin, thug oifigigh de chuid RCEF faisnéis do Choiste Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta an Tionóil ar na príomhthorthaí.

## Mar a anailísíodh freagairtí an chomhairliúcháin

- 2.8 Bhí d'aidhm ag an chomhairliúchán réimse leathan de fhreagairtí faoi na tograí a spreagadh. Fuair an Roinn beagnach 13,000 freagairt a raibh breithniú agus anailís chúramach, mhion de dhíth ina leith.
- 2.9 Ní eolaíocht í freagairtí comhairliúcháin a anailísiú agus is modh anailíse cáilíochtúil, den chuid is mó, seachas cainníochtúil a úsáideadh i gcás an chomhairliúcháin seo. Úsáideadh anailís chainníochtúil leis na staitisticí ardleibhéil a tháirgeadh a bhain leis an líon freagairtí foriomlána agus an líon freagairtí do thograí aonair. Ach ní raibh ábhar bhunús na

the proposals, answer questions, and encourage responses.

- 2.5 Those wishing to comment on the proposals could do so online through the DCAL website or by completing a form, which could be downloaded. DCAL also provided paper copies of the form to Irish language groups for distribution at meetings. The online questionnaire and forms were available in Irish and English and responses to the consultation were welcomed in both languages. In addition, DCAL accepted responses that were submitted in a wide range of other formats. For example, Conradh na Gaeilge provided its own online questionnaire and there were also a range of campaign letters and forms for and against the proposals, samples of which are included in Annex A.
- 2.6 DCAL was also keen to get the views of children and young people so officials worked with the Participation Network to produce consultation documents, in English in Irish, tailored for the young. These were distributed in schools and youth groups.
- 2.7 At the end of the consultation DCAL officials briefed the Assembly's Culture, Arts and Leisure Committee on the main findings.

## How the consultation responses were analysed

- 2.8 The consultation was conducted with the aim of encouraging a wide range of responses on the proposals. The Department received almost 13,000 responses, which required careful, detailed consideration and analysis.
- 2.9 Analysing consultation responses is not a science and the method of analysis used for this consultation was largely qualitative not quantitative. Quantitative analysis was used to produce the high level statistics relating to the number of overall responses and responses to the individual proposals. However the content of most of the

bhfreagairtí, astu féin, fóirsteanach faoi choinne anailís staitistiúil agus, mar sin de, is anailís cháilíochtúil a rinneadh orthu. Is é a bhí i gceist leis an anailís, léamh agus breithniú cúramach na bhfreagairtí sa dóigh go n-aithneofaí na príomhthéamaí agus na príomhdhearcthaí a cuireadh in iúl. B'fhadálach agus ba chasta an modh anailíse é seo.

- 2.10 Nuair a chuirtear san áireamh na tosca seo ar fad, ba chóir a aithint nach é atá i gceist leis an tuairisc achomair seo taifead ar gach dearcadh aonair a cuireadh in iúl ar gach gné de na moltaí, agus níor chóir dearcadh uirthi mar sin. Is achoimre cháilíochtúil go príomha í an chuid théacsúil den tuairisc ina leagtar amach na príomhcheisteanna agus na príomhthéamaí a sainaitníodh tríd an phróiseas anailíse agus ina dtugtar samplaí de na smaointe agus de na moltaí a tugadh i leith codanna aonair den dréacht-Bhille.
- 2.11 Moltar i dtreoir faoin dea-chleachtas ar chomhairliúcháin gur chóir achoimre de na tuairimí a chuirtear in iúl a chur i láthair an phobail (faoi réir iarratas ar rúndacht). Is faoin Aire, áfach, atá sé an anailís ar na freagairtí comhairliúcháin a mheas agus cinntí a dhéanamh atá le leas an phobail nuair a bheas ábhar deiridh an Bhille á shocrú.

consultation responses by their nature were not amenable to statistical analysis and so were subject to qualitative analysis. The analysis involved carefully reading and considering of the responses with the aim to identify the main themes and views expressed. This method of analysis was both time consuming and complex.

- 2.10 Taking all of these factors into consideration it should be recognised that this summary report is not meant to be, nor should it be seen as, a record of every individual view expressed on all aspects of the proposals. The textual part of the report is primarily a qualitative summary setting out the main issues and themes identified through the analysis process and providing examples of the ideas and suggestions provided for the individual sections of the draft Bill.
- 2.11 Best practice guidance on consultations suggests that a summary of the views expressed should be made public (subject to requests for confidentiality). However, it is for the Minister to assess the analysis of the consultation responses and take decisions in the public interest in determining the final content of the Bill.



### 3. Torthaí an Chomhairliúcháin

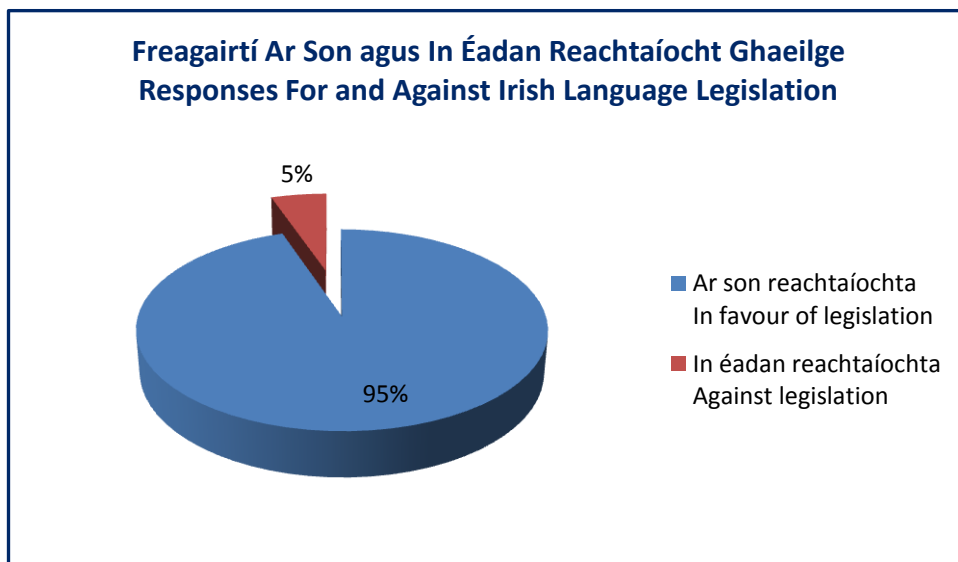
### 3. Findings from the Consultation

#### Achoimre Fhoriomlán

- 3.1 Cuirtear i láthair sa rannán seo achoimre fhoriomlán de fhreagairtí ar son agus in éadan na dtograí faoi choinne Bille Gaeilge.
- 3.2 Fuair RCEF 12,911 freagairt don chomhairliúchán, ó eagrais agus ó dhaoine aonair; tá liosta d'eagrais agus de pholaiteoirí/páirtithe polaitíochta a d'fhreagair cuimsithe in Iarscríbhinn B. Tharraing an comhairliúchán tacaíocht ollmhór do reachtaíocht Ghaeilge - 94.7% (12,233) de fhreagairtí a léirigh tacaíocht agus chuir 5.3% (678) ina héadan (Cairt 1).

#### Overall Summary

- 3.1 This section presents an overall summary of responses for and against the proposals for an Irish Language Bill.
- 3.2 DCAL received 12,911 responses to the consultation, from organisations and individuals; a list of organisations and politicians/political parties that responded is included at Annex B. The consultation attracted huge support for Irish language legislation – 94.7% (12,233) of responses indicated support while 5.3% (678) expressed opposition (Chart 1).



CAIRT 1: LEIBHÉAL TACAÍOCHTA DO BHILLE GAEILGE | CHART 1: LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR AN IRISH LANGUAGE BILL

- 3.3 Cé nár léirigh cuid mhór freagróirí ach a dtuairimí gur thug nó nár thug siad tacaíocht do reachtaíocht Ghaeilge a thabhairt isteach, chuaigh beagnach 60% (7,600) céim ab fhaide ná sin agus thug a mbarúlacha féin ar cheann amháin nó níos mó de na tograí a bhí sa doiciméad comhairliúcháin. Léirítear i dTábla 1 an líon iomlán agus na céatadáin a chuir tuairimí in iúl ar gach togra agus an briseadh anuas idir tacaíocht agus cur in éadan.

- 3.3 Whilst many only gave their opinions on whether or not they supported the introduction of legislation for the Irish language, almost 60% (7,600) went further and provided their views on one or more of the proposals, which were contained in the consultation document. Table 1 shows the total numbers and percentages that expressed opinions on each proposal and the breakdown between the support and opposition.

Ábhar Molta Bille Gaeilge Proposed Content of an Irish Language Bill	Líon a chuir tuairim in iúl No. that expressed a view	Aontaíonn Agree		Ní Aontaíonn Disagree	
		Uimh. No.	%	Uimh. No.	%
Stádas Oifigiúil don Ghaeilge   Official Status for the Irish Language	7,536	7,183	95.3%	353	4.7%
An Ghaeilge sna Cúirteanna   Irish in the Courts	7,469	7,060	94.5%	409	5.5%
An Ghaeilge sa Tionól   Irish in the Assembly	7,453	7,102	95.3%	351	4.7%
Coimisinéir Gaeilge   Irish Language Commissioner	7,436	7,095	95.4%	341	4.6%
Comhlachtaí Poiblí   Public Bodies	7,420	7,081	95.4%	339	4.6%
Scéimeanna Teanga   Language Schemes	7,347	6,926	94.3%	421	5.7%
Limistéir Ghaeltachta   Gaeltacht Areas	7,406	7,024	94.8%	382	5.2%
Logainmneacha   Place-names	7,416	7,112	95.9%	304	4.1%
Oideachas   Education	7,412	7,144	96.4%	268	3.6%

TÁBLA 1: LEIBHÉAL COMHAONTAITHE LEIS NA TOGRAÍ FAOI CHOINNE BILLE GAEILGE  
TABLE 1: LEVEL OF AGREEMENT TO THE PROPOSALS FOR AN IRISH LANGUAGE BILL

3.4 Léirítear i dTábla 1 go raibh an tacaíocht do na tograí aonair ag an leibhéal an-ard céanna leis an tacaíocht fhoriomlán do reachtaíocht, bhí an raon idir 94.3% agus 96.4 (féach fosta larscríbhinn C).

3.4 Table 1 shows that the support for the individual proposals was at the same very high level as the overall support for legislation, ranging from 94.3% to 96.4% (see also Annex C).

## ACHOIMRE AR THUAIRIMÍ A BHÍ AR SON REACHTAÍOCHT GHAELIGE

## SUMMARY OF COMMENTS IN FAVOUR OF IRISH LANGUAGE LEGISLATION

3.5 I ndiaidh an hanailíse ar na freagairtí aonair, ba iad seo a leanas na príomhthéamaí a bhí ar son na reachtaíochta:

- Thagair cuid mhór freagróirí don tacaíocht mhór reatha d'Acht na Gaeilge mar a thuilleadh fianaise ar an ghá atá le reachtaíocht bunaithe ar chearta. Mar shampla, na freagairtí do chomhairliúchán poiblí 2012 ar an dréacht-Straitéis le Forbairt na Gaeilge a Chosaint agus a Fheabhsú agus comhairliúcháin ar Bhille Gaeilge a rinneadh cheana in 2006 agus 2007.
- Cuireadh an tuairim in iúl go raibh reachtaíocht de dhíth le hoibleagáidí idirnáisiúnta i leith teangacha mionlaigh agus chaighdeáin chearta an duine a chomhlíonadh. Chuir saineolaithe teanga fianaise ar fáil inar maíodh go léirítear sa dea-chleachtas gur dóigh éifeachtach í an reachtaíocht teanga le teangacha dúchais mionlaigh a fhorbairt agus a chosaint.

3.5 Analysis of the individual responses has produced the following main themes in favour of legislation:

- Many of those responding cited the large body of existing local support for Acht na Gaeilge as further evidence of the need for rights-based legislation. For example, the responses to the 2012 public consultation on the draft Strategy for Protecting and Enhancing the Development of the Irish Language and the previous consultations on an Irish Language Bill in 2006 and 2007.
- The view was expressed that legislation was required to meet international obligations for minority languages and human rights standards. Language experts provided evidence suggesting that international best practice shows that language legislation is an effective way of developing and protecting indigenous minority languages.

- Bhí cuid mhór moltaí ann leis na tograí a fheabhsú agus a neartú:

Ba chóir go gcuimseofaí caighdeán teanga sa Bhille, mar a tugadh isteach sa Bhreatain Bheag, seachas scéimeanna teanga (pléite níos faide ar aghaidh sa rannán seo).

Ba chóir, maidir leis na tograí faoi choinne an Bhille, feidhm a bhaint as na mionsonraí atá leagtha amach in *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue (Acht na Gaeilge do TÉ – Eisiúint 2)*, de chuid POBAL. Cuimsítear tagairtí ábhartha don fhoilseachán seo ó thús deireadh na tuairisce seo.

Tá gá le cur chuige níos comhleanúnaí; ba chóir go leagfaí amach go soiléir sa bhille cad é a chuirfidh ranna agus comhlachtaí poiblí ar fáil.
- Moladh fosta gur chóir go gcuimseofaí in aon reachtaíocht teanga, cúrsaí atá faoi chúram pharlaimint Westminster faoi láthair amhail craoltóireacht agus Comhlachtaí Corónach srl.
- Mhol roinnt freagróirí, mura dtig leis an Fheidhmeannas agus an Tionól teacht ar chomhaontú faoi reachtaíocht Ghaeilge, gur chóir do rialtas na Breataine an tiomantas a thug sé i gComhaontú Chill Rìmhinn in 2006 a chomhlíonadh agus Acht na Gaeilge a thabhairt isteach.
- Cuireadh an tuairim in iúl gur chóir do rialtas na hÉireann a leagan amach cé na bearta a dhéanfaidh sé lena chinntiú go gcomhlíonfaidh rialtas na Breataine an tiomantas a thug sé Acht na Gaeilge a thabhairt isteach.
- Rinne cuid de na freagróirí an cás gur chóir go mbeadh, in aon reachtaíocht, dualgas reachtúil ar údaráis phoiblí comhthuiscint a chur chun cinn idir grúpaí teanga, go háirithe meas, tuiscint agus caoinfhulaingt i leith na Gaeilge.
- Cuireadh an bharúil in iúl go raibh reachtaíocht Ghaeilge de dhíth, ní hé amháin i dtéarmaí ceartas sóisialta ach, lena chois sin, le héagsúlacht chultúrtha a chur chun cinn. Mothaíodh gur dheis é Acht na Gaeilge le gné eile dár gcultúr a chomhroinnt lena chéile.
- There were many suggestions to improve and strengthen the proposals:

The Bill should include language standards, which have been introduced in Wales, rather than language schemes (discussed later in this section).

The proposals for the Bill should draw on the detail outlined in POBAL's *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue (Acht na Gaeilge do TÉ – Eisiúint 2)*, published in 2012. Relevant references to this publication are included throughout this report.

A more joined-up approach is needed; the Bill should set out clearly what departments and public bodies will deliver.
- It was also suggested that matters which currently fall under the Westminster parliament, such as broadcasting and Crown Bodies etc., must be included in any language legislation.
- Some advocated that if the Executive and Assembly cannot agree to legislate in relation to the Irish language that the British government should deliver on its commitment given in the St Andrews Agreement in 2006 to introduce Acht na Gaeilge.
- The opinion was expressed that the Irish Government should outline what actions it will take to ensure that the British Government honour its commitment to introduce Acht na Gaeilge.
- Some respondents argued that any legislation should contain a statutory duty on public authorities to promote mutual understanding between linguistic groups, particularly respect, understanding and tolerance of the Irish language.
- The view was expressed that Irish language legislation was required not only in terms of social justice but also to promote cultural diversity. It was felt that an Irish Language Act would be an opportunity to embrace another element of our shared culture.

- Chuir a lán freagróirí an cás chun tosaigh nach bhfuil an Chairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh, nach bhfuil feidhm dhlíthiúil ar bith aici, á cur i bhfeidhm go hiomlán nó mar is ceart agus maíodh gur fáth tréan eile é seo a bhfuil reachtaíocht de dhíth.
- Léiríodh dearcadh láidir gur chóir go mbeadh nasc suntasach idir dualgais Ghaeilge ag institiúidí polaitíochta amhail an Tionóil agus soláthar seirbhísí poiblí ag comhlachtaí ar nós comhairlí.

## ACHOIMRE AR THUAIRIMÍ A BHÍ IN ÉADAN REACHTAÍOCHT GHAeilGE

- 3.6 Bunús na ndaoine a d'fhreagair go diúltach don chomhairliúchán, chuir siad in éadan choincheap iomlán na reachtaíochta Gaeilge seachas cur in éadan moltaí ar leith. Tá na príomhfháthanna ar chuir siad in héadan leagtha amach thíos.
- Chuir cuid acu i leith páirtithe náisiúnacha, Sinn Féin go háirithe, go raibh siad ag polaitiú na Gaeilge. Áiríodh le tuairimí go mbeadh Acht Gaeilge 'deighilteach agus á spreagadh ag polaitíocht' agus gurbh 'arm polaitíochta' é. Mhaígh cuid eile 'go dtí go n-aithneofar mar is ceart gach gné de chultúr agus d'fhéiniúlacht i dTuaisceart Éireann, is éagothrom an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn thar gach léiriú eile cultúir agus féiniúlachta'.
  - Dúirt cuid eile go raibh na costais a bhaineann le Acht Gaeilge a fheidhmiú, m.sh. aistriú doiciméad agus seirbhísí ateangaireachta, doghlactha nuair atá a oiread brú airgeadais ar sheirbhísí poiblí amhail an tsláinte agus an t-oideachas.
  - Maíodh go dtugtar cosaint don Ghaeilge trína stádas Chuid III sa Chairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh agus, mar sin de, nach bhfuil aon ghá le reachtaíocht Ghaeilge.
  - Mheas cuid eile gur 'teanga mharbh' í an Ghaeilge nach labhraíonn, 'de réir an daonáirimh dheireanaigh', ach 5% den daonra.

- Many argued that the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which has no legal force, is not being fully or properly implemented and contended that this is another powerful reason why legislation is necessary.
- There was a strong view that there should be a significant link between the Irish language duties of political institutions such as the Assembly and the provision of public services by bodies such as councils.

## SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AGAINST IRISH LANGUAGE LEGISLATION

- 3.6 Most of those who replied in negative terms to the consultation expressed their objections to the whole concept of Irish language legislation rather than opposition to particular proposals. The main reasons for their opposition are set out below.
- Some accused nationalist parties, particularly Sinn Féin, of politicising the Irish language. Comments included that an Irish Language Act would be 'divisive and politically motivated' and 'a political weapon'. Others stated that, 'until all aspects of culture and identity in Northern Ireland are properly recognised, it is unfair to promote the Irish language over and above all other expressions of culture and identity'.
  - Some said that the costs of implementing an Irish Language Act, e.g. translation of documents and interpretation services, are unacceptable when there are so many financial pressures on public services such as health and education.
  - It was contended that, as the Irish language gets protection from its Part III status in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, there is no need for Irish language legislation.
  - Others considered Irish to be a 'dead language', which 'according to the last census, only 5% of the population speak'.

## Tuairimí ar na Moltaí

- 3.7 Leagtar amach sa doiciméad comhairliúcháin moltaí i leith ábhar Bille Gaeilge, faoi naoi gceannteideal:
- Stádas Oifigiúil na Gaeilge
  - An Ghaeilge sna Cúirteanna
  - An Tionól
  - An Coimisinéir Gaeilge
  - Comhlachtaí Poiblí
  - Scéimeanna Teanga
  - Limistéir Ghaeltachta
  - Logainmneacha
  - Oideachas
- 3.8 Cuimsítear na moltaí iomlána sa doiciméad comhairliúcháin in larscríbhinn D. Tuairiscítear sa rannán seo ar an leibhéal tacaíochta do gach moladh díobh.

## STÁDAS OIFIGIÚIL NA GAEILGE

- 3.9 Mar atá léirithe i dTábla 1, d'aontaigh 95.3% (7,183) gur chóir stádas oifigiúil a thabhairt don Ghaeilge trí reachtaíocht. Moltar go mbeadh foráil i mBille Gaeilge go ndéanfaí teanga oifigiúil den Ghaeilge sa tuaisceart agus go gcinnteodh sé seo go mbeadh na seirbhísí a chuirfí ar fáil trí mheán na Gaeilge ar aon chéim leo sin atá ar fáil trí mheán an Bhéarla. Léiríodh roinnt téamaí comhchoiteanna i bhfreagairtí an chomhairliúcháin.

### *Tionchar an stádais oifigiúil*

- 3.10 D'aontaigh formhór mór na bhfreagróirí gur chóir go mbeadh stádas oifigiúil ag an Ghaeilge ionas go n-aithneofar mar is ceart an ról atá ag an Ghaeilge i saol laethúil an iomad daoine. Rinne freagróirí an pointe gur tábhachtach fosta nach san fhoclaíocht amháin a bheadh an stádas oifigiúil agus gur chóir feidhm phraiticiúil a bheith leis. Leis an dearcadh seo a threisiú, rinne cuid acu tagairt don dualgas a cuireadh ar an Roinn Oideachais in 2000 an Gaeloideachas 'a spreagadh agus a éascú'<sup>1</sup> agus breith an

## Comments on the Proposals

- 3.7 The consultation document set out proposals for the content of an Irish Language Bill, under nine headings:
- Official Status of the Irish Language
  - Irish in the Courts
  - The Assembly
  - The Irish Language Commissioner
  - Public Bodies
  - Language Schemes
  - Gaeltacht Areas
  - Place-names
  - Education
- 3.8 The full proposals contained in the consultation document are included at Annex D. This section reports on the level of support for each of the proposals.

## OFFICIAL STATUS OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE

- 3.9 As shown in Table 1, 95.3% (7,183) agreed that Irish language should be given official status through legislation. It is proposed that an Irish language Bill would contain a provision that Irish would become an official language in the north and this would guarantee that services provided through Irish would be on a par with those available through English. The responses to the consultation highlighted a number of common themes.

### *Impact of official status*

- 3.10 There was overwhelming agreement that the Irish language should have official status in order to properly recognise the role that the Irish language plays in the daily lives of many people. Respondents argued that it was also important that official status went beyond words and should have practical effect. In support of this view, some cited the duty which was placed on the Department of Education in 2000 to 'encourage and facilitate' Irish-medium education<sup>1</sup> and Justice Treacy's ruling in the High Court case Coláiste

<sup>1</sup> Article 89 Education (NI) Order 1998

Ghiúistís Treacy i gcás Ard-Chúirte Choláiste Feirste v An Roinn Oideachais gurb é a bhí i gceist riamh anall leis an dualgas seo go mbeadh 'iarmhairtí praiticiúla agus suntas reachtúil' ag dul leis.<sup>2</sup> Ba chóir go mbeadh, dáiríre, impleachtaí praiticiúla le 'stádas oifigiúil'.

### *Meas ar an Ghaeilge*

- 3.11 Rinne go leor freagróirí trácht ar an diúltachas agus an cur in éadan i leith na Gaeilge agus i leith aon chineál tacaíochta nó stádas oifigiúil don teanga. Síleadh, dá mbeadh stádas oifigiúil le tabhairt don teanga, go soiléireofaí go bhfuil meas le léiriú ar an Ghaeilge agus go bhfuiltear le caitheamh le lucht labhartha na Gaeilge ar bhonn comhionannais i ngach réimse den saol poiblí.

### *Reachtaíocht atá Bunaithe ar Chearta*

- 3.12 Mhaígh líon suntasach freagróirí gur léiríodh i gcomhairliúcháin eile cheana go bhfuil pobal na Gaeilge ag tacú le reachtaíocht ina bhfuil cur chuige atá bunaithe ar chearta. Mhol cuid mhór acu gur chóir, i dtaca leis an Bhille de, tarraingt as moltaí in *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue/Acht na Gaeilge - Eisiúint 2*. Moladh gur chóir stádas oifigiúil na Gaeilge a léiriú i dteideal agus i dtéacs an Achta agus tríd an réimse leathan de chearta ráthaithe a chruthóidh sé.

### *Tuairimí eile a thacaíonn le stádas oifigiúil*

- 3.13 Léirítear sna ráitis seo a leanas roinnt de na tuairimí trína dtacaítear le stádas oifigiúil:
- Rinneadh an cás go gcaithfidh an Bille tagairt a chuimsiú do stádas oifigiúil a thabhairt don Ghaeilge agus an stádas seo á ráthú trí réimse leathan de chearta faoi mar a leagfar amach i bhforálacha an Bhille.
  - Thug cuid de na freagróirí suntas do thionchar reachtaíocht teanga i dtíortha eile ar na moltaí comhairliúcháin. Thacaigh siad leis seo, go háirithe maidir le tarraingt ar an taithí atá acu sa Bhreatain Bheag, in Éirinn agus in Albain.

Feirste v Department of Education that this duty was always intended to have 'practical consequences and legislative significance.'<sup>2</sup> In effect, 'official status' should have practical implications.

### *Respect for the Irish language*

- 3.11 Many commented on the negativity and opposition towards the Irish language and towards any form of officially-sponsored support or status for the language. It was felt that the granting of official status to the Irish language will also make it clear that the Irish language is to be respected, and that Irish speakers are to be treated on the basis of equality in all areas of public life.

### *Rights-based legislation*

- 3.12 A significant number of respondents commented that previous consultations had shown that the Irish-speaking community has indicated support for legislation with a rights-based approach. Many suggested that the Bill should draw on proposals in *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue*. It was suggested that the official status of Irish should be reflected in the Act's title and text and through the wide range of guaranteed rights it creates.

### *Other comments in support of official status*

- 3.13 The following comments are representative of views in support of official status:
- It was argued that the Bill needs to include reference to Irish being given official status and this status being guaranteed through a wide range of rights as set out in the provisions of the Bill.
  - Some respondents noted the influence of language legislation in other countries on the consultation proposals. They supported this particularly in terms of drawing on the experience of Wales, Ireland and Scotland.

<sup>2</sup> Coláiste Feirste v Department of Education (2011) NIQB 98 para 44

- Ba chóir go sainmhíneofaí 'stádas oifigiúil' sa bhille le comhsheasmhacht agus cinnteacht dhlíthiúil a chinntiú maidir le réimse fheidhmiú an Bhille i leith úsáid na Gaeilge.
- Is í an Ghaeilge teanga dhúchais an oileáin seo agus ba chóir í a chosaint sa dlí, mar atá amhlaidh i gcás teangacha dúchais sa Bhreatain Bheag agus in Albain.
- Is acmhainn thábhachtach chultúrtha í an Ghaeilge agus is cuid luachmhar dár stair chomhroinnte í.
- Is ceist thábhachtach chomhionannais é aitheantas don Ghaeilge.
- Gealladh Acht Gaeilge faoi chomhaontú Chill Rìmhinn 2006.
- Normalú trí thuilleadh infheictheachta a bheith ag an Ghaeilge an toradh a bheadh ar stádas oifigiúil.

### *Tuairimí in éadan stádais oifigiúil*

- 3.14 Is tuairimí den chineál seo a leanas a bhí acu sin nár aontaigh leis an mholadh:
- Céatadán íseal a bhaineann úsáid as an Ghaeilge ar bhonn laethúil agus tá Béarla fosta ag gach duine a bhfuil Gaeilge acu.
  - Ní fhéadfaí an costas a chosaint, go háirithe nuair a chuirtear san áireamh na deacrachtaí reatha airgeadais.
  - Scoiltfeadh Acht Gaeilge an pobal. Dhéanfadh sé coimhthíos le taobh amháin den phobal agus ní fhreastalódh sé ach ar sciar beag den taobh eile.
  - Leithcheal ar theangacha mionlaigh eile i dTuaisceart Éireann m.sh. Sínis/Mandaraínis, Polainnis) an toradh a bheadh ar Acht Gaeilge.
  - Táthar ag baint feidhme as an Ghaeilge mar arm cultúrtha.
  - Is tábhachtach cur chun cinn na Gaeilge, ach ní trí stádas oifigiúil ná Acht Gaeilge.

## AN GHAeilGE SNA CúIRTEANNA

- 3.15 As a measc siúd a chuir barúil in iúl, d'aontaigh 94.5% (7,060) gur chóir forálacha a chuimsiú a cheadódh úsáid na Gaeilge sna cúirteanna. Cheadófaí leis na forálacha imeachtaí dlí ar bith sa tuaisceart a bheith i nGaeilge.

- The Bill should define the meaning of 'official status' to ensure consistency and legal certainty as to the scope of the Bill's application to the use of the Irish language.
- Irish is the native language of this island and should be protected by law, as is the case for native languages in Wales and Scotland.
- The Irish language is an important cultural asset and a valuable part of our shared history.
- Irish language recognition is an important equality issue.
- An Irish Language Act was promised under the St. Andrew's Agreement of 2006.
- Official status would bring about a normalisation through greater visibility of Irish.

### *Comments against official status*

- 3.14 The following were typical of the views of those who disagreed with this proposal:
- Low percentage of the population use Irish daily and anyone who speaks Irish can also speak English.
  - The cost would be unjustified, especially given the current financial difficulties.
  - An Irish Language Act would be divisive. It would alienate one side of the community and only serve a low proportion of the other.
  - An Irish Language Act would discriminate against other minority languages in Northern Ireland (e.g. Chinese/Mandarin, Polish).
  - The Irish Language is being used as a cultural weapon.
  - Promotion of Irish is important, but not through official status and an Irish Language Act.

## IRISH IN THE COURTS

- 3.15 Of those who expressed an opinion, 94.5% (7,060) agreed with the inclusion of provisions to allow Irish to be used in the courts. The provisions would allow any legal proceedings in the north to be in Irish, which could include

D'áireofaí leis seo doiciméid dhlíthiúla a bheith i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla agus ateangaireacht dóibh siúd nach bhfuil Gaeilge acu. Ní iarrfaí costais bhreise ar bith orthu siúd a d'iarrfadh imeachtaí a bheith i nGaeilge.

- 3.16 Mheas cuid mhór freagróirí gur ceart bunúsach é an ceart Gaeilge a úsáid nár chóir a shéanadh. Sna paragraif seo a leanas tá ceisteanna a bhaineann le húsáid na Gaeilge ar tábhachtach lena lán freagróirí iad.

### *An tAcht um Riar an Chirt (Teanga) (Éire) 1737*

- 3.17 Bhí tacaíocht láidir ann leis An Acht um Riar an Chirt (Teanga) (Éire) 1737 a aisghairm. Shonraigh cuid mhór freagróirí gur fada an reachtaíocht seo aisghairthe in Albain agus sa Bhreatain Bheag agus rinne an cás gur léir nach bhfuil sé fóirsteanach le freastal ar riachtanais sochaí nua-aoiseach.
- 3.18 Mheas cuid mhór freagróirí nár leor Acht 1737 a aisghairm agus go bhfuil gá lena thuilleadh mionsonraí ar na bearta a d'fheidhmeofaí lena chur ar chumas daoine Gaeilge a úsáid sa chóras ceartais.

### *Foirmeacha agus teastais oifigiúla*

- 3.19 Rinneadh an cás gur chóir go dtiocfadh le daoine gach cineál foirmeacha iarratais a chomhlánú i nGaeilge agus gur chóir na foirmeacha sin a ghlacadh agus a phróiseáil gan aon chineál moille nó baic. Mhol cuid mhór freagróirí gur chóir na cineálacha seo a leanas foirmeacha agus teastas a chur ar fáil i nGaeilge agus gur chóir iad a chuimsiú sa reachtaíocht:
- ceadúnais tiomána
  - pasanna agus víosaí
  - teastais breithe
  - teastais báis
  - teastais pósta/páirtnéireacht shibhialta
- 3.20 Léirigh cuid de na freagróirí an bharúil fosta gur chóir seirbhísí pósta agus páirtnéireacht shibhialta a bheith bailí dá ndéanfaí i nGaeilge iad.
- 3.21 Mhol cuid de na freagróirí gur chóir go mbeadh gach foirm oifigiúil dátheangach agus an téacs Gaeilge taobh leis an téacs Béarla, sa dóigh go mbeadh sé soiléir agus sofheicthe.

legal documents in Irish and English and interpretation for those who do not speak Irish. There would be no additional costs imposed on those who request proceedings in Irish.

- 3.16 Many felt that the right to use Irish in the courts was a basic right, which should not be denied. The following paragraphs contain issues in relation to the use of Irish in the courts that many felt were important.

### *Administration of Justice (Language) Act (Ireland) 1737*

- 3.17 There was strong support for the repeal of the Administration of Justice (Language) Act (Ireland) 1737. Many noted that this legislation has been long since repealed in both Scotland and Wales and argued that it is clearly not suitable to meet the needs of a modern society.
- 3.18 Many felt that repealing the 1737 Act was not enough and that there needs to be more detail on the steps that would be implemented to enable the use of Irish in the justice system.

### *Official forms and certificates*

- 3.19 It was argued that people should be able to complete all forms of registration in Irish, and should have those forms accepted and processed without any sort of delay or other hindrance. Many suggested that the following types of forms and certificates should be made available in Irish and included in the legislation:
- driving licences
  - passports and visas
  - birth certificates
  - death certificates
  - marriage / civil partnership certificates
- 3.20 Some also contended that marriage and civil partnership services should be valid if conducted in Irish.
- 3.21 Some suggested that all official forms should be bilingual with the Irish text beside the English text, so that it is clear and visible. It was felt that ensuring that official forms



Measadh nach n-éireodh deacrachtaí ar bith aníos mar gheall ar rogha teanga daoine dá gcinnteofaí go gcuimseofaí an dá theanga ar fhoirmeacha oifigiúla, seachas iad a bheith ar fhoirmeacha ar leith. Mhottaigh cuid mhór de na freagróirí go raibh sé seo ag cur leis an dea-chleachtas i dtíortha nó i ndlínsí eile ina bhfuil níos mó ná teanga amháin.

### *Fad imeachtaí dlí*

- 3.22 Mhottaigh cuid mhór de na freagróirí gur chóir go gcinnteofaí sa reachtaíocht nach mbeadh aon mhoill mhíchuí ar imeachtaí dlí mar gheall ar iarratas duine go n-éistfí an cás trí mheán na Gaeilge. Cuireadh an bharúil in iúl go bhfuil córas de dhíth lena chinntiú go mbeadh aistritheoirí agus ateangairí ar fáil nuair a thiocfadh cás i nGaeilge os comhair na gcúirteanna.

### *Feasacht ar an Ghaeilge*

- 3.23 Mhottaigh cuid de na freagróirí gur chóir feachtais oiliúna/feasachta a chur ar fáil d'fhostaithe bainteacha earnáil phoiblí lena chinntiú go dtuigeann siad na freagrachtaí a éireoidh as an reachtaíocht maidir le foirmeacha Gaeilge a ghlacadh agus a phróiseáil.

### *Tuairimí eile a thacaíonn le húsáid na Gaeilge sna cúirteanna*

- 3.24 Is tuairimí den chineál seo a leanas a bhí acu sin a thacaíonn le húsáid na Gaeilge sna cúirteanna:
- Shíl cuid mhór acu gur ceist chomhionannais, saoirse, chearta an duine a bhí ann.
  - Maíodh gur chóir riar ar an Ghaeilge sna cúirteanna de thairbhe go bhfuiltear ag riar cheana féin ar theangacha eile.
  - Tugadh faoi deara gur féidir cásanna cúirte a éisteacht sa Bhreatnais agus i nGaeilge na hAlban sa Bhreatain Bheag agus in Albain faoi seach.
  - D'aontaigh cuid de na freagróirí gur chóir Gaeilge a úsáid sna cúirteanna ar anocht nach mbeadh costas suntasach ag baint leis.

include both languages, rather than having separate forms, removes the possibility of any difficulties arising because of a person's language choice. Many respondents felt this was in line with best practice in other countries or jurisdictions with more than one language.

### *Length of court proceedings*

- 3.22 Many felt that the legislation should ensure that there is no undue delay in court proceedings because of a person's request to have the case heard through Irish. The view was expressed that a system is needed to ensure that translators and interpreters will be available when a case in Irish comes before the courts.

### *Awareness of the Irish language*

- 3.23 Some respondents thought that training / awareness campaigns should be provided for relevant public sector employees to ensure that they understood the responsibilities emanating from the legislation in relation to accepting and processing Irish language forms.

### *Other comments in support of the use of Irish in the courts*

- 3.24 The following views were typical of those supporting the use of the Irish language in courts:
- Many thought it was an equality issue, an issue of freedom, a human right.
  - It was stated that as provision is already made for other languages in the courts then Irish should also be accommodated.
  - It was noted that court cases can be heard in Welsh and Scottish Gaelic in Wales and Scotland respectively.
  - Some agreed to the use of Irish in the courts on condition it does not incur significant costs.

- Mhaígh cuid de na freagróirí gur ghá an reachtaíocht a bheith iontach sainiúil faoi úsáid na Gaeilge sa chóras ceartais sa dóigh nach n-úsáidí í mar ghléas 'moilleadóireachta'.
- Measadh gur chóir cúrsaí oiliúna/feasachta a chur ar fáil do bhaill foirne sa chóras ceartais lena chinntiú go dtuigeann siad a n-oibleagáidí.
- Measadh gurbh fhéidir go mbeadh liosta ar leith toghthóirí de Ghaeilgeoirí de dhíth.
- Chuir cuid de na freagróirí chun tosaigh na moltaí bunaithe ar chearta in *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue/Acht na Gaeilge do TÉ – Eisiúint 2* maidir leis na cúirteanna.
- Ba chóir go leagfaí amach go soiléir sa Bhille cad é a chuirfidh an Roinn Ceartais agus codanna aonair den chóras ceartais ar fáil nuair a fheidhmeofar é.

### *Tuairimí in éadan úsáid na Gaeilge sna cúirteanna*

3.25 Léiríonn na tuairimí seo a leanas an dearcadh a bhí acu sin nár aontaigh le húsáid na Gaeilge san cúirteanna:

- Níl sí de dhíth óir tá Béarla fosta ag gach duine a bhfuil Gaeilge acu.
- Ní fhéadfaí an costas a chosaint go háirithe nuair a chuirtear san áireamh na deacrachtaí reatha airgeadais.
- Bhainfeadh sí ó cháilíocht imeachtaí na gcúirteanna agus, dáiríre, chuirfeadh sí bac ar an cheartas.
- Is cúis fhéideartha leithcheala í foráil i leith úsáid na Gaeilge sna cúirteanna a thabhairt isteach agus gan aon teanga eile a úsáidtear i dTuaisceart Éireann, .i. Ultais, Polainnis, Liotuáinis, a chuimsiú.
- Dhearcfaí uirthi mar bheart a scoiltfeadh an pobal agus mar iarracht eile leis an Ghaeilge a pholaitiú.
- Níor chóir Gaeilge a úsáid sna cúirteanna ach amháin más í an Ghaeilge an t-aon teanga amháin atá ag na daoine bainteacha.

- Some respondents stated that the legislation needs to be very specific about the use of Irish within the justice system so that it is not used as a 'stalling' mechanism.
- It was felt that staff in the judicial system should be provided with training / awareness courses to ensure they understand their obligations.
- It was thought that perhaps a separate electoral list of Irish speakers will be required.
- Some recommended the rights-based proposals for the courts in *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue*.
- The Bill should set out clearly what the Department of Justice and individual parts of the justice system will deliver once implemented.

### *Comments against the use of Irish in the courts*

3.25 The following comments were representative of those who disagreed with the use of Irish in the courts:

- It is unnecessary as anyone who speaks Irish can also speak English.
- The cost would be unjustified especially given the current financial difficulties.
- It would detract from the quality of court proceedings and actually impede justice.
- To introduce the provision for the use of Irish in courts, and not any other language used in Northern Ireland, i.e. Ulster-Scots, Polish, Lithuanian is potentially discriminatory.
- It would be seen as divisive and another attempt to politicise the Irish language.
- Irish should be used in the courts only if Irish is the only language of people involved.

## AN TIONÓL

- 3.26 95.3% (7,102) a d'aontaigh gur chóir forálacha a chuimsiú le go gcaithfear ar bhonn comhionannais leis an Ghaeilge agus leis an Bhéarla in imeachtaí an Tionóil. Chiallódh sé sin go mbeadh de cheart ag daoine a ngnó a dhéanamh sa Tionól nó ar choistí Tionóil trí mheán na Gaeilge. Bheadh sé de dhualgas ar an Tionól seirbhísí ateangaireachta nó aistriúcháin a chur ar fáil idir Ghaeilge agus Bhéarla agus bheadh ceanglas ann gach Acht agus Bille a fhoilsiú i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla go comhuaineach. Tháinig roinnt téamaí comhchoiteanna aníos ina measc siúd a thacaigh le húsáid na Gaeilge as Tionól.

### *Áiseanna ateangaireachta agus aistriúcháin*

- 3.27 Bhí comhaontú forleathan ann gur chóir áiseanna ateangaireachta agus aistriúcháin a bheith ar fáil do CTRanna sa Tionól, mar atá i bparlaimintí eile ar fud an domhain. Tagraíodh do Pharlaimint na hEorpa mar eiseamláir a mbeadh sé feidhmiúil í a leanúint. D'aontaigh a lán leis an mholadh gur chóir go mbeadh seirbhísí ateangairí ar fáil sa Tionól lena chinntiú go dtiocfadh le CTRanna Gaeilge a úsáid agus nach gcaithfeadh siad féin an méid a deir siad a aistriú, mar atá amhlaidh faoi láthair.
- 3.28 Measadh gur chóir áiseanna ateangaireachta agus aistriúcháin a bheith ar fáil sna Coistí chomh maith le seomra an Tionóil.
- 3.29 Le cois Billí agus Achtanna a fhoilsiú go comhuaineach i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla, mothaíodh gur chóir suíomh idirlín an Tionóil, Dialann Ghnó an Tionóil agus sceidil na gCoistí srl. a bheith ar fáil i nGaeilge. Is é seo an cineál eolais a aimsíonn an pobal ar bhonn níos rialta.

### *Gearáin faoi fheidhmiú Acht Gaeilge*

- 3.30 Rinneadh an cás go moltar sna tograí gur chóir gearáin faoi fheidhmiú Acht Gaeilge a chur faoi bhráid an Choimisinéara Gaeilge sa chéad dul síos. Mhottaigh cuid de na freagróirí, i gcás an Tionóil, gurbh iomchuí gur Choimisinéir Chaighdeán an Tionóil a

## THE ASSEMBLY

- 3.26 The inclusion of provisions for the Irish and English languages to be treated equally in the proceedings of the Assembly was agreed by 95.3% (7,102). This would mean that persons would have the right to conduct their business in the Assembly or Assembly Committees through Irish. The Assembly would have a duty to provide interpretation and translation services between Irish and English and there would be a requirement for all Acts and Bills to be published simultaneously in Irish and English. A number of common themes emerged from those who supported the use of Irish in the Assembly.

### *Interpretation and translation facilities*

- 3.27 There was broad agreement that interpretation and translation facilities should be available for MLAs in the Assembly, as are available in other parliaments across the world. The European Parliament was cited as a model that might usefully be followed. Many agreed with the proposal that the services of interpreters should be available in the Assembly in order to ensure that MLAs are able to use Irish without having to translate what they have said themselves, as is currently the case.
- 3.28 It was felt that interpretation and translation facilities should be available in Committees as well as the Assembly chamber.
- 3.29 In addition to Bills and Acts being published simultaneously in Irish and English, it was felt that the Assembly website, the Assembly Business Diary and schedules of Committees etc. should be available in Irish. This is the sort of information that members of the public access on a more regular basis.

### *Complaints about the implementation of an Irish Language Act*

- 3.30 It was pointed out that the proposals suggest that complaints about the implementation of an Irish Language Act should be taken to the Irish Language Commissioner in the first instance. Some felt that in the case of the Assembly, it would be more appropriate that

phléifeadh le gearáin a thiocfadh aníos trí imeachtaí an Tionóil nó le linn idirbheartaíochta leis an Tionól nó le CTRanna aonair.

- 3.31 Measadh fosta gur chóir go mbeadh rogha achomhairc ann leis an Choimisinéir Gaeilge dá measfaí nach raibh an Tionól ag comhlíonadh a fhreagrachtaí.

### *Tuairimí eile a thacaíonn le húsáid na Gaeilge sa Tionól*

- 3.32 Léiríonn na tuairimí seo a leanas (moltaí faoi fhorálacha eile san áireamh) an dearcadh a bhí acu sin a thacaíonn le húsáid na Gaeilge sa Tionól:

- Go gcuirfeadh úsáid na Gaeilge sa Tionól agus sa ghnáthdhioscúrsa phoiblí le stádas na Gaeilge agus gur chuidiú í leis an Ghaeilge a normalú agus a chur chun cinn do gach duine, daoine óga san áireamh.
- Ba chóir go mbeadh ráiteas dlíthiúil, tréan, soiléir ann faoi chearta Gaeilgeoirí sa Tionól. Is cuid de na toghthóirí iad lucht labhartha na Gaeilge agus ba chóir go mbeadh an ionadaíocht chéanna acu agus atá ag lucht labhartha an Bhéarla.
- Is gá seasamh neodrach a bheith ag an Ghaeilge i bhfóiraim fhoirmiúla amhail an Tionól.
- Chomhlíonfadh úsáid na Gaeilge sa Tionól an tiomantas i gComhaontú Aoine an Chéasta chun 'beart daingean a dhéanamh leis an [Ghaeilge] a chur chun cinn'.
- Chuirfeadh aistriúcháin Ghaeilge ar chumas Thuaisceart Éireann cloí le coinníollacha na Cairte do Theangacha Réigiúancha nó Mionlaigh dá bhfuil an RA ina shínitheoir.
- Léiríodh an tuairim gur chóir nasc láidir a bheith idir dualgais na bhforas polaitiúil ar nós an Tionóil agus soláthar seirbhísí poiblí ag comhlachtaí ar nós comhairlí áitiúla.

complaints which arise through Assembly proceedings or in the course of interaction with the Assembly or individual MLAs should be dealt with by the Assembly Standards Commissioner.

- 3.31 It was also felt that there should also be an option of appeal to the Irish Language Commissioner when it was felt the Assembly was not meeting its responsibilities.

### *Other comments in support of the use of Irish in the Assembly*

- 3.32 Other typical views suggested by respondents (including suggestions for other provisions) that were supportive of Irish in the Assembly were that:

- The use of Irish in the Assembly and in normal public discourse would enhance the status and help normalise and promote Irish to all, including young people.
- There should be a strong and clear legal statement about the rights of Irish speakers in the Assembly. Irish speakers form part of the electorate and should be represented on a par with English speakers.
- Irish needs to be placed on a neutral footing in formal forums such as the Assembly.
- Use of Irish in the Assembly would honour the commitment of the Good Friday Agreement 'to take resolute action to promote the [Irish] language'.
- Translations from Irish would enable Northern Ireland to conform to the stipulations of the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of which the UK is a signatory.
- There was a view that there should be a strong link between the duties of political institutions such as the Assembly and the provision of public services by bodies such as local councils.

### *Tuairimí in éadan úsáid na Gaeilge sa Tionól*

- 3.33 Léiríonn na tuairimí seo a leanas an dearcadh a bhí acu sin a bhí in éadan úsáid na Gaeilge sa Tionól:
- Níl feidhm ar bith léi óir tá Béarla fosta ag gach duine a bhfuil Gaeilge acu.
  - Ní fhéadfaí an costas a chosaint, go háirithe nuair a chuirtear san áireamh na deacrachtaí reatha airgeadais.
  - Chuirfeadh sí bac ar ghnó an tionóil.
  - Bheadh aistriúchán de dhíth ar sciar maith den phobal le himeachtaí an Tionóil a thuiscint. Chuirfeadh sí daoine ó dhoras maidir le páirt ní ba mhó a ghlacadh sa pholaitíocht.
  - Ní tír dhátheangach í seo. Deighleann agus dheighlféadh úsáid na Gaeilge sa Tionól an pobal go hiomlán. Ní chuireann sí an coincheap chun cinn go bhfuilimid ag dul chun cinn le chéile.
  - Is annamh a úsáidtear an Ghaeilge sa Dáil.
  - Ba chóir go bhfanadh cúrsaí mar atá, ach má dhéantar í a dhíspeagadh ar chúiseanna seicteacha, ba chóir an comhalta a dhíbirt nó fíneáil a ghearradh air/uirthi.

### AN COIMISINÉIR GAEILGE

- 3.34 95.4% (7,095), díobh sin a léirigh tuairim faoi, a bhí i bhfách le cruthú post Coimisinéir Teanga. Cheapadh an Chéad-Aire agus an LeasChéad-Aire an Coimisinéir Gaeilge le húsáid na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn agus a éascú. I measc fheidhmeanna agus chumhachtaí na Choimisinéara, a bheadh neamhspleách ar an rialtas, bheadh:
- maoirseacht agus monatóireacht fheidhmiú an Achta;
  - a threorú do chomhlachtaí poiblí scéimeanna teanga a dhréachtú, agus na scéimeanna a fhaomhadh agus a mhonatóiriú;
  - comhairle a thabhairt don phobal agus d'fhorais phoiblí;
  - gearáin de chuid an phobail a fhiosrú;

### *Comments against the use of Irish in the Assembly*

- 3.33 The following were typical of the views of those who objected to the use of Irish in the Assembly:
- It is unnecessary as anyone who speaks Irish can also speak English.
  - The cost would be unjustified, especially given the current financial difficulties.
  - It would impede Assembly business.
  - A high proportion of the population would require translation to understand the happenings in the Assembly. It would discourage the public from being more engaged in politics.
  - This is not a bilingual country. Using Irish in the Assembly is and would be divisive and polarising. It does not promote the concept of moving forward together.
  - Irish is hardly ever used in the Dáil.
  - Things should stay as they are, but if it is mocked for sectarian reasons then the member should be removed and fined.

### THE IRISH LANGUAGE COMMISSIONER

- 3.34 The creation of the position of an Irish Language Commissioner got approval from 95.4% (7,095) of those who expressed an opinion. The Irish Language Commissioner would be appointed by the First Minister and deputy First Minister to promote and facilitate the use of the Irish language. The functions and powers of the Commissioner, who would be independent of government, would include:
- overseeing and monitoring the implementation of the Act;
  - instructing public bodies to draft language schemes, and approving and monitoring the schemes;
  - providing advice to the public and public bodies;
  - investigating complaints from the public;

- cúisimh a thionscnamh má dhiúltaíonn nó má theipeann ar aon dream comhoibriú le hobair an Choimisinéara.

3.35 Cláraithe thíos tá roinnt barúlacha comhchoiteanna a bhaineann le ról an Choimisinéara Gaeilge.

### *Neamhspleáchas an Choimisinéara*

- 3.36 Bhí tacaíocht láidir ann d'fhoráil 4(d) den doiciméad comhairliúcháin ina maítear 'go gcomhlíonfaidh an Coimisinéir a d(h)ualgais ar bhonn neamhspleách ón rialtas. Measadh gur den riachtanas ról an Choimisinéara a bheith neamhspleách agus neamhpholaitiúil.
- 3.37 Cuireadh an tuairim in iúl go bhféadfadh sé nach mbeadh an Céad-Aire agus an LeasChéad-Aire in ann aontú ar an duine ba chóir a cheapadh mar Choimisinéir.

### *Feidhmeanna agus Cumhachtaí an Choimisinéara Gaeilge*

- 3.38 D'aontaigh cuid mhór de na freagróirí gur chóir ról iontach soiléir agus cumhachtaí cuí a bheith ag an Choimisinéir.
- 3.39 Mhóthaigh cuid acu, áfach, go bhfuil an ról atá leagtha amach don Choimisinéir sa doiciméad comhairliúcháin róleathan. Rinneadh an cas nár chóir don Choimisinéir scéimeanna teanga foras poiblí a fhaomhadh agus ansin meastóireacht a dhéanamh orthu. Thagair na freagróirí seo do thaithí ón Bhreatain Bheag agus ó Éirinn mar fhianaise nach é seo an tsamhail is fearr le leanúint.
- 3.40 Cuireadh an bharúil in iúl gur chóir ról comhairleach a bheith ag an Choimisinéir i ndréachtú aon scéime nó polasaí a bhaineann leis an Ghaeilge. Mar atá amhlaidh sa Bhreatain Bheag, measadh fosta gur gur chóir ról comhairleach a bheith ag an Choimisinéir i bhforbairt billí, polasaithe agus straitéisí lena chinntiú nach mbeadh iarmhairtí diúltacha neamhbheartaithe ann don Ghaeilge.

- initiating prosecutions for refusing or failing to co-operate with the work of the Commissioner.

3.35 A number of common views relating to the role of the Irish Language Commissioner are recorded below.

### *The Commissioner's independence*

- 3.36 There was strong support for provision 4(d) of the consultation document, which states that the Commissioner 'will carry out his/her duties independent of government'. It was considered to be essential that the Commissioner's role is independent and apolitical.
- 3.37 A view was expressed that the First Minister and deputy First Minister might not be able to agree on the person who should be appointed as Commissioner.

### *The functions and powers of the Irish Language Commissioner*

- 3.38 Many agreed that the Commissioner must have a very clear role and appropriate powers.
- 3.39 Some felt, however, that the role set out for the Commissioner in the consultation document is too broad. It was argued that the Commissioner should not approve public body language schemes and then evaluate them. These respondents cited experience from Wales and Ireland as evidence that this was not the best model to follow.
- 3.40 The view was expressed that the Commissioner should have an advisory role in the drafting of any scheme or policy related to the Irish language. As is the case in Wales, it was also felt that the Commissioner should have an advisory role in the development of Bills, policies and strategies to ensure that there would be no unintended negative consequences for Irish.

### *Acmhainní don Choimisinéir Gaeilge*

- 3.41 Tá réimse an-leathan sna moltaí sa doiciméad comhairliúcháin de fhreagrachtaí faoi choinne oifig úr an Choimisinéara Gaeilge. Mhóthaigh cuid mhór freagróirí gur den riachtanas go mbeadh a sáith acmhainní ag Oifig an Choimisinéara lena chinntiú go dtiocfadh léi a cuid oibre a dhéanamh.

### *Tuairimí eile a thacaíonn le cruthú ról an Choimisinéara Gaeilge*

- 3.42 D'ainneoin nach féidir gach tuairim aonair a léiriú, is iad seo a leanas cuid de na tuairimí comhchoiteanna a bhí ag freagróirí le tacú le cruthú Coimisinéir Gaeilge.
- Chuirfeadh sé cosc ar mhí-úsáid agus ar cháineadh na Gaeilge amach anseo
  - Is ról riachtanach é le teangacha dúchais mionlaigh a chosaint agus a chur chun cinn in áiteanna eile, m.sh. Éire agus an Bhreatain Bheag.
  - Chuirfeadh sé neamhchlaontacht pholaitiúil ar fáil.
  - Is den riachtanas an duine ceart a cheapadh.
  - Ba chóir nach mbeadh an costas iomarcach.
  - Mhóthaigh roinnt freagróirí gur chóir Bord úr a chruthú. Ba chóir go mbeadh de chumhacht ag an Bhord seo tabhairt ar chomhlachtaí poiblí nach luaitear i Sceideal na reachtaíochta scéimeanna a réiteach. Measadh nár chóir gur fhreagracht de chuid an Choimisinéara é seo.
  - Ba chóir na moltaí atá leagtha amach in *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue (Acht na Gaeilge do TÉ – Eisiúint 2)*, maidir le cumhachtaí an Choimisinéara, a bhreithniú.
  - Is tábhachtach go dtiocfaidh an Coimisinéir i dtír ar shaineolas agus a bhfuil gnóthaithe ag cuid mhór eagrais teanga áitiúla agus réigiúnacha óir ní haon eagrais aonfhoirmeach amháin é pobal na Gaeilge ach eintiteas a bhfuil riachtanais, cuspóirí agus tréithe éagsúla aige.

### *Resources for the Irish Language Commissioner*

- 3.41 The consultation document proposals contain a very wide range of responsibilities for the new office of the Irish Language Commissioner. Many respondents felt that it was essential that the Office of the Commissioner has sufficient resources to ensure that it is able to carry out its work.

### *Other comments in support of the creation of the role of Irish Language Commissioner*

- 3.42 Although it is not possible to reflect every individual view, the following are some common views of respondents in support of the creation of an Irish Language Commissioner.
- It would help deter future abuse and condemnation of the Irish Language.
  - It is an essential role in order to safeguard and promote indigenous minority language in other places, e.g. Ireland and Wales.
  - It would provide political impartiality.
  - The appointment of the correct person is essential.
  - The cost should not be excessive.
  - Some felt that a new Board should be created. This Board should have the power to compel public bodies not mentioned in the Schedule to the legislation to prepare schemes. It was thought that this should not be the Commissioner's responsibility.
  - The proposals set out in POBAL's *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue* regarding the powers of the Commissioner should be considered.
  - It is important for the Commissioner to harness the expertise and achievements of many local and regional language bodies as the Irish Language community is not one uniform entity but has different needs, aims and character in various areas.

- Ba chóir don Choimisinéir feidhmiú iomlán an Achta a mhaoirsiú agus na dualgais agus feidhmeanna a shannfar dó trí Acht Gaeilge agus Achtanna eile Parlaiminte de chuid an RA nó Thionól Thuaisceart Éireann a chur i gcrích, comhall monatóireachta ag comhlachtaí poiblí san áireamh.
- Ba chóir don Choimisinéir tuairisc bhliantúil a chur ar fáil ar a c(h)uid oibre, cuntais bhliantúla airgeadais san áireamh.
- Tá sé riachtanach le Gaeilge a chur chun cinn, meas idir pobail a chruthú agus paireacht ghradaim agus soláthar seirbhíse a chinntiú do Ghaeilgeoirí. Ba chóir go mbeadh de fhreagracht ar an Choimisinéir plé le cás ar bith leithcheala, neamhionannais, srl. Ba chóir go n-áireofaí leis seo, fiosrúcháin a dhéanamh ar son gearánaithe nó ar a c(h)onlán féin.
- Ba chóir go bhféadfadh an Coimisinéir dul sa tóir orthu siúd a bhfaightear amach fúthu go bhfuil siad ag déanamh leithcheala ar chainteoirí Gaeilge agus iad a chúiseamh.
- Ba chóir cumhachtaí dlí a bheith ag an Choimisinéir an reachtaíocht a fhorfheidhmiú agus ceisteanna ar bith a bhaineann le sárúithe reachtaíochta a fhiosrú.
- Ba chóir don Choimisinéir a bheith cuntasach ach neamhspleách chomh maith.
- Ba chóir cumhachtaí an Choimisinéara a bheith teoranta don Ghaeilge taobh istigh de cheantar agus réimse ainmnithe a údaráís.

### *Tuairimí in éadan chruthú ról an Choimisinéara Gaeilge*

- 3.43 Léiríonn na tuairimí seo a leanas an dearcadh a bhí acu sin a bhí in éadan chruthú Choimisinéir Gaeilge:
- Ní fhéadfaí an costas a chosaint, go háirithe nuair a chuirtear san áireamh na deacrachtaí reatha airgeadais.
  - Ní úsáideann ach céatadán íseal an Ghaeilge ar bhonn laethúil.
  - Níl ann ach leithscéal le poist a chur ar fáil do lucht na Gaeilge.

- The Commissioner should oversee full implementation of the Act and carry out such duties and functions as are assigned by an Irish Language Act and other Acts of Parliament of UK or of the Northern Ireland Assembly, including monitoring compliance by public bodies.
- The Commissioner should provide an annual report on his/her work, including annual financial accounts.
- It is essential to promote Irish, to create inter-community respect and to ensure parity of esteem and service provision for Irish speakers. The Commissioner should have responsibility for dealing with any cases of discrimination, inequality, etc. This should include carrying out investigations on behalf of complainants or on his/her own initiative.
- The Commissioner should be able to pursue and prosecute those who are found to be discriminating against Irish speakers.
- The Commissioner should have legal powers to enforce the legislation and investigate any issues with regard to breaches.
- The Commissioner should be accountable but also independent.
- The Commissioner's powers should be limited to the Irish language within the designated area of his authority.

### *Comments against the creation of the role of Irish Language Commissioner*

- 3.43 The following were typical opinions of those who were against the creation of an Irish Language Commissioner:
- The cost would be unjustified, especially given the current financial difficulties.
  - Low percentage of the population use Irish daily.
  - This is only 'jobs for the boys'.



- Má tá Coimisinéir Gaeilge le bheith ann ba chóir go mbeadh a leithéid ann fosta don Ultais agus do theangacha mionlaigh eile.
- Tá an Ghaeilge cosanta cheana féin mar theanga mhionlaigh faoi reachtaíocht AE - níl bearta eile maorlathais de dhíth lena cosaint a chinntiú.
- Ba chóir gur phost deonach amháin é.

## COMHLACHTAÍ POIBLÍ

- 3.44 95.4% (7,081), díobh siúd a chuir barúil in iúl, a bhí i bhfách leis an mholadh gur chóir go n-áireofaí sa Bhille forálacha faoi choinne Comhlachtaí Poiblí. Chuirfí dualgais ar chomhlachtaí poiblí an Ghaeilge a aithint agus seirbhísí poiblí a chur ar fáil trí mheán na Gaeilge. Liostófaí na comhlachtaí poiblí, a chuimseodh gach comhlacht stáit agus leathstáit, údarais áitiúla, na cúirteanna, an tseirbhís phóilíneachta, i Sceideal an Bhille. Bheadh sé d'iallach orthu comhoibriú leis an Choimisinéir Gaeilge.
- 3.45 Leirigh cuid mhór freagróirí tuairimí ar na ceisteanna seo a leanas:

### *Bearnaí sna forálacha*

- 3.46 Rinne cuid acu an cás go raibh bearnaí sna forálacha a leagadh amach do chomhlachtaí poiblí sa doiciméad comhairliúcháin. Dúirt siad gur chóir do na moltaí a bhaineann le comhlachtaí poiblí a bheith ag cur leo siúd a bhaineann le forais pholaitiúla ach nach léir sa doiciméad comhairliúcháin gur amhlaidh atá. Maíodh fosta go raibh neamhréir idir moltaí a bhaineann leis an Tionól agus leo sin a bhaineann le comhlachtaí poiblí. Fágfar ar lár i moltaí na gcomhlachtaí poiblí riachtanais shainiúla le caitheamh leis an Ghaeilge 'ar bhonn comhionannais i riar imeachtaí' agus 'meas ar úsáid na Gaeilge a chinntiú' a dhíríonn ar chosaint níos airde d'úsáid na Gaeilge sa Tionól seachas ag comhlachtaí poiblí.
- 3.47 Measadh go bhfuil nasc suntasach idir dualgais na bhforas polaitiúil agus soláthar seirbhísí poiblí. Mheas roinnt freagróirí go raibh an nasc seo leagtha amach go maith in *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue/Acht na Gaeilge do TÉ – Eisiúint 2*.

- If there was an Irish Language Commissioner, there should be one for Ulster-Scots and other minority languages.
- Irish is already protected as a minority language under EU Legislation - there is no need for further bureaucratic positions to ensure its protection.
- Only if it is a voluntary position.

## PUBLIC BODIES

- 3.44 The proposal that the Bill should include provisions for Public Bodies was supported by 95.4% (7,081) of those who expressed an opinion. Duties would be placed on public bodies to recognise the Irish language and to provide services through Irish. The public bodies, which would include all state and semi-state bodies, local authorities, the courts, the police service, would be listed in a Schedule of the Bill. They would be required to cooperate with the Irish Language Commissioner.
- 3.45 Many respondents commented on the following issues:

### *Gaps in the provisions*

- 3.46 Some argued that there were gaps in the provisions set out for public bodies, in the consultation document. They said that the proposals relating to public bodies should complement those relating to the political institutions but that it is not clear, in the consultation document, that this is the case. It was also suggested there was an inconsistency between proposals for the Assembly and those for public bodies. The proposals for public bodies omit specific requirements to treat Irish 'on the basis of equality in the conduct of proceedings' and 'ensure respect for the use of Irish', which points to higher protection for the use of Irish in the Assembly than by public bodies.
- 3.47 It was felt that there is a significant link between the duties of the political institutions and the provision of public services. Some respondents felt that this link is set out well in *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue*.

### *Treoir do chomhlachtaí poiblí*

- 3.48 Shíl roinnt freagróirí go bhfuil treoir shoiléir de dhíth lena chinntiú go dtig le comhlachtaí poiblí cibé freagrachtaí a thugtar dóibh tríd an reachtaíocht a chomhlíonadh. Mhol freagróirí eile gur chóir go mbeadh comhairle agus cuidiú ar fáil do chomhlachtaí poiblí lena chinntiú go gcuireann siad a gcuid dualgas i gcrích go hiomlán, i ndiaidh thabhairt isteach na reachtaíochta. D'fhéadfadh oiliúint foirne, comhairle do bhainisteoirí agus comhairle faoin dóigh le timpeallacht dhátteangach a chruthú a bheith san áireamh.

### *Feasacht a ardú faoi sheirbhísí*

- 3.49 Dúirt roinnt freagróirí go gcaithfear an pobal a chur ar an eolas faoi na seirbhísí atá ar fáil dóibh trí mheán na Gaeilge ó chomhlachtaí poiblí. Measadh nach mbeidh a fhios ag daoine, i dtús báire, cé na seirbhísí atá/nach bhfuil ar fáil dóibh trí mheán na Gaeilge agus, mar sin de, go mbeidh treoir de dhíth orthu le hiad a chur ar an eolas faoi na hathruithe atá i ndiaidh titim amach.

### *Oiliúint do bhaill foirne earnáil phoiblí*

- 3.50 Mar a luadh san anailís ar na freagairtí faoin Ghaeilge sna cúirteanna, rinneadh an cás gur tábhachtach oiliúint a chur ar fáil d'fhostaithe earnáil phoiblí le cuidiú leo a ndualgais a chur i gcrích agus lena chinntiú go bhfuil soláthar seirbhísí trí mheán na Gaeilge ar aon chaighdeán leis an soláthar Béarla.

### *Tuairimí eile a thacaíonn le cuimsiú forálacha do chomhlachtaí poiblí*

- 3.51 Seo a leanas moltaí comhchoiteanna eile faoi chomhlachtaí poiblí maidir le hábhar féideartha na reachtaíochta (dualgais, forálacha eile):
- Tá ról na gcomhlachtaí poiblí riachtanach maidir le cosaint, feabhsú agus forbairt na Gaeilge.
  - Tá reachtaíocht de dhíth as siocair nach bhfuil an Feidhmeannas ná na comhairlí áitiúla ag soláthar mar is cóir a n-oibleagáidí seirbhís phoiblí don Ghaeilge faoin Chairt Eorpach.

### *Guidance for public bodies*

- 3.48 Respondents thought that clear guidance is needed to ensure that public bodies are able to fulfil whatever responsibilities are given to them by the legislation. Others suggested that there should be advice and assistance available to public bodies to ensure they deliver their duties fully, following the introduction of legislation. This might include staff training, advice for managers, and advice on how to create a bilingual environment.

### *Raising awareness about services*

- 3.49 Respondents said that members of the public must be made aware of the services that are available to them through Irish from public bodies. It was thought that initially people won't know what services are/aren't available to them through Irish and therefore will need guidance to make them aware of the changes which have occurred.

### *Training for public sector staff*

- 3.50 As mentioned in the analysis of the Irish in the Courts responses, it was argued that it was important that training should be provided for public body employees to help them to carry out their duties and to ensure that the delivery of services through Irish are of an equal standard to those delivered in English.

### *Other comments in support of the inclusion of provisions for public bodies*

- 3.51 Other common suggestions about public bodies in terms of what the legislation might contain (duties, other provisions) made by respondents included:
- The role of public bodies is essential to the protection, enhancement and development of Irish.
  - Legislation is necessary because the Executive and local councils are not properly delivering their public service obligations for Irish under the European Charter.

- Ba chóir freagra Gaeilge a thabhairt ar chomhfhreagras Gaeilge.
- Ba chóir seirbhísí, comharthaíocht agus ábhar scríofa a fhoilsiú i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla i ngach comhlacht agus comhairle phoiblí. Ba chóir féiniúlacht chorparáideach a chur i láthair go dátheangach, páipéarachas, comharthaíocht, cártaí gnó, suíomh idirlín srl. san áireamh.
- Ba chóir go dtiocfadh gach Comhlacht Poiblí Neamh-Rannach agus gach Comhlacht Thuaidh-Theas faoi na forálacha ar fad.
- D'fhéadfadh sé gur samhail chuí iad na feidhmeanna atá leagtha amach sa *Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005*.
- Tá cur chuige comhleanúnach de dhíth idir na rannáin éagsúla den Bhille. Mheas cuid de na freagróirí nach raibh an chuid seo ar Chomhlachtaí Poiblí soiléir maidir le, mar shampla, cé acu atá nó nach bhfuil comharthaíocht san áireamh agus, má tá, cén cineál comharthaíochta agus cá háit. Mhol roinnt freagróirí go bhféadfaí na tograí a neartú trí fheidhm a bhaint as *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue (Acht na Gaeilge do TÉ – Eisiúint 2)*.
- Baill foirne a údarú agus a spreagadh le Gaeilge a fhoghlaim a fhad le leibhéal ar leor é lena ndualgais oibre a dhéanamh i nGaeilge, ag soláthar oiliúint leanúnach Ghaeilge mar chuid den fhorbairt ghairmiúil.
- Ba chóir do gach údarás áitiúil coibhéis Oifigeach Forbartha amháin lánaimseartha a cheapadh ar chóir dó/di freagracht a bheith air/uirthi as an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn agus as dul i gcomhairle agus i dteagmháil le pobal na Gaeilge.
- Tá treoir shoiléir agus comhairle shuntasach de dhíth lena chinntiú go bhfuil comhlachtaí poiblí ábalta cibé freagrachtaí a thugtar dóibh a chomhlíonadh.
- Ba chóir an tseirbhís a bheith ar aon chaighdeán leis an Bhéarla.
- Caithfear an pobal a chur ar an eolas faoi na seirbhísí atá ar fáil dóibh i nGaeilge.
- Ba chóir do Chomhlachtaí Poiblí eolas a chur ar bhonn práinne ar ionaid agus dlúithe pobail labhartha Gaeilge. D'fhéadfaí taifead a fheidhmiú ar ghrúpaí
- Correspondence in Irish should be replied to in Irish.
- Services, signage and literature should be published in both Irish and English throughout all public bodies and councils. Corporate identity should be presented bilingually, including stationery, signage, business cards, website etc.
- Any provisions should be extended to all Non Departmental Public Bodies and North-South Bodies.
- The functions set out in the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 may be an appropriate model to follow.
- A joined-up approach is needed between the various sections of the Bill. Some felt that this section on Public Bodies was not clear as to whether for example, signage is included, and if so, which type of signage and where. Some suggested that drawing from *The Irish Language Act NI - 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue* might help strengthen these proposals.
- Authorising and encouraging staff to learn Irish to a sufficient level to carry out their work duties in Irish, providing ongoing Irish language training as part of professional development.
- Every local authority should employ at least one full-time equivalent Irish Language Development Officer who should have responsibility for promoting the Irish language and consulting and liaising with the Irish language community.
- Clear guidance and substantial advice is needed to ensure that public bodies are able to fulfil whatever responsibilities are given to them.
- Service should be on a par with English.
- The public must be made aware of services that are available to them in Irish.
- Public Bodies should become aware urgently of the location and density of Irish-speaking communities. A register of individual groups and organisations known

agus eagraíochtaí aonair ar fearr leo Gaeilge a úsáid agus ba chóir gur i nGaeilge a bheadh gach cumarsáid leo.

- Ní gá gach doiciméad oifigiúil a aistriú go Gaeilge.
- Ba chóir go mbeadh na forálacha céanna ann do gach roinn.
- Ba chóir oiliúint Ghaeilge a chur ar fáil do státseirbhísigh le cuidiú leo a ndualgais a chomhlíonadh lena chinntiú go mbíonn soláthar caighdeánaithe seirbhíse i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla araon.
- Chaithfeadh gach comhlacht poiblí polasaí Gaeilge a chruthú le cuidiú oifig an Choimisinéara.
- Mheas roinnt freagróirí gur tábhachtach go mbeadh forálacha ann lena chinntiú go gcuireann comhlachtaí poiblí an soláthar seirbhíse acu in oiriúint do riachtanais na bpobal labhartha Gaeilge.
- Measadh gur chóir go gcinnteofaí tríd an Bhille, ar a laghad ar bith, go gcuirfí d'iallach ar gach comhlacht poiblí a sholáthraíonn seirbhísí nó a thacaíonn le páistí dar aois scoile plean a shocrú le seachadadh na seirbhísí sin trí mheán na Gaeilge a fheidhmiú - mar shampla seirbhísí óige bord oideachais, seirbhísí sláinte agus seirbhísí sóisialta, sábháilteacht bhóthair srl.
- Is gá an chiall atá le 'gníomhaíocht dhearfach' a shoiléiriú ós rud é gur foráil shainiúil í seo sa reachtaíocht um fhostaíocht chothrom.
- Ba chóir go mbeadh tagairt shoiléir ann do dhualgais atá á dtabhairt d'eagraíochtaí eanáil phríobháideach a bhfuil conarthaí acu seirbhísí poiblí a sholáthar.

### *Tuairimí in éadan cuimsiú forálacha do chomhlachtaí poiblí*

3.52 Léiríonn na tuairimí seo a leanas an dearcadh a bhí acu sin a bhí in éadan na dtograí a bhain le Comhlachtaí Poiblí

- Céatadán íseal den daonra a labhraíonn Gaeilge ar bhonn laethúil agus tá Béarla fosta ag gach duine a bhfuil Gaeilge acu.
- Ní fhéadfaí an costas a chosaint, go háirithe nuair a chuirtear na deacrachtaí airgeadais reatha san áireamh.

to prefer to use Irish could be established and all communications with them should be in Irish.

- Every official document does not need to be translated.
- There should be the same provisions for all departments.
- Irish language training should be provided for civil servants to help them fulfil their duties to ensure that the service provision is standardised in both Irish and English.
- Every public body would have to create a policy for Irish with the help of the Commissioner's office.
- Some felt it important that provision should be made to ensure that public bodies target their service delivery to the needs of the Irish-speaking communities.
- It was felt that the Bill should ensure that, as a minimum, all public bodies that deliver services or support school-age children should be obliged to put in place a plan to implement the delivery of these services through Irish – for example, education board youth services, health and social services, road safety etc.
- The meaning of 'affirmative action' needs clarified given that this is a specific provision within fair employment legislation.
- There should be clear reference to duties being placed on private sector organisations that are contracted to supply public services.

### *Comments against the inclusion of provisions for public bodies*

3.52 The following were typical of the views of those who against the Public Bodies proposal:

- Low percentage of the population use Irish daily and anyone who speaks Irish can also speak English.
- The cost would be unjustified, especially given the current financial difficulties.

- B'fhearr a d'fhorbrófaí meas ar an Ghaeilge trí bhearta nach bhfuil aon toirmeasc ag baint leo.
- Dheighlfeadh sé an pobal agus bheadh caidreamh pobail thíos leis.
- Níl ann ach leithscéal le poist a chur ar fáil do lucht na Gaeilge.

## SCÉIMEANNA TEANGA

3.53 I ndiadh chruthú phost an Choimisinéara agus na ndualgas ar chomhlachtaí poiblí le seirbhísí a sholáthar i nGaeilge, 94.3% (6,926) a d'aontaigh gur chóir scéimeanna teanga a thabhairt isteach. Bheadh d'iallach ar gach comhlacht poiblí scéimeanna a chruthú ina leagfaí amach mar a sholáthrófaí seirbhísí Gaeilge. Bheadh gach scéim bunaithe ar an mhéid atá de dhíth orthu siúd a bhíonn ag plé leis na comhlachtaí poiblí aonair agus chomhaontófaí agus d'fhaomhfaí iad tríd an Choimisinéir Gaeilge. Léirigh freagróirí réimse tuairimí ina raibh roinnt téamaí comhchoiteanna.

### *Monatóireacht na scéimeanna*

3.54 Measadh gur chóir go mbeadh athbhreithniú leanúnach ar siúl ag an Choimisinéir Gaeilge ar an dul chun cinn atá á dhéanamh ag comhlachtaí poiblí, lena chinntiú go bhfaigheann na comhlachtaí comhairle thráthúil, ábhartha nó cibé tacaíocht atá de dhíth lena spriocanna a ghnóthú, .i. ní chaithfeadh siad fanacht go dtí deireadh scéime le cuidiú agus comhairle a fháil.

### *Comhairle do chomhlachtaí poiblí*

3.55 Mhol roinnt freagróirí gur chóir go mbeadh córas comhairleach ar fáil le comhairle agus treoir phraiticiúil a thairiscint do chomhlachtaí poiblí. Mheas cuid mhór freagróirí nár leor scéim a aontú agus gur chuidiú don chomhlacht poiblí cuidiú, comhairle phraiticiúil agus samplaí de dhea-chleachtas a chur ar fáil lena scéim a sholáthar go héifeachtach. Rinne cuid acu an cás gurbh é an toradh a bheadh air seo nach dtiocfadh leis na comhlachtaí poiblí leithscéal a dhéanamh as gan a gcuid scéimeanna a sholáthar.

- Respect for the Irish language would be better developed through non-proscriptive measures.
- It would be divisive in terms of community relations.
- This is just 'jobs for the boys'.

## LANGUAGE SCHEMES

3.53 Following on from the creation of a Commissioner and the duties on public bodies to provide services in Irish, 94.3% (6,926) agreed that language schemes should be introduced. All public bodies would be required to produce schemes, which set out how Irish language services will be provided. Each scheme would be based on what is required by those that deal with the individual public bodies and will be agreed and approved by the Irish Language Commissioner. Respondents provided a range of comments with some common themes.

### *Monitoring the schemes*

3.54 It was felt that there should be an ongoing review by the Irish Language Commissioner of the progress made by public bodies, to ensure that the bodies receive timely, relevant, advice or whatever support is needed in order to achieve their targets, i.e. they wouldn't have to wait until the conclusion of a scheme in order to receive help and advice.

### *Advice for public bodies*

3.55 Respondents suggested that an advisory system should be available to offer practical advice and guidance to public bodies. Many felt that agreeing a scheme was not enough and the provision of practical help, advice and examples of best practice would assist the public body to deliver its scheme effectively. Some argued that this would mean that public bodies could not be make excuses for not delivering their schemes.

## *Cearta Teanga*

- 3.56 Mhol roinnt freagróirí gur chóir go n-áireofaí leis na tograí réimse leathan de chearta ráthaithe a chruthófaí mar chuid dhílis den Bhille. Measadh fosta nach bhfuil go leor eolais ar fáil sa doiciméad comhairliúcháin faoin Sceideal molta agus faoi na comhlachtaí poiblí ba chóir a chuimsiú ann. Rinneadh tagairt don chur síos a rinneadh in *The Irish Language Act – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue/Acht na Gaeilge - 2<sup>ú</sup> Eisiúint*. Faoi mar a luadh san anailís ar rannán na bhfreagairtí ar an Choimisinéir Teanga. Mheas roinnt freagróirí gur chóir Bord úr a chruthú le scéimeanna a chomhaontú leis na comhlachtaí siúd nach bhfuil luaite sa scéim. Measadh go tréan nár chóir gur fhreagracht de chuid an Choimisinéara Gaeilge é seo.

## *Caighdeáin Teanga*

- 3.57 Mhol Conradh na Gaeilge caighdeáin teanga a thabhairt isteach seachas scéimeanna teanga, mar a tharla sa Bhreatain Bheag. Bhí cuid mhór tacaíochta ann do dhearcadh Chonradh na Gaeilge; beagnach sé mhíle freagróirí a d'aontaigh gur chóir caighdeáin teanga a úsáid mar chuidiú leis an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn sa saol poiblí. (Rinne Conradh na Gaeilge a leagan féin den cheistneoir comhairliúcháin a dháileadh, ina raibh ceist bhreise, 'Ar chóir Caighdeáin Teanga a úsáid mar chuidiú leis an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn sa saol poiblí?' Féach larscribhinn A.)
- 3.58 Roimhe seo, d'úsáideadh an Bhreatain Bheag córas scéimeanna teanga agus cé gur measadh iad a bheith éifeachtach, go dtí pointe, maidir le feasacht agus úsáid mhéadaithe na Breatnaise a éascú, dearbhaíodh in 2011 go rabhthas ag dul i dtreo na gcaighdeán.<sup>3</sup> Chiallódh córas caighdeán go mbeadh forais phoiblí á gcatagóiriú agus go sannfaí do gach catagóir liosta seirbhísí ar chóir iad a sholáthar trí mheán an Gaeilge. Mar shampla, bheadh gach institiúid tríú leibhéal i gcatagóir amháin agus bheadh liostaí seirbhísí Gaeilge a bheadh ar fáil do mhic léinn, beag beann ar cén ollscoil/coláiste ar a mbeadh siad.<sup>4</sup>

## *Language rights*

- 3.56 Some suggested the proposals should include a wide range of guaranteed rights created within the Bill. It was also felt that there is not enough information in the consultation document about the proposed Schedule and which public bodies would be included in it. Reference was made to the description given in *The Irish Language Act – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue*. As was mentioned in the analysis of the Language Commissioner responses section, some felt that a new Board should be created to agree schemes with those bodies not mentioned in the Schedule. It was strongly felt that this should not be the Irish Language Commissioner's responsibility.

## *Language Standards*

- 3.57 Conradh na Gaeilge advocated the introduction of language standards instead of language schemes, as has occurred in Wales. There was a lot of support for Conradh na Gaeilge's position; almost six thousand respondents agreed that language standards should be used to help with the promotion of the Irish language in public life. (Conradh na Gaeilge distributed its own version of the consultation questionnaire, which contained an additional question, 'Should Language Standards be used to help with the promotion of the Irish language in public life?' See Annex A.)
- 3.58 Wales had previously used a system of language schemes and, although these were considered to have been effective, up to a point, in facilitating the increased awareness and use of the Welsh language, the move to standards was confirmed in 2011.<sup>3</sup> A system of standards would mean that public bodies would be categorised and a list of the services that should be provided through Irish assigned to each category. For example, all third level institutions would be in one category and there would be a list of services through Irish that are available to students, no matter what university/college they attend.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

<sup>4</sup> More information on the use of standards in Wales is available at:

<http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/consultation/141106-consultation-welsh-language-standards-en.pdf>

3.59 Tá dhá phríomhbhuntaíste a bhaineann le caighdeáin teanga seachas scéimeanna teanga sainaitheanta. I dtosach báire, is soiléire agus is comhleanúnaí na caighdeáin; bíonn an pobal níos cinnte faoi na seirbhísí ar féidir a bheith ag dúil leo ó chomhlachtaí poiblí agus, mar sin de, is é is dóichí go n-iarrfaidh siad na seirbhísí a úsáid. Lena chois sin, chealódh caighdeáin an oibleagáid atá ar gach comhlacht poiblí a scéim féin a dhearadh agus a fheidhmiú, rud a laghdódh an t-ualach ar chomhlachtaí poiblí chomh maith leis an mhaorlathas a bhíonn de dhíth le scéimeanna a fhaomhadh agus a mhonatóiriú.

### *Tuairimí eile a thacaíonn le tabhairt isteach scéimeanna teanga*

3.60 I measc freagairtí coitianta eile bhí:

- Ba chóir go mbeadh córas comhairleach, atá idir phraiticiúil agus úsáideach, ar fáil do chomhlachtaí poiblí.
- Tá scéimeanna teanga tábhachtach leis an leibhéal cuí seirbhíse don Ghaeilge a leagan amach.
- Caithfidh scéimeanna teanga a bheith daingean agus ba chóir tréimhse ghearr ama a bheith i gceist - trí bliana ar a mhéad.
- Mhol roinnt freagróirí gurbh úsáideach *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue (Acht na Gaeilge do TÉ – Eisiúint 2)*, de chuid POBAL mar chuidiú leis na comhlachtaí agus na ranna a bheadh sa sceideal a leagan amach agus cé na freagrachtaí a bheadh orthu faoin Acht. Sa doiciméad seo fosta tá cur síos mion ar scéimeanna/pleananna Gaeilge a bheadh úsáideach.
- Níor chóir go mbeifí ag dúil leis an Choimisinéir Teanga scéimeanna/pleananna Gaeilge a fhaomhadh agus a mhonatóiriú. Ba chóir Bord a chruthú le caighdeáin a chomhaontú le comhlachtaí. Ba chóir go n-athbhreithneodh an Coimisinéir Teanga ar bhonn leanúnach an dul chun cinn a dhéanann comhlachtaí poiblí, lena chinntiú go gcuirfear ar fáil cibé comhairle nó tacaíocht bhreise a bheas de dhíth le go ngnóthóidh siad a spriocanna.

3.59 Two main advantages of language standards over language schemes have been identified. Firstly, standards are clearer and more consistent; members of the public are more certain of about the services they can expect from public bodies and, therefore, are more likely to ask to use these services. Secondly, standards would remove the obligation on each public body to design and implement its own scheme, which eases the burden on public bodies and reduces the bureaucracy required to approve and monitor schemes.

### *Other comments in support of the introduction of language schemes*

3.60 Other common responses included:

- There should be an advisory system available to public bodies, which is practical and useful.
- Language schemes are important to set out the appropriate level of service for Irish.
- Language schemes need to be robust and over a short period – a maximum of three years.
- Some respondents suggested that POBAL's *The Irish Language Act – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue* would be useful in helping to set out the bodies and departments who would be in the Schedule and what their responsibilities would be under the Act. This document also contains a detailed description of schemes/Irish language plans that may be of use.
- The Language Commissioner should not be expected to approve and monitor language schemes/standards. A Board should be created to agree standards with bodies. There should be an ongoing review of the progress made by public bodies by the Language Commissioner, to ensure that whatever advice or additional support is needed in order to achieve their targets is provided.

### *Tuairimí in éadan tabhairt isteach scéimeanna teanga*

3.61 Léiríonn na tuairimí seo a leanas an dearcadh a bhí acu sin a bhí in éadan Scéimeanna Teanga:

- Ní oibríonn scéimeanna teanga. Is caighdeán bhunúsacha seirbhíse atá de dhíth, mar atá amhlaidh sa Bhreatain Bheag.
- Níor oibrigh scéimeanna teanga sa deisceart - tá ag teip orthu gach áit.
- Ní fhéadfaí an costas a chosaint, go háirithe nuair a chuirtear na deacrachtaí reatha airgeadais san áireamh.
- B'úsáidí meastóireacht leanúnach ar dhul chun cinn i soláthar seirbhís Ghaeilge agus teacht níos réidhe a bheith ar chomhairle agus ar chuidiú do Chomhlachtaí Poiblí ná scéimeanna Gaeilge.
- Tacaíocht a chur ar fáil do gach duine an fheidhm atá ag Comhlachtaí Poiblí. Tá sé deacair ag ár seirbhísí reatha uilig freastal mar is cóir ar dhaoine.
- Is ar bhonn deonach amháin ba chóir scéimeanna teanga ar bith a sholáthar.
- Ba chóir do dhaoine ar mian leo Gaeilge a fhoghlaim é sin a dhéanamh trí chúrsaí teanga.
- D'fhéadfadh leithcheal ar gach teanga eile a úsáidtear i dTuaisceart Éireann a bheith i gceist le soláthar scéimeanna Gaeilge a bhfuil toirmeasc ag baint leo.

### LIMISTÉIR GHAELTACHTA

3.62 94.8% (7,024) a bhí bhfách le haitheantas agus cúnamh do cheantair Ghaeltachta sa tuaisceart. Leagfaí amach sa Bhille na coinníollacha le haitheantas oifigiúil a thabhairt do cheantar Ghaeltachta sa tuaisceart agus bheadh de chumhacht ag an Aire cuí ceantair úra Ghaeltachta a ainmniú agus teorainneacha ceantair reatha a shíneadh. Bheadh foráil ann leis na ceantair ainmnithe Ghaeltachta a chosaint agus a fhorbairt.

3.63 Tháinig roinnt ceisteanna agus téamaí comhchoiteanna aníos ón anailís ar na freagairtí comhairliúcháin.

### *Comments against the introduction of language schemes*

3.61 The following were typical opinions of those who disagreed with Language Schemes:

- Language schemes do not work. Basic standards of service are what are needed, as is the case in Wales.
- Language schemes did not work in the south – they are failing everywhere.
- The cost would be unjustified, especially given the current financial difficulties.
- Continuous assessment of progress in the provision of Irish-language service and the greater availability of advice and help for Public Bodies would be more useful than Irish language schemes.
- Public Bodies are for the purposes of providing support to all the people. All of our current services are over-stretched.
- Any language schemes should be provided on a voluntary basis only.
- Those who wish to learn the Irish language should do so via language courses.
- The provision of proscriptive Irish language schemes is potentially discriminatory against all other languages used in Northern Ireland.

### GAELTACHT AREAS

3.62 Recognition and assistance for Gaeltacht areas in the north got the approval of 94.8% (7,024). The conditions for giving official recognition to a Gaeltacht area in the north would be set out in the Bill and the appropriate Minister would have the power to designate new Gaeltacht areas and extend the boundaries of existing ones. There would be provision to protect and develop the designated Gaeltacht areas.

3.63 A number of common issues and themes emerged from the analysis of the consultation responses.



### *Sainmhíniú ar cheantar Gaeltachta*

- 3.64 Maíodh nach ionann an sainmhíniú ar 'cheantar Gaeltachta' ar fud na hÉireann. Measadh gur chóir na critéir trína sainmhíneofaí ceantar Gaeltachta a leagan amach go soiléir. Rinne roinnt freagróirí an cás gur chóir seirbhísí a bheith ar fáil do phobal na Gaeilge gach áit, in ionad iad a bheith teoranta do líon beag ceantair ainmnithe. Mar shampla, cé na seirbhísí a bheadh ar fáil do dhaoine a oibríonn nó a théann ar scoil i gceantar Gaeltachta ach atá ina gcónaí i gceantar eile? Dúradh go bhfuil a thuilleadh eolais agus smaointeoireachta de dhíth sula gcuimseofar na forálacha seo sa Bhillé.

### *'Moil' nó 'Aonaid'*

- 3.65 Mhol roinnt freagróirí gur ríthábhachtach nach gcuireann 'teorainneacha' srian ar cheantar ar bith mar gheall ar an áit a bhfuil sé suite. D'fhéadfaí 'moil' nó 'aonaid' Ghaeilge a úsáid in áit ceantair Ghaeltachta mar dhóigh leis an infheistíocht agus aitheantas riachtanach a thabhairt chuig ceantar gan gá ar bith le líne a tharraingt.

### *Critéir le ceantair Ghaeltachta a bhunú*

- 3.66 Mhol freagróirí gur chóir critéir shoiléire a leagan amach le ceantair Ghaeltachta a bhunú. Ba chóir céimeanna soiléire a leagan amach do cheantair ar mian leo an stádas seo a ghnóthú .i. critéir shoiléire nach gcuireann srian ná bac orthu agus a fhágann nach mbeidh deacrachtaí míchuí ag grúpaí agus iad ag iarraidh an stádas seo a ghnóthú. Nuair a bheas na critéir seo socraithe, ba chóir tacaíocht agus treoir a bheith ar fáil sa dóigh go dtig le ceantair oibriú i dtreo an stádas seo a ghnóthú. Ar an dóigh seo, is féidir teacht i dtír ar an chumas atá i gceantair leis an stádas a ghnóthú. Mura mbeadh an tacaíocht agus an treoir ar fáil, d'fhéadfadh sé tarlú nach mbeadh grúpaí in ann na critéir a chomhlíonadh leo féin.

### *Definition of a Gaeltacht area*

- 3.64 It was stated that what the definition of a 'Gaeltacht area' is not the same throughout Ireland. It was felt that the criteria by which a Gaeltacht area would be defined should be clearly set out. Some argued that services should be available to the Irish-speaking community everywhere, rather than being limited to a small number of designated areas. For example, what services would be available to people who work or go to school in a Gaeltacht area, but who live in another area? It was contended that more information and more thought are needed before these provisions are included in the Bill.

### *'Hubs' or 'Units'*

- 3.65 Some suggested that it is highly important that 'borders' do not restrict any areas because of where it happens to be located. 'Hubs' or Irish language 'units' could be used instead as a way to bring the necessary investment and recognition to an area without having to draw a line.

### *Criteria for establishing Gaeltacht areas*

- 3.66 Respondents suggested that clear criteria should be set out for establishing Gaeltacht areas. There should be clear steps set out for areas that would like to achieve this status, i.e. clear criteria that isn't restrictive and means that groups won't face undue difficulties when trying to achieve this status. Once these criteria are established, support and guidance should be available so that areas can work to achieve this status. In this way, the potential which exists in areas to achieve this status can be realised, whereas without this support and guidance, groups could find themselves in a situation where they cannot meet the criteria by themselves.

### *Pleanáil cheantair*

- 3.67 Cuireadh an tuairim in iúl gur chóir an tacaíocht don Ghaeilge a chuirtear ar fáil do na ceantair seo a chur in oiriúint do cheantair éagsúla - is é is dóichí nach ionann an tacaíocht a bheadh de dhíth i gceantar amháin agus a bheadh de dhíth i gceantar eile, go háirithe maidir leis an deighilt idir cathair agus tuath. I dtaca le ceantar ar bith a fhaigheann an stádas seo, ba chóir go mbeadh de dhualgas ar gach údarás a bhfuil ról acu i bpleanáil an tsoláthair seirbhísí sna ceantair seo, riachtanais shonracha phobal na Gaeilge sa cheantar sin a chur san áireamh. Chuimseofaí leis seo cinntí a bheadh le déanamh maidir le hoideachas, seirbhísí óige, seirbhísí comhairle áitiúil, srl.

### *Tuairimí eile a thacaíonn le haitheantas ceantair Ghaeltachta*

- 3.68 Thug freagróirí réimse tuairimí ar thábhacht ceantair Ghaeltachta, lena n-áirítear smaointe ar fhorálacha eile:
- Níl mionsonraí ar bith ann ar an tslat tomhais le 'ceantar Ghaeltachta' a roghnú. Ba chóir seirbhísí a bheith ar fáil do phobal na Gaeilge ar fud an dlínse. Tá cainteoirí Gaeilge ina gcónaí ar fud an tuaiscirt.
  - Ní hionann 'Ceantar Ghaeltachta' sna sé chontae agus sna sé chontae fichead - tá níos mó mionsonraí de dhíth.
  - Ní gá gur ceantair thíreolaíochta iad seo; ba chóir iad a bheith bunaithe ar phobail nó ar mhoil. m.sh. pobal scoile, pobal Cultúrlainne srl.
  - Bheadh an-fhéidearthachtaí turasóireachta agus geilleagair ag baint leo.
  - Is tábhachtach ó thaobh forbairt teanga de, ceantair ina labhraíonn céatadán suntasach den phobal Gaeilge a aithint. Is ionann iad agus pobail bheo.
  - Bheadh gá le hacmhainní, cosaintí agus bearta tacaíochta a bheith ar fáil le bonn inmharthana a chur faoi ghluaiseachtaí agus forbairtí áitiúla agus réigiúnacha den chineál seo le cois na dúshraithe infreastruchtúir agus eacnamaíochta is fóirsteanáí.

### *Area planning*

- 3.67 The view was expressed that support for Irish, which is made available for these areas, should be tailored for different areas – it is likely that the support that would be needed in one area wouldn't be what is needed in another area, especially in relation to an urban/rural divide. For any area that receives this status, all authorities with roles in planning for the provision of services in these areas should have a duty to take into consideration the particular needs of the Irish language community in that area. This would include decisions to be made in relation to education, youth services, local council services, etc.

### *Other comments in support of recognition of Gaeltacht areas*

- 3.68 Respondents provided a range of views on the importance of Gaeltacht areas including thoughts on other provisions:
- There are no details on what the yardstick is to select a 'Gaeltacht area'. There should be services available to the Irish-speaking community throughout the jurisdiction. There are Irish speakers living all over the north.
  - A 'Gaeltacht Area' is not the same in the six counties as in the twenty-six counties – more detail is required.
  - These should not necessarily be geographical areas; they could be based on communities or hubs, e.g. school community, Cultúrlann community etc.
  - They would have great tourism and economic potential.
  - Recognising areas where a significant percentage of the community can speak Irish is important for language development. They represent living communities.
  - Resources, funding, safeguards and support measures would need to be available to place such local or regional revival movements and developments on a viable footing as well as the most suitable infrastructural and economic foundation.

- An t-údarás cuí a bheith ag an Aire le teorainneacha ceantair Ghaeltachta a shocrú agus an t-údarás le stádas oifigiúil Gaeltachta a bhronnadh ar cheantair sa tuaisceart.
- Ba chóir na céimeanna atá de dhíth le stádas Gaeltachta a ghnóthú a bheith soiléir ach gan iad a bheith chomh dian sin go gcuirfeadh siad bac ar ghrúpa a bheadh ag obair i dtreo an stádas seo a ghnóthú.
- Ba chóir breithniú ar na moltaí faoin cheist seo in *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue (Acht na Gaeilge TÉ - 2ú Eisiúint)* de chuid POBAL
- Ba chóir teagmháil níos fearr a bheith idir ceantair thraidisiúnta Ghaeltachta agus ceantair úra Ghaeltachta i gceantair chathrach, thuaithe agus bhaile mór.
- Is tábhachtach sainmhíniú beacht a thabhairt ar cad is ceantar Gaeltachta ann.
- Ba chóir don Fheidhmeannas cruthú Comhlachas Tithíochta úr a éascú mar chuidiú le pobail labhartha Gaeilge a chothú.
- Vóta a ghlacadh i gceantair agus tuairimí uile an phobail a bhreithniú.
- Ba chóir gach seirbhís phoiblí sna ceantair Ghaeltachta a sholáthar trí mheán na Gaeilge, lena n-áirítear scoileanna, seirbhís phóilíneachta, siopaí agus eaglaisí.
- Ba chóir do na húdaráis bhainteacha, comhairlí agus eile dul i mbun pleanála ar bhonn ceantair ar riachtanais teanga an cheantair.
- Ba chóir go mbeadh an chumhacht ag an Choimisinéir stádas Gaeltachta a bhaint de cheantar.
- D'fhéadfadh sé go mbeadh gá le treoirlínte sainiúla don phleanáil laistigh de cheantair Ghaeltachta.
- Ba chóir anailís agus taighde sochtheangeolaíoch a úsáid lena chinntiú go n-éiríonn leis an chur chuige seo i dtaca le cruthú pobail Ghaeilge de.
- Ba chóir tumchúrsaí a bheith ar fáil dóibh siúd ar mian leo Gaeilge a fhoghlaim nó a gcuid Gaeilge a fheabhsú.
- The Minister to have the appropriate authority to decide on the boundaries of Gaeltacht areas and authority to grant official Gaeltacht area status on areas within the north.
- The steps required to achieve Gaeltacht status should be clear and not strict so that difficulties cannot be placed in the way of a group working towards achieving this status.
- Considerations should be given to recommendations on this issue in POBAL's *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue*.
- There should be greater contact between traditional Gaeltacht areas and new Gaeltacht areas in urban, rural and town settings.
- It is important to give an accurate definition of a Gaeltacht area.
- The Executive should allow for the creation of a new Housing Association to help build Irish speaking communities.
- Take polls in areas and consider all public opinion.
- All public services in the Gaeltacht areas should be delivered through Irish, including schools, police service, shops and churches.
- The relevant authorities, councils and others should carry out area planning on the language needs of the area.
- The Commissioner should have the power to remove Gaeltacht status from an area.
- There may need to be specific guidelines for planning within Gaeltacht areas.
- Sociolinguistic analysis and research should be used to ensure that this approach is successful as far as creating Irish-speaking communities is concerned.
- There should be funded immersion courses for those who wish to learn or improve their Irish.

### *Tuairimí in éadan aitheantas do cheantair Ghaeltachta*

- 3.69 Léiríonn na tuairimí seo a leanas an dearcadh a bhí acu sin a bhí in éadan an togra seo:
- Ní fhéadfaí an costas a chosaint, go háirithe nuair a chuirtear na deacrachtaí reatha airgeadais san áireamh.
  - Tá barraíocht deighilte ann cheana féin. Is tábhachtach go mbíonn gach ceantar ar oscailt agus forbhfáilteach do chách.
  - Is togra é atá deighilteach ó thaobh na polaitíochta, an chultúir agus na sochaí de.
  - D'fhéadfaí an fhoráil chéanna a chur ar fáil do na pobail Ultaise / Polainnise / Sírise
  - Chuirfeadh sé turasóirí ó dhoras in áit iad a mhealladh.
  - Más main le ceantair labhartha Gaeilge ceantair phobail a chruthú, ba chóir dóibh é a dhéanamh trína gcuid maoiniú féin nó trí iarratas ar mhaoiniú faoi mar a dhéanfadh lucht na hUltaise nó aon ghrúpa teanga eile.
  - Níor éirigh go rómhaith le cruthú ceantair Ghaeltachta in Éirinn óir ba é an toradh a bhí ar dhea-mhúineadh dúchais an Ghaeil gur labhair bunadh na háite Béarla le fáilte a chur roimh chuairteoirí agus iad a chuimsiú sa phobal.

### LOGAINMNEACHA

- 3.70 95.9% (7,112) dóibh sin a chur barúil in iúl a bhí i bhfách le cuimsiú forálacha i leith logainmneacha Gaeilge. Chuimseofaí leis na forálacha an sainmhíniú ar logainm. Thabharfaí aitheantas oifigiúil agus dlíthiúil do logainmneacha Gaeilge agus an fhreagracht astu ar an Choimisinéir Gaeilge. Chuimseofaí logainmneacha Gaeilge ar léarscáileanna agus i bhfoilseacháin oifigiúla agus thabharfaí comharthaí dátheangacha bóthair isteach ar a mbeadh an Ghaeilge agus an Béarla ar comhstádas.

### *Comments against recognition of Gaeltacht areas*

- 3.69 The following were typical opinions and views of those who were against this proposal:
- The cost would be unjustified, especially given the current financial difficulties.
  - There is too much segregation already. It is important that all areas remain open and feel comfortable to everyone.
  - It is a politically, culturally and socially divisive proposal.
  - The same provision could be provided to the Ulster Scots / Polish / Chinese communities.
  - It would discourage tourism, rather than encourage it.
  - If Irish speaking areas wish to form community areas then they should do with self-funding or funding applications as should Ulster-Scots or any other language group.
  - The introduction of the Gaeltacht areas in Éire has not been very successful, because the natural courtesy of the Irish has led to the local people speaking English to include and welcome visitors.

### PLACE-NAMES

- 3.70 The inclusion of provisions for place-names in Irish gained the support of 95.9% (7,112) of those who commented. The provisions would include the definition of a place-name. Place-names in Irish would be given official and legal recognition with responsibility resting with the Irish Language Commissioner. Irish language place-names would be included in official maps and publications and bilingual road signs would be introduced that would give the Irish language parity with English.

### *Tionscadal Logainmneacha*

- 3.71 Mheas cuid mhór freagróirí gur chóir feachtas feasachta a bheith ann faoi logainmneacha dúchais le go léireofar an tábhacht atá leo dar leis an phobal agus maidir leis na naisc atá ag an teanga le pobail áitiúla i ngach contae dá bhfuil tagairt sa reachtaíocht. Rinneadh go leor tráchta ar an 'Tionscadal Logainmneacha' ar Ollscoil na Banríona, Béal Feirste. Dúirt cuid mhór freagróirí gur chóir é a athbhunú lena chuid oibre a chur i gcrích ar thaighde agus ar aistriúchán logainmneacha. Measadh gur don tionscadal seo ba chóir an fhreagracht a thabhairt as breithiúnas agus cinneadh a dhéanamh faoin aistriúchán ar na logainmneacha ba chóir a úsáid go hoifigiúil.

### *Ainmneacha agus seoltaí Gaeilge*

- 3.72 Measadh gur chóir do gach comhlacht poiblí, mar chuid d'aitheantas oifigiúil na Gaeilge, ainmneacha agus seoltaí Gaeilge a ghlacadh, logainmneacha agus sráidainmneacha san áireamh. Léirigh roinnt freagróirí go bhfuil freagracht ar údarais áitiúla, faoin Chairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh glacadh le leaganacha traidisiúnta de logainmneacha agus de shloinnthe teaghlaigh agus gur chóir é seo a chuimsiú sna tograí seo.

### *Seirbhísí Postais*

- 3.73 Moladh gur tábhachtach go bhféachann *Royal Mail* nó eagrais poist ar bith eile lena chinntiú nach mbíonn moill ar bith ar sheachadadh poist mar gheall ar úsáid logainmneacha nó seoltaí Gaeilge.

### *Tuairimí eile a thacaíonn le logainmneacha Gaeilge*

- 3.74 Léiríonn na tuairimí seo a leanas an dearcadh a bhí ag roinnt freagróirí (lena n-áirítear forálacha ar bith eile) a bhí i bhfách leis an togra seo:
- Tá tábhacht le logainmneacha ó pheirspictíocht phobail, chultúir agus staire.

### *Place-Name Project*

- 3.71 Many respondents felt that there should be an awareness campaign on native place-names in order to illustrate their importance to the public and the links that the language has with local communities in every county referred to in any legislation. The 'Place-Name Project' at Queen's University, Belfast received much comment with many thinking it should be reinstated to complete its work on the research and the translation of place-names. It was felt that this Project should be provided with the responsibility of adjudicating and determining the translation of the place-name to be officially used.

### *Irish names and addresses*

- 3.72 It was felt that as part of the official recognition of the Irish language, all public bodies should accept names and addresses in Irish, including place-names and street names. Respondents highlighted that local authorities have a responsibility under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages to accept traditional forms of place-names and family surnames, and this should be included in these proposals.

### *Postal services*

- 3.73 It was suggested that it is important that Royal Mail or any other postal organisation works to ensure that there is no delay on the delivery of post because of the use of place-names or addresses in Irish.

### *Other comments in support of Irish place-names*

- 3.74 The following are typical views expressed by some respondents (including any other provisions) in favour of this proposal:
- Place-names are important from a community, cultural and historical perspective.

- Caithfear an reachtaíocht a bhaineann le sráidainmneacha a leasú, de réir roinnt freagróirí. Dúirt cuid acu gur chóir deireadh a chur le riail an dá thrian maidir le comharthaí dátheangacha in eastáit agus ar shráideanna.
- Ba chóir go mbeadh úsáid logainmneacha cosúil leis an úsáid sa Bhreatain Bheag.
- Dá gcuirfí an Ghaeilge i láthair níos mó daoine ar an dóigh seo, b'fhéidir go maolófaí an faitíos atá ar dhaoine fúithi.
- Feachtas poiblíochta/scéim feasachta faoin chiall atá le logainmneacha Gaeilge le suim daoine a spreagadh.
- Ba chóir go mbeadh leagan Gaeilge de logainmneacha ar fáil ar léarscáileanna (Google Maps san áireamh).
- Is tábhachtach go bhféachann *Royal Mail* nó eagras poist ar bith eile lena chinntiú nach mbíonn moill ar bith ar sheachadadh poist mar gheall ar úsáid logainmneacha nó seoltaí Gaeilge.
- Ba chóir breithniú ar na moltaí ar an cheist seo in *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue (Acht na Gaeilge TÉ - 2<sup>ú</sup> eisiúint)* de chuid POBAL.
- Ba chóir forálacha a bhaineann le comharthaíocht Ghaeilge/dhátheangach de gach cineál a chuimsiú sa Bhille seo chomh maith lena dhéanamh níos fusa ainmneacha agus seoltaí Gaeilge a úsáid. Caithfidh *Royal Mail* a bheith mar chuid den phlé ionas gur féidir teacht ar dhóigheanna le húsáid ainmneacha agus seoltaí Gaeilge a éascú.
- Ba chóir é seo a shíneadh le comharthaíocht bhóthair eile a chuimsiú m.sh. géill slí, stad srl.
- Má tá logainmneacha le bheith ar taispeáint i nGaeilge, níor cheadmhach go nglacfadh sé áit an ghnáthainm ná tús áite a bheith aige ar chomharthaíocht ar bith.
- Níor chóir gur le logainmneacha amháin a bhainfeadh an fhoráil seo ach go mbeadh sí i bhfeidhm fosta maidir le comharthaí topagrafacha eile fosta.
- Ba chóir go n-éascófaí sa reachtaíocht logainmneacha dátheangacha mar a mbíonn tacaíocht on phobal le hé seo a chosaint.
- The legislation regarding street names needs to be amended according to some respondents. Some said the two-thirds rule should be done away with for bilingual signs in estates and on streets.
- The use of place-names should be similar to Wales.
- More exposure to Irish in this way might reduce the fearfulness of Irish.
- A publicity campaign/ awareness scheme about the meaning of Irish place-names to excite people's interest.
- Maps (including Google Maps) should have the Irish version of place-names available.
- It is important that Royal Mail or any other company work to ensure that there is no delay to provision of mail where Irish language place-names or addresses are in use.
- The recommendations on this issue in POBAL's *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue* need to be considered.
- Provisions regarding Irish language/bilingual signage of all sorts should be included in this Bill, as well as making it easier to use Irish language names and addresses. Royal Mail must be included in the discussion so that ways of facilitating the use of Irish language names and addresses can be found.
- This should be extended to include other road signage e.g. géill slí (give way), stad (stop) etc.
- If place-names are to be displayed in Irish, the name must not be permitted to either replace the customary name, or take priority on any signage.
- The provisions should not be restricted to place-names but also make provision for other topographical indicators.
- The legislation should facilitate bilingual place-names where there is community support to justify this.

- Ba chóir foráil a bheith sa Bhille le teacht ar mheicníocht le foireann a aimsiú do Thionscadal Logainmneacha Thuaisceart Éireann le cur ar chumas an Tionscadail leanúint ar aghaidh agus a chuid oibre a chur i gcrích.

### *Tuairimí in éadan logainmneacha Gaeilge*

3.75 Léiríonn na tuairimí seo a leanas an dearcadh a bhí acu sin a bhí in éadan an togra seo:

- Ní fhéadfaí an costas a chosaint, go háirithe nuair a chuirtear na deacrachtaí reatha airgeadais san áireamh.
- Ní bhainfeadh ach sciar beag den daonra tairbhe as seo.
- Ní gá tosú ag athainmniú áiteanna i nGaeilge.
- Ba chúis mhór dheighilte é beart den chineál seo agus caidreamh pobail a pholarú a thuilleadh i dTuaisceart Éireann an toradh a d'fhéadfadh a bheith air. D'fhéadfaí é seo a léirthiscint mar rianú teorainneacha.
- D'fhéadfadh comharthaí ilteangacha a bheith ina gcúis le tasmí ag lucht úsáidte na mbóithre.
- Aontaíodh go bhféadfadh comharthaí 'Welcome to Northern Ireland' a bheith san iomad teangacha, an Gaeilge ar theanga acu.
- Bheadh an Ultais le cur leis fosta ar mhaithe le caidreamh pobail.

## OIDEACHAS

3.76 96.4% (7,144) de na freagróirí a mheas gur chóir go gcuimseofaí sa Bhille foráil a thabharfadh an ceart do pháistí a gcuid oideachais a fháil trí mheán na Gaeilge.

3.77 Léirigh cuid mhór freagróirí nach bhfuil sa doiciméad comhairliúcháin ach líne amháin faoin oideachas agus mhaígh gur chóir forálacha cuimsitheacha ar oideachas a bheith sa Bhille. Mhol cuid acu gur chóir don Bhille tarraingt as *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue (Acht na Gaeilge TÉ - 2<sup>ú</sup> Eisiúint)* ina gcumhdaítear gach céim den chóras oideachais le cois theagasc na Gaeilge i scoileanna Béarla.

- Provision should be included in the Bill to find a mechanism to staff the Northern Ireland Place-Name Project, in order to allow the Project to continue and complete its work.

### *Comments against Irish place-names*

3.75 The following were typical views of those who were against this proposal:

- The cost would be unjustified, especially given the current financial difficulties.
- Low proportion of the population would benefit from this.
- It is not necessary to start renaming places in Irish.
- Such a measure would be highly divisive and seek to further polarise community relations in Northern Ireland. This could be interpreted as territorial marking.
- Multi-language signs have the potential to cause accidents for road users.
- Agree that 'Welcome to Northern Ireland' signs could be in multiple languages, of which one could be Irish.
- Ulster Scots would need to be added as well for the benefit of community relations.

## EDUCATION

3.76 It was believed by 96.4% (7,144) of respondents that the Bill should include a provision that would give children the right to receive their education through the Irish language.

3.77 Many highlighted that the consultation document contained only one line about education and contended that the Bill should have comprehensive provisions for education. Some suggested that the Bill's proposals should draw on *The Irish Language Act – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue*, which covers every stage in the education system as well as the teaching of Irish in English-medium schools.

### *An ceart ar an Ghaelscolaíocht*

- 3.78 Chuir cuid mhór freagróirí fáilte roimh an togra faoin cheart ar an Ghaelscolaíocht a ráthú. Measadh go gcuirfí deireadh, mar gheall ar an tagairt don cheart seo sa Bhille, le débhrí ar bith atá ann faoi láthair. Mhaígh roinnt eile gurbh ann cheana féin don cheart ar oideachas trí mheán na Gaeilge, bunaithe ar fhasaigh idirnáisiúnta atá socraithe le tamall anuas.<sup>5</sup>
- 3.79 Measadh go raibh deacrachtaí ann go fóill, d'ainneoin an dualgais a cuireadh ar an Roinn Oideachais an Ghaelscolaíocht a spreagadh agus a éascú<sup>6</sup>, dóibh siúd ar mian leo oideachas a fháil trí mheán na Gaeilge. Le tabhairt faoi na húdair imní seo, maítear go bhfuil gá le reachtaíocht shainiúil i leith na Gaelscolaíochta.

### *An Ghaelscolaíocht a 'spreagadh agus a éascú'*

- 3.80 Rinneadh an chás gur chóir an dualgas reachtúil atá ar an Roinn Oideachais an Ghaelscolaíocht 'a spreagadh agus a éascú' a leathnú le go gcuimseofar comhlachtaí oideachais ar bith atá á maoiniú ag an Roinn Oideachais.

### *Sainriachtanais oideachais*

- 3.81 Bhí tacaíocht láidir ann do sholáthar cuí sainriachtanais oideachais i nGaelscoileanna, mar atá sé ar fáil i scoileanna Béarla. Ba chóir sainaonaid a bheith ann mar a dtig le páistí de chuid earnáil na Gaelscolaíochta a bhfuil sainriachtanais oideachais acu tacaíocht shonrach shainoiriúnaithe a rochtain trí mheán na Gaeilge.

### *Teangacha breise*

- 3.82 Mheas cuid mhór freagróirí gur chóir go n-aithneofaí an tábhacht atá le teangacha breise a fhoghlaim i ngach cuid den chóras iomlán oideachais: ba chóir scéim a bheith i bhfeidhm le foghlaim na Gaeilge a spreagadh ag leibhéal na bunscolaíochta agus na hiarbhunscolaíochta san earnáil Bhéarla dóibh siúd ar mian leo feidhm a bhaint aisti.

### *Right to Irish-medium education*

- 3.78 The proposal to guarantee a right to Irish-medium education was welcomed by many. It was suggested that the articulation of this right in the Bill will remove any ambiguity, which exists at present. Some contended that the right to education through the medium of Irish here may already exist, based on international precedents that have been established.<sup>5</sup>
- 3.79 It was felt that, in spite of the duty to encourage and facilitate Irish-medium education placed on the Department of Education<sup>6</sup>, there continue to be difficulties for those wishing to access education through the medium of Irish. In order to address these concerns, it is suggested that legislation specifically for Irish-medium education is necessary.

### *'Encourage and facilitate' Irish-medium education*

- 3.80 The point was made that the Department of Education's statutory duty to 'encourage and facilitate' Irish-medium education should be broadened to include any education bodies receiving funding from the Department of Education.

### *Special educational needs*

- 3.81 There was strong support for proper provision special educational needs in Irish-medium schools, as is available in English-medium schools. There should be dedicated units where children with special educational needs from the Irish-medium sector can access expert, tailored support through the medium of Irish.

### *Additional languages*

- 3.82 Many respondents felt that the importance of learning additional languages should be recognised throughout the entire education system; a scheme should be in place to encourage the learning of Irish at primary and secondary level in the English-medium sector for those who wish to avail of it.

<sup>5</sup> See Prof. Dr. Fernand de Varennes, Education, Discrimination and Language, 13 March 2015

<sup>6</sup> Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998



### *Tuairimí eile a thacaíonn leis an cheart ar an Ghaelscolaíocht*

3.83 Léiríonn na tuairimí seo a leanas dearcchá agus barúlacha a bhí ag freagróirí a bhí tacúil, lena n-áirítear smaointe ar fhorálacha ar bith eile:

- Caithfear an ceart ar Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim a achtú mar bhuncheart de chuid an duine. Ba chóir go mbeadh ceart ag gach páiste ar oideachas trí mheán na Gaeilge.
- Caithfear foráil dhaingean, chuimsitheach oideachais a chur sa Bhille, ina gcumhdófar gach leibhéal ón náiscolaíocht go dtí an tríú leibhéal, teagasc na Gaeilge sa chóras oideachais Béarla, an gairmoideachas, acmhainní, soláthar oiliúna, soláthar do pháistí a bhfuil sainriachtanais oideachais acu agus córas iompair. Moladh gur chóir breithniú ar *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue (Acht na Gaeilge do TÉ – Eisiúint 2)*, de chuid POBAL.
- Tá ról lárnach ag an oideachas i gcur chun cinn phrionsabail an chomhionannais agus meas ar an ilchineálacht.
- Tá fianaise shoiléir ann ar na buntáistí intleachtúla a bhaineann leis an oideachas dátheangach.
- Ba chóir níos mó leibhéal bheith ar fáil i scrúduithe, mar shampla, litríocht na Gaeilge, an teanga labhartha amháin agus an teanga scríofa.
- Ba chóir an Ghaeilge a thairiscint chomh maith le gach teanga eile.
- Ba chóir go mbeadh scéim ann fosta le tacú le foghlaim na Gaeilge ag leibhéal na bunscolaíochta agus na hiarbhunscolaíochta san earnáil Bhéarla dóibh siúd ar suim leo a leithéid.
- Ba chóir aitheantas agus tacaíocht a thabhairt do chlubanna óige, scoileanna samhraidh, tumchúrsaí, cistí téacsleabhar, duaiseanna agus gradaim dhrámaíochta, leabhair filíochta, ficin, bheathaisnéise agus staire i nGaeilge.
- Tá cás speisialta ann do Ghaelscoileanna maidir le maoiniú seirbhísí sainriachtanas i nGaeilge.
- Má tá an pobal i bhfabhar Gaelscoile nó Gaelcholáiste a bheith ann, ba chóir don Roinn Oideachais tacaíocht a thabhairt di.

### *Other comments in support of the right to Irish-medium education*

3.83 The following are some typical supportive views and opinions, including thoughts on any other provisions:

- The right to learn Irish must be enacted as a fundamental human right. Every child should have the right to an Irish-medium education.
- Robust, comprehensive education provision needs to be put into the Bill, covering every level from pre-school education to third level, the teaching of Irish in English-medium education, vocational education, resources, training, provision for children with special educational needs and a transport system. It was suggested that consideration be given to POBAL's recommendations in *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue*.
- Education has a central role to play in the promotion of the principles of equality and respect for diversity.
- The intellectual benefits of bilingual education are clearly documented.
- More levels available for exams, for example, literature in Irish, spoken language only and written language.
- Irish should be offered along with all the other languages.
- There should also be a scheme to support the learning of Irish at primary and post-primary level in the English-medium sector for those who are interested in it.
- Recognition and support should be given for Irish language youth clubs, summer schools, immersion courses, textbook funds, prizes and awards for drama, poetry, fiction, biography and history books through Irish.
- There is a special case for Irish-medium schools regarding the funding of special needs services in Irish.
- If the community is in favour of an Irish-medium primary or secondary school, the Department of Education should support it.

- Caithfear éileamh áitiúil a bheith ann do na scoileanna seo agus caithfear costálacha a dhéanamh lena chinntiú go dtabharfar luach ar airgead.
- Ba chóir curaclam atá bunaithe ar oidhreacht, logainmneacha agus sloinntea a fhorbairt do scoileanna stáit.
- Chomh maith leis an cheart ar an Ghaelscolaíocht, ba chóir forálacha a bheith ann leis an Ghaeilge a chumhdach i scoileanna Béarla.
- Ba chóir go leagfaí amach go soiléir sa Bhille cad é a sholáthróidh an Roinn Oideachais agus a chomhlachtaí bainteacha, nuair a achtófar é.

### *Tuairimí in éadan ceart a bheith ag daoine ar an Ghaelscolaíocht*

3.84 Léiríonn na tuairimí seo a leanas an dearcadh a bhí acu sin a bhí in éadan reachtaíochta a bhaineann leis an Ghaelscolaíocht:

- Ní fhéadfaí an costas a chosaint, go háirithe nuair a chuirtear na deacrachtaí reatha airgeadais san áireamh.
- Feictear go leor buntáistí cheana féin á dtabhairt don Ghaelscolaíocht agus leithcheal á himirt ar gach earnáil eile.
- Ba chóir dúinn páistí a spreagadh le teanga ar bith a fhoghlaim, ní gá gurb í an Ghaeilge a bheadh i gceist.
- Is gá litearthacht an Bhéarla a fheabhsú.
- Ba chóir oideachas a thabhairt do pháistí i gcuideachta a chéile.
- Tá an fhoráil cuimsithe cheana féin faoi reachtanna ar leith.
- Cheana féin, níl go leor daoine ag gabháil do staidéar ar an Ghaeilge ar bhonn uilephobail ó forbraíodh na Gaelscoileanna.
- Tá go leor scoileanna ag riar ar an éileamh ar an Ghaeilge faoi láthair.
- Níl gá ar bith leis an cheart go dteagascfaí gach ábhar trí mheán na Gaeilge.
- Níor chóir go mbeadh d'iallach ar dhaltáí Gaeilge a fhoghlaim mar chuid de churaclam ar bith ach ba chóir an rogha a bheith acu más mian leo í a fhoghlaim.

- There needs to local demand for these schools and costings need to be done to ensure they provide value for money.
- A curriculum based on heritage, place-names and surnames should be developed for state schools.
- As well as the right to Irish-medium education, there should be provisions to cover Irish in English-medium schools.
- The Bill should set out clearly what the Department of Education and its related bodies will deliver, once enacted.

### *Comments against the right to Irish-medium education*

3.84 The following were typical opinions of those who were against legislation in relation to Irish-medium education:

- The cost would be unjustified, especially given the current financial difficulties.
- There already is enough favouritism seen towards Irish-medium education and discrimination towards all others.
- We should encourage children to learn any language, not necessarily Irish.
- There is a need to improve literacy in English.
- Children should be educated together.
- This provision is already included under separate statutes.
- There is already insufficient take-up of Irish study on a community-wide basis since the introduction of Irish-medium schools.
- There are enough schools providing Irish to meet demand currently.
- There is no need for the right to have all subjects taught using the Irish Language.
- Students should not be required to learn Irish as part of any curriculum but should have the choice to learn if they wish.

- Ba chóir scoil Ghaeilge ar bith a mhaoiniú go príobháideach agus níor chóir dóibh dul in iomaíocht le scoileanna príomhshrutha maidir le maoiniú.
- Ní oibríonn sé Gaeilge a bhrú ar dhaltaí, mar atá le feiceáil sa Phoblacht.
- Chaithfí an Ultais a chur leis ar mhaithe le caidreamh pobail.

## Tuairimí ar Bith eile

- 3.85 Thapaigh freagróirí an deis leis na tograí reatha sa dréacht-Bhille a athbhreithniú, a fhorbairt agus cur leo. An iomad freagróirí a thóg cuid mhór de na moltaí seo agus tá siad léirithe cheana féin san anailís ar gach togra sa tuairisc seo cheana.
- 3.86 Thapaigh roinnt freagróirí an deis le saincheisteanna a mholadh, óna bpeirspictíocht féin, a bhféadfaí tograí ar leith a dhéanamh díobh sa Bhille. Mar shampla:
- Infheistíocht san aos óg
  - Tá dualgas ar rialtas na Breataine Acht Gaeilge a thabhairt isteach.
  - Caithfear cúrsaí a thagann faoi Westminster amhail craoltóireacht agus Comhaltaí Corónach srl. a chuimsiú i reachtaíocht teanga.
  - Cearta sainiúla fostaíochta.
  - Moladh athbhreithniú rialta ar thiomantais na Ríochta Aontaithe faoin chairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh a chuimsiú sa reachtaíocht, chomh maith le hathbhreithniú ar léirthuisicint Alt 75, ag comhlachtaí amhail an Coimisiún Comhionannais (féach *The Irish Language Act – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue/Acht na Gaeilge - 2<sup>ú</sup> Eisiúint*)

### *Tuairimí eile a thacaíonn le reachtaíocht Ghaeilge*

- 3.87 Léiríonn na tuairimí seo a leanas barúlacha a bhí ag freagróirí a bhí i bhfách le reachtaíocht:
- Ba chóir roinnt machnaimh a dhéanamh ar an cheart rochtana ar mheáin chumarsáide, teilifís, raidió, nuachtáin, meáin dhigiteacha srl. i nGaeilge.

- Any Irish language schools should be funded privately and shouldn't compete with mainstream schools for funding.
- Forcing Irish on pupils does not work, as seen in the Republic.
- Ulster Scots would need to be added as well for the benefit of community relations.

## Any Other Comments

- 3.85 Respondents took the opportunity to revise, expand and add to the existing proposals in the draft Bill. Many of these suggestions were raised by several respondents and have already been reflected in the analysis of each proposal, earlier in this report.
- 3.86 Some respondents took the opportunity to suggest distinct issues from their perspective which might form separate proposals in the Bill. For example:
- Investment in young people.
  - The British government has a duty to introduce an Irish Language Act.
  - Matters which fall under Westminster such as broadcasting and Crown Bodies etc. must be included in language legislation.
  - Specific rights in employment.
  - A regular review of the United Kingdom's commitments under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages was recommended for inclusion in the legislation, as well as a review of the interpretation of Section 75, by bodies such as the Equality Commission (see *The Irish Language Act – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue*).

### *Other comments in support of Irish language legislation*

- 3.87 Some typical comments from respondents in favour of legislation are set out below:
- There should be some consideration of the right of access to Irish language media, TV, radio, newspapers, digital media, and so on.

- Ba chóir tuilleadh machnaimh a dhéanamh ar *The Irish Language Act – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue/Acht na Gaeilge - 2<sup>ú</sup> Eisiúint* de chuid POBAL. Ghlac pobal na Gaeilge agus saineolaithe teanga páirt i scríobh an doiciméid seo agus tá cuid mhór eolais agus moltaí fiúntacha ann. Cuireann sé creat reachtaíochta ar fáil le haghaidh Bille Gaeilge.
- Tá achtanna teanga ag an Bhreatain Bheag agus ag Albain. Tá de cheart ag TÉ acht teanga a bheith aige leis an teanga dhúchais a chur chun cinn mar atá amhlaidh i gcodanna eile den RA.
- Aithnítear comhionannas teanga ar fud an domhain fhorbartha.
- Tá dualgas orainn uilig an Ghaeilge a chosaint. Is de chroí an chultúir í ag Caitlicigh agus ag Protastúnaigh araon.
- Caithfidh luach, ábharthacht agus tábhacht chaomhnú agus chur chun cinn na Gaeilge a bheith le sonrú ar Acht Gaeilge ar bith.
- Cion coiriúil a dhéanamh de dhuine a mhaslú d'aon turas as Gaeilge a labhairt i bhfóram poiblí.
- Bheadh sé le leas na Gaeilge agus le leas chóras eacnamaíochta na hÉireann dá mbeadh foráil sa Bhille le naisc a chothú le diaspora na hÉireann.
- Ba chuidiú é sa mhéid nach mbeadh an Ghaeilge chomh hacadúil céanna ach go mbeadh sí in úsáid ar bhonn laethúil ag duine ar bith ar mian leo í a fhoghlaim.
- Mar theanga mhionlaigh Eorpach ba chóir go mbeadh stádas iomlán cosanta aici.
- Ba chóir Acht Gaeilge a thabhairt chun cinn agus a chumhdach sa dlí lena chinntiú go léireofar go hiomlán cearta, comhionannas agus dlisteanacht chultúrtha go hoibríochtúil agus go straitéiseach, trí na seirbhísí poiblí agus na hacmhainní poiblí.
- Níor chóir an bhéim a leagan ar mhaorlathas ach ar chuidiú praiticiúil do dhaoine ar mian leo cuid dhílis dá saol a dhéanamh den Ghaeilge. Ná déantar na meancóga céanna a rinneadh sa deisceart.
- Acadamh Gaeilge a bhunú le cúrsaí Gaeilge do dhaoine fásta a chaighdeánú ar fud an tuaiscirt (agus ar fud Chúige Uladh).
- Mura rithfear an Bille trí Stormont,
- POBAL's *Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue*, should be given further consideration. The Irish language community and language experts participated in the writing of this document and there is a lot of information and worthwhile recommendations in it. It presents a legislative framework for an Irish Language Bill.
- Wales and Scotland have language acts. NI has a right to a language act to promote the native language similar to the other parts of the UK.
- Language equality is recognised throughout the developed world.
- We all have a duty to protect the Irish language. It is central to the culture of both Catholics and Protestants.
- The value, relevance and importance of the preservation and promotion of the Irish language must come through any Irish Language Act.
- Make it an offence for anyone who deliberately abuses those who use the language in a public forum.
- It would be beneficial both to the Irish language and also to Ireland's economy to include provision in the Bill for building links with the Irish diaspora.
- It will help to make Irish less academic and more for everyday use by anyone who cares to learn it.
- As a minority European language it should have full protected status.
- An Irish Language Act should be brought forward and enshrined in law to ensure that rights, equality and cultural legitimacy are fully reflected, operationally and strategically, through all public services and public resources.
- The emphasis should not be placed on bureaucracy but on practical help for people who want to make Irish a central part of their lives. Do not make the same mistakes which were made in the south.
- Establish an Irish Language Academy to standardise Irish courses for adults throughout the north (and in all of Ulster).
- If this Bill is not voted through Stormont,

caithfear an Bille a iarraidh trí Westminster mar a tharla leis an chéad Acht Breatnaise.

- Níor chóir go mbeadh ceist dea-chaidrimh ann i gcónaí leis an Ghaeilge. Is ceist eile í an Ghaeilge i dtaca le comhionannas de agus ba chóir an cheist seo a phlé aisti féin.
- Ba chóir scéim chuimsitheach scoláireachtaí Gaeltachta a bhunú agus ba chóir a thuilleadh forbartha a dhéanamh uirthi seo do dhéagóirí agus do dhaoine fásta.

### *Tuairimí eile in éadan reachtaíocht Ghaeilge*

3.88 Léiríonn na tuairimí seo a leanas an dearcadh a bhí acu sin a bhí in éadan reachtaíocht Gaeilge:

- Ní fhéadfaí an costas a chosaint, go háirithe nuair a chuirtear na deacrachtaí reatha airgeadais san áireamh.
- Cruthóidh Acht Gaeilge tuilleadh deighiltí inár bpobail agus caidreamh pobail níos measa an toradh a bheas air.
- Níl gá ar bith le hAcht Gaeilge i dTuaisceart Éireann. Is é an Béarla an phríomhtheanga i nDeisceart na hÉireann féin.
- Gan meastacháin ar na costais a bheas i gceist, níl an comhairliúchán seo iomlán agus ní thig le freagróirí measúnacht iomlán a dhéanamh ar impleachtaí Acht Gaeilge ar bith.
- Bheadh an-chontúirt ag baint le comharthaíocht bhóthair dhátheangach agus chuirfeadh sí tuilleadh mearbhaill ar chónaitheoirí agus ar thurasóirí araon.
- Ba chóir duinn teanga nó dhó idirnáisiúnta m.sh. an Mhandairínis, an Rúisis a chur chun cinn i scoileanna chomh maith le príomhtheangacha na hEorpa. Má bhíonn acmhainní ar bith fágtha i ndiaidh na polasaithe seo a fheidhmiú, amharcaimis níos doimhne ar ár gcultúr agus réimse leathan de scoláireachtaí maoinithe a chur ar fáil don Ghaeilge chomh maith leis an Laidin, an Ghréigis agus b'fhéidir na teangacha Seimíteacha.

the Bill must be sought through Westminster as with the first Welsh Language Act.

- There should not always be a good relations issue with Irish. The issue of Irish is a different issue as far as equality is concerned and this issue should be discussed on its own merits.
- A comprehensive scholarship scheme for Gaeltacht courses should be established and this should be developed more for teenagers and adults.

### *Other comments against Irish language legislation*

3.88 The following were typical opinions of those who were against Irish language legislation:

- The cost would be unjustified, especially given the current financial difficulties.
- The Irish Language Act will create more division in our communities and lead to poorer community relations.
- There is no need for an Irish Language Bill in Northern Ireland. English is the main language even in Southern Ireland.
- Without estimates of costs being included, this consultation is incomplete and does not allow a full assessment of the implications of the any Irish Language Act by respondents.
- Provision of dual language road signage would be downright dangerous, adding to the confusion of both residents and tourists.
- We should be promoting one or two main international languages e.g. Mandarin, Russian in schools alongside the main European languages. If any resources are left over after these policies are put in place, then let's delve deeper into our culture and include a wide range of funded scholarships for Irish, as well as Latin, Greek and perhaps the Semitic languages.

- Chuir roinnt freagróirí in éadan an stádas céanna a thabhairt don Ghaeilge agus atá ag an Bhéarla, arb é, dar leo, an teanga oifigiúil. Ní raibh siad, áfach, in éadan na Gaeilge aisti féin agus chreid go dtig léi, le cois na hUltaise, cur go mór lenár n-oidhreacht chultúrtha chomhroinnte.
  - Ba chóir an forfheidhmiú a sheachaint go hiomlán. Téann Bille na Gaeilge níos faide ná an méid atá de dhíth leis an Ghaeilge a spreagadh agus a chur chun cinn agus féachann sé leis an Ghaeilge a bhrú ar gach gné den saol abhus.
- Some opposed the Irish language being given equal status with English, which they consider to be the official language. However, they were not opposed to the Irish language per se and believed that it can add to our shared cultural heritage along with the Ulster-Scots language.
  - Enforcement should be completely avoided. The Irish Language Bill goes beyond what is needed to encourage and promote the use of Irish and seeks to impose Irish in all aspects of life here.

## 4. Measúnacht Tionchair Chomhionannais (EQIA)

### Réamhrá

- 4.1 Faoi Mhír 75 d’Acht Thuaisceart Éireann 1998, tá ceangal ar an Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta agus í i mbun a cuid feidhmeanna, aird chuí a bheith aici ar an ghá atá le cur chun cinn an chomhionannais deiseanna:
- idir daoine de chreideamh éagsúil, a mbeadh barúlacha polaitiúla éagsúla acu, de ghrúpaí ciníocha éagsúla, ar aoiseanna éagsúla, a mbeadh stádas pósta éagsúil acu nó claonadh gnéasach éagsúil acu;
  - idir fir agus mná go ginearálta;
  - idir daoine atá faoi mhíchumas agus daoine nach bhfuil; agus
  - idir daoine a bhfuil cleithiúnaithe acu agus daoine nach bhfuil.
- 4.2 Gan aon dochar don oibleagáid thuas, tá de cheangal chomh maith ar an RCEF, agus í ag comhlíonadh a cuid feidhmeanna, bheith meabhrach gur inmhianaithe dea-chaidreamh a chur chun cinn idir daoine de chreideamh éagsúil, a bhfuil barúlacha polaitiúla éagsúla acu agus ó ghrúpaí ciníocha éagsúla.
- 4.3 Fágann scéim chomhionannais RCEF go bhfuil sé de dhualgas ar an Roinn an tionchar a bhíonn ag tograí polasaí ar chur chun cinn an chomhionannais deiseanna a mheas de réir théarmaí Alt 75 d’Acht TÉ 1998. Tá de cheangal ar údaráis phoiblí, leis an reachtaíocht seo, Measúnacht Tionchair Chomhionannais (MTC) a dhéanamh aon áit ar dócha go mbeadh tionchar ag polasaí molta ar chomhionannas deiseanna. Mar fhreagairt air seo, tá socraithe ag an Roinn go bhfágann na tograí faoi choinne Bille Gaeilge go bhfuil Measúnacht Tionchair Chomhionannais (MTC) de dhíth. Is é feidhm an doiciméid seo torthaí an MTC a chlárú agus tráchtanna a iarraidh.

## 4. Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

### Introduction

- 4.1 Under section 75 of the NI Act 1998 the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL), in carrying out its functions is required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:
- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
  - between men and women generally;
  - between persons with a disability and persons without; and
  - between persons with dependants and persons without.
- 4.2 In addition, without prejudice to its obligations above, DCAL shall, in carrying out its functions have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.
- 4.3 DCAL’s Equality Scheme commits the Department to assess how policy proposals impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity within the terms of section 75 of the NI Act 1998. The legislation requires public authorities to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment where a proposed policy is likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity. In response to this, the Department has decided that proposals for an Irish Language Bill require an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA). The purpose of this document is to record the findings of the EQIA and invite comments.

## MEASÚNACHT AR THIONCHAR AR CHOMHIONANNAS

- 4.4 Tugtar le tuiscint leis an fhianaise atá ar fáil gur dóchúla gur mó an seans gur duine Caitliceach, náisiúnach, óg, nach bhfuil faoi mhíchumas, ag a bhfuil cleithiúnaithe agus nach bhfuil pósta, é/í duine atá ina Ghaeilgeoir nó a bhfuil eolas éigin aige/aici ar an Ghaeilge. Ní raibh difríochtaí ar bith ann maidir le hinscne nó grúpa ciníoch. Níl aon sonraíocht ar fáil maidir le claonadh gnéis.
- 4.5 Is é an dearcadh atá ag RCEF go dtiocfaidh tionchar dearfach, trí reachtaíocht a bhunú, ar lucht labhartha na Gaeilge agus, mar sin de, go hindíreach ar Chaitlicigh, náisiúnaithe, daoine singile, daoine níos óige, daoine nach bhfuil faoi mhíchumas agus daoine a bhfuil cleithiúnaithe acu. Dar le RCEF, ní thiocfaidh aon tionchair idirdhealaitheacha ná dhíobhálacha.

## MEASÚNACHT AR AN TIONCHAR AR DHEA-CHAIDREAMH

- 4.6 Mheas RCEF go bhfuil d'fhéidearthacht ag tabhairt isteach Bille Gaeilge an dea-chaidreamh a fheabhsú, nó beidh níos mó comhionannais ag baint leis an Ghaeilge agus beidh ardán inrochtana aici do gach cuid den phobal.

## Torthaí ón Chomhairliúchán

- 4.7 Mar chuid den chomhairliúchán, iarradh ar dhaoine a dtuairimí a thabhairt ar mheasúnacht RCEF ar thionchair chomhionannais tograí faoi choinne Bille Gaeilge agus eolas breise a thabhairt a d'fhéadfadh a bheith úsáideach leis na tionchair chomhionannais sin a mheasúnú.
- 4.8 D'aontaigh tromlach suntasach díobh sin a d'fhreagair don MTC, nó a thagair do cheisteanna comhionannais, le measúnú RCEF nach mbeadh tionchair leithchealacha ná diúltacha ar bith ag baint le glacadh le hAcht Gaeilge agus gur comhionannas deiseanna feabhsaithe an toradh a bheadh air.

## ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT ON EQUALITY

- 4.4 The available evidence suggests that those speaking and possessing some knowledge of Irish are more likely to be Catholic, nationalist, young, without a disability, with dependants and single. There were no differences in relation to gender and racial group. No data is available in relation to sexual orientation.
- 4.5 It is DCAL's view that establishing Irish language legislation will have a positive impact on Irish speakers and therefore indirectly on Catholics, nationalists, single people, younger people, people without a disability and people with dependants. In DCAL's view, there are no discriminatory or adverse impacts.

## ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT ON GOOD RELATIONS

- 4.6 DCAL considered that the introduction of an Irish Language Bill has the potential to improve good relations, as it will give the Irish language more equality and accessibility platform for all sections of the community.

## Findings from the Consultation

- 4.7 As part of the consultation, people were asked to give their views on DCAL's assessment of the equality impacts of proposals for an Irish Language Bill and provide any further information which could be useful in assessing those equality impacts.
- 4.8 A significant majority of those who responded to the EQIA, or referred to equality issues, agreed with DCAL's assessment that the adoption of an Irish Language Act would not have any discriminatory or adverse impacts and would lead to improved equality of opportunity.



- 4.9 D'esaontaigh roinnt bheag de fhreagróirí an chomhairliúcháin le tátal RCEF. Ba é an dearcadh a bhí acu, de thairbhe gur mó Caitlicigh a bhfuil Gaeilge acu i gcomparáid le Protastúnaigh, gur leithcheal ar Phrotastúnaigh, beag beann ar a chuspóir chur chun cinn an chomhionannais, an toradh a bheadh ar aon reachtaíocht Ghaeilge, go háirithe maidir le deiseanna fostaíochta san earnáil phoiblí.
- 4.9 A small number of respondents to the consultation disagreed with DCAL's conclusions. Their view was that, as more Catholics had knowledge of the Irish language relative to Protestants, any Irish language legislation, irrespective of its intention to promote equality, would result in discrimination against Protestants, particularly with regard to employment opportunities in the public sector.
- 4.10 Mheas cuid mhór go raibh d'acmhainn ag Acht Gaeilge an dea-chaidreamh a fheabhsú óir cuirfidh sé rochtain ar sheirbhísí i nGaeilge nó i mBéarla ar chomhchéim reachtúil.
- 4.10 Many felt that that an Irish Language Act has the potential to improve good relations because it will put access to services in to Irish or English on an equal statutory basis.
- 4.11 Rinne cuid de na freagróirí an chás gur léirmhíniú contráilte ar dhualgais chomhionannais Alt 75 é níos mó ualúcháin a thabhairt do chur chun cinn an dea-chaidrimh seachas cur chun cinn an chomhionannais deiseanna. Ba é a ndearcadh nár chóir barraíocht airde ná ualúcháin a thabhairt ar an dea-chaidreamh i gcomparáid le ceisteanna comhionannais agus chearta an duine.
- 4.11 Some argued that giving more weight to the promotion of good relations as opposed to promoting equality of opportunity was an incorrect interpretation of the Section 75 equality duties. Their view was that good relations should not be given undue regard or weight as relative to equality and human rights issues.
- 4.12 D'esaontaigh formhór mór maith na bhfreagróirí go mbeadh Acht Gaeilge leithchealach nó go mbeadh tionchar diúltach aige ar chaidreamh pobail. Rinne na freagróirí seo an chás go raibh reachtaíocht Ghaeilge, ar cuspóir di an comhionannas a chur chun cinn, comhleanúnach agus gurb é an léirmhíniú ceart é ar dhualgas comhionannais agus cur chun cinn an dea-chaidrimh de réir Alt 75 é. Mhaígh siad go gcuireann sí le torthaí Choiste Saineolaithe Chomhairle na hEorpa ar an Chairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh agus an Ghrúpa Chomhairligh ar an Chreat-Choinbhinsiún um Chosaint Mionlaigh Náisiúnta.
- 4.12 The overwhelming number of those who responded disagreed that an Irish Language Act would be discriminatory or that it would have a negative effect on community relations. These respondents argued that Irish language legislation, which sought to promote equality, was consistent and the correct interpretation of the Section 75 equality duty and promotion of good relations. They stated that it is in line with the findings of the Council of Europe Committee of Experts on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Advisory Group on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.
- 4.13 Thug an Coimisiún Comhionannais dá aird go raibh a dhearcadh ar taifead cheana féin gur meicníocht chúil chosanta don Ghaeilge í reacht sainiúil teanga. D'athdhearbhaigh an Coimisiún go bhfuil cainteoirí teanga mhionlaigh i dteideal a gcearta a chosaint faoi mar atá leagtha amach i gCairt Chomhairle na hEorpa do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh agus an Ghrúpa Chomhairligh ar an Chreat-Choinbhinsiún um Chosaint Mionlaigh
- 4.13 The Equality Commission noted that it had previously placed on record its view that a specific language statute is an appropriate mechanism of protection for the Irish language. The Commission reiterated that minority language speakers are entitled to protection of their rights as set out in the Council of Europe Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Framework

Náisiúnta. Mhaígh an Coimisiún *"Nár chóir labhairt teanga ar bith i dTuaisceart Éireann a bhrath mar bhagairt ar aon duine nó grúpa aonair, ná nár chóir an cuspóir sin a bheith léi"*.

- 4.14 Ina tuairisc 2011 ar fheidhmiú an Chreat-Choinbhinsiúin um Chosaint Mionlaigh Náisiúnta, dhaingnigh Coiste Comhairleach Chomhairle na hEorpa torthaí Choiste Saineolaithe na Cairte:

*"B'údar imní don Choiste Chomhairleach a chluinstin go measann roinnt ionadaithe de chuid na n-údarás go ndéanann cur chun cinn na Gaeilge leithcheal ar dhaoine ar de dhaoine an tromlaigh iad. Níl ráitis den chineál seo ag cur le prionsabail an Chreat-Choinbhinsiúin agus go háirithe le forálacha Airteagal 10. Athdhearbhaíonn sé fosta, ar aon dul le hAirteagal 4.2 agus Airteagal 4.3 den Chreat-Choinbhinsiúin, nach bhfuil feidhmiú cearta mionlaigh a chosnaítear faoin Chreat-Choinbhinsiúin le breithniú ionann agus go bhfuil siad ag déanamh leithcheala ar dhaoine eile...."*<sup>7</sup>

- 4.15 Léiríonn na tuairimí seo a leanas dearcthaí, idir dhearfach agus dhiúltach, uathu sin a d'fhreagair don MTC seo:
- Ní bheidh tionchar diúltach ar bith ag Acht Gaeilge ar chearta duine ar bith ar dhóigh ar bith, ach ina áit sin cuirfidh sé le reachtaíocht reatha chomhionannais sa dlínse seo.
  - Níl sé ag tabhairt tús áite don Ghaeilge seachas teanga eile. Tá sé ag aithint go bhfuil, agus go raibh riamh anall, ról lárnach ag an teanga sa tsochaí s'againn.
  - Ní teanga reiligiúnach ná pholaitiúil í an Ghaeilge.
  - Ba mhór an cuidiú í an Ghaeilge le dul i ngleic le míthuiscint agus le constaicí rannpháirtíochta, agus tá de chumas aici pobail a thabhairt le chéile.

Convention for the Protection and Rights of National Minorities. The Commission contended that *"The speaking of any language in Northern Ireland should not be perceived as a threat to any individual or group, nor should it be intended in such a manner"*.

- 4.14 In its 2011 report on the application of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the Council of Europe Advisory Committee reinforces the findings of the Charter's Committee of Experts:

*"The Advisory Committee was disconcerted to hear that some representatives of the authorities consider that promoting the use of the Irish language is discriminating against persons belonging to the majority population. Such statements are not in line with principles of the Framework Convention, and in particular with the provisions of Article 10. It also reiterates that in line with Article 4.2 and Article 4.3 of the Framework Convention, implementation of minority rights protected under the Framework Convention are not be considered as discriminating against other persons...."*<sup>7</sup>

- 4.15 The following are typical comments, both positive and negative, from those who responded to this EQIA:

- An Irish Language Act will not have a negative effect on the rights of any person in any way, but instead will add to existing equality legislation in this jurisdiction.
- It is not favouring the Irish Language over another. It is recognising that the language has, and will always, play an integral part in our society.
- The Irish language isn't religious or political.
- The Irish Language Act would go far in tackling misconceptions and barriers to participation, and has the potential to bring communities together.

<sup>7</sup> Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, Third Opinion on the United Kingdom adopted on 30 June 2011

- Le bheith uileghabhálach, ba chóir Bille Ultaise, in am is i dtráth, a bheith faoi réir an chineáil chéanna forála agus cosanta.
- Ní bhaineann an Bille Gaeilge leis an chomhionannas óir tá sé aontaobhach agus fabhrach le pobal beag mionlaigh thar gach pobal eile.
- Déanfaidh an tAcht leithcheal ar theangacha eile (Ultais, Sínis, Hiondúis, Polainnis)
- Cruthóidh sé seo tuilleadh deighilte.
- Ní éireodh leis na tograí seo i Measúnacht Tionchair Chomhionannais óir níl aon tuiscint ar an Ghaeilge ach ag 2% den phobal Phrotastúnach.
- Ba mhíbhuntáiste na tograí seo ag daoine nach bhfuil Gaeilge acu i réimsí amhail poist earnáil phoiblí.
- D'fhéadfadh sé ceantair "gan cead isteach" a chruthú.
- Is le leas daoine áirithe polasaí fabhraíochta i leith na Gaelscolaíochta, ach beidh daoine eile thíos leis dá bharr.
- An gá atá le comhairliúcháin comhairlí áitiúla maidir le taispeántais phoiblí Ghaeilge, sa dóigh nach mbeidh daoine míchompordach leo.
- Dearbhuithe go dtuigeann ceantair Ghaeltachta nach sárú cearta comhionannais é bac a chur ar dhaoine nach bhfuil Gaeilge acu a bheith ina gcónaí, ag obair nó ag bunú gnólachtaí sna ceantair seo.
- Moladh gur chóir tiomantais an RA faoin Chairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh a athbhreithniú go rialta chomh maith le léirmhíniú Alt 75 ag comhlachtaí amhail an Coimisiún Comhionannais lena chinntiú go mbíonn a léirmhíniú inchomparáide le forálacha Bille Gaeilge agus leis an Chairt. (Féach *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue/Acht na Gaeilge do TÉ – Eisiúint 2*).
- Is rílér ó na forálacha don Choimisinéir, do na Comhlachtaí Poiblí agus do na Breithiúna, cé nach gcuirtear in iúl é ar an dóigh seo, go ndéanfar, a bheag nó a
- In order to be inclusive, an Ulster-Scots Bill should, in due course, be subject to the same kinds of provision and protection.
- The Irish Language Bill is not about equality as it is one-sided, favouring a small minority community over all others.
- The Act will discriminate against other languages (Ulster-Scots, Chinese, Hindu, Polish).
- This will create more division.
- These proposals would not pass an Equality Impact Assessment as only 2% of the Protestant community have any understanding of the Irish Language.
- These proposals would disadvantage non-Irish speakers in areas such as public sector jobs.
- It has the potential to create "no go" areas.
- Adopting a policy of favouritism towards Irish-medium education will benefit some, but will be to the detriment of all others.
- The need for local council consultations regarding public displays of Irish, so people don't feel uncomfortable.
- Assurances that Gaeltacht areas understand equality rights are not breached by preventing people who do not speak Irish from living, working or setting businesses up in these areas.
- It was recommended that there should be regular review of the UK's commitments under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the interpretation of Section 75 by bodies such as the Equality Commission to ensure their interpretation is compatible with the provisions of an Irish Language Bill and with the Charter (See *The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue*).
- The provisions for the Commissioner, Public Bodies and the Judiciary, make it quite clear, though not expressed in these terms, that the 'unionist' part of

mhór, an chuid 'aontachtach' dár bpobal a eisiáimh ó aon phost a bheith acu sna comhlachtaí seo.

- Ós rud é, de réir an daonáirimh, go bhfuil ceithre oiread cainteoirí Polainnise ina gcónaí anois i dTuaisceart Éireann, luífeadh sé le réasún gur chóir dúinn a bheith ag smaoineamh ar Bhille Polainnise an chéad uair.
- Tá claontacht thíreolaíoch ann faoi láthair sa mhéid gur i gceantair neamhneodracha atá Gaelscoileanna suite; mar sin de, is d'aon chuid amháin den phobal a gcuid daltaí.

## Conclúidí

4.16 D'aontaigh formhór mór maith na bhfreagróirí le conclúidí RCEF nach mbeadh 'tionchar diúltach' ag na tograí faoi choinne reachtaíocht Ghaeilge ar aon ghrúpa Alt 75. Léirigh cuid mhór acu cúis imní gur minic míthuiscint i gceist le coincheap 'tionchar diúltach'. San am atá caite, baineadh an chiall chontráilte as bearta leis an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn, a bhí ag cur leis an Chairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnacha nó Mionlaigh, díreach ar an bhonn go mbítear ag cur in éadan na mbeart seo ó thaobh na polaitíochta de, nó go bhfuil tromlach na gcainteoirí i ngrúpa eitneach/reiligiúnach amháin seachas a chéile. Tá an Coiste um Riar an Cheartais i measc an iomad grúpaí a mhaíonn nach gcomhlíonann ceachtar de na fáthanna seo tairseach 'tionchar diúltach' maidir le Measúnachtaí Tionchair Chomhionannais agus tá siad sásta nár bhain RCEF an chiall chontráilte as na dualgais ar an dóigh seo.<sup>8</sup>

4.17 Déanfar athbhreithniú agus monatóireacht ar thionchar Acht na Gaeilge le tionchar ar bith nach raibh súil leis a aithint agus lena chinntiú go bhfuil a aidhmeanna agus cuspóirí á mbaint amach agus cé acu a tháinig nó nár tháinig athrú suntasach ar an tionchar a bheadh ag Acht ar chatagóir ar bith de na naoi gcatagóir.

our community will be virtually excluded from having any position in those same bodies.

- Given that the census shows that there are four times as many Polish speakers now resident in Northern Ireland, surely we should be considering a Polish language Bill in the first instance.
- Currently there is a geographical bias in that Irish-medium schools are in non-neutral areas; hence their students come from only one part of the community.

## Conclusions

4.16 The overwhelming number of those who responded agreed with DCAL's conclusions that the proposals for the Irish language legislation would not constitute an 'adverse impact' on any section 75 group. Many expressed concerns that the concept of 'adverse impact' has often been misinterpreted. In the past, actions to promote Irish, compatible with the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, have often been misconstrued as having an 'adverse impact' purely on the basis that there is political opposition to these actions, or that speakers are more concentrated in one ethnic/religious group than another. The Committee on the Administration of Justice is among the many who contend that neither of these reasons meets the threshold of 'adverse impact' in relation to Equality Impact Assessments and welcome the fact that DCAL has not misinterpreted the duties in this manner.<sup>8</sup>

4.17 The impact of the Irish Language Act will be reviewed and monitored to identify any unforeseen impacts and ensure that its aims and objectives are being achieved and whether or not the impact of an Act on any of the nine categories has significantly changed.

<sup>8</sup> For further information see Committee on the Administration of Justice 'Unequal Relations? Policy, the Section 75 duties and Equality Commission advice: has 'good relations' been allowed to undermine equality?' May 2013.

## Tagairtí | References

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Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ), '*Unequal Relations? Policy, the Section 75 duties and Equality Commission advice: has 'good relations' been allowed to undermine equality?*', May 2013.

Council of Europe, 1992; European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

Council of Europe, 2011; Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the protection of National Minorities, Third Opinion on the United Kingdom adopted on 30 June 2011

Council of Europe, 2014; European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages – 4th monitoring cycle, Report of the Committee of Experts and Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the application of the Charter by the United Kingdom

Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, Article 89

Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005

Neutral Citation No. [2011] NIQB 98; *Coláiste Feirste v The Department of Education Northern Ireland*, paragraph 44

POBAL, 2012; *Acht na Gaeilge do TÉ – Eisiúint 2 | The Irish Language Act NI – 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue*

de Varennes, Fernand; *Education, Discrimination and Language*; 13 March 2015

Welsh Government, *Welsh Language Standards: Regulations – Improving services for Welsh speakers (Consultation Document)*, 7 November 2014

Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

## Iarscr bhinn  | Annexes

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- A Sampla  de Litreacha Feachtais agus Achain ocha  
Examples of Campaign Letters and Petitions
  
- B Liosta Eagra ochta  a chuir tuairim  in i l  
List of Organisations that responded
  
- C Tortha  an Chomhairleach in – Cairteacha  
Results of the Consultation – Charts
  
- D Na Togra   
The Proposals

**SAMPLAÍ DE LITREACHA FEACHTAIS AGUS ACHAINÍOCHA  
EXAMPLES OF CAMPAIGN LETTERS AND PETITIONS****Chuibh: An Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíonn agus Fóillíochta**

Thug rialtas na Breataine gealltanas i gComhaontú Cill Rimhinn Acht na Gaeilge a thabhairt isteach. Léirigh 98% de fhreagraí sa chéad chomhairliúchán (2006 – 7) tacaíocht do mholtaí comhaontaithe POBAL. Maidir le cáipéis chomhairliúcháin atá foilsithe ag an Roinn Cultúir, Ealaíon agus Fóillíochta i mí Feabhra 2015, creidim go bhfuil moltaí POBAL, sa doiciméad *Acht na Gaeilge Eisiúint 2*, chun leasa go mór agus go tábhachtach don chomhairliúchán seo, agus gur chóir glacadh leis na moltaí POBAL mar bhunús Bhille agus Acht na Gaeilge as seo amach.

Cóip do na moltaí POBAL ar fail ar [www.pobal.org](http://www.pobal.org)

**To: The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**

The British government gave a commitment in the St Andrews' Agreement to introduce the Irish Language Act. During the first consultation (2006-7), 98% of responses supported POBAL's agreed proposals. In relation to the consultation document published by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in February 2015, I believe that the POBAL proposals, outlined in the document *The Irish Language Act Issue 2*, provide a detailed and significant contribution to this consultation and should be adopted as the basis for the Irish Language Bill and Act going forward.

Copy of the POBAL proposals on [www.pobal.org](http://www.pobal.org)

**AINM / NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**SEOLADH / ADDRESS.** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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SAMPLAÍ DE LITREACHA FEACHTAIS AGUS ACHAINÍOCHA  
EXAMPLES OF CAMPAIGN LETTERS AND PETITIONS



## Tograí faoi choinne Bille na Gaeilge

- 1. Stádas Oifigiúil:** Ar chóir stádas oifigiúil a thabhairt don Ghaeilge anseo?  
Aon bharúil eile?

Aontaím:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. An Ghaeilge sna Cúirteanna:** Ar chóir gur féidir le daoine a gcás a dhéanamh trí Ghaeilge más mian leo?  
Aon bharúil eile?

Aontaím:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_
- 3. An Tionól:** Ar chóir aitheantas a thabhairt d'úsáid na Gaeilge sa Tionól agus cothromas a léiriú idir an Ghaeilge agus an Béarla? Aon bharúil eile?

Aontaím:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_
- 4. An Coimisinéir Gaeilge:** Ar chóir ról a chruthú mar Choimisinéir Gaeilge a bheas freagrach as cur i bhfeidhm an Acht a mheasúnú agus cuidiú le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge? Aon bharúil eile?

Aontaím:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Comhlachtaí Poiblí:** Ar chóir dualgais a chur ar chomhlachtaí poiblí aitheantas a thabhairt don Ghaeilge agus seirbhísí a chur ar fáil do dhaoine ar mhian leo é? Aon bharúil eile?

Aontaím:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_
- 6. (A) Scéimeanna Teanga:** Ar chóir scéimeanna teanga a úsáid le cuidiú le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge sa saol poiblí?  
Aon bharúil eile?

Aontaím:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_
- 6(B) Caighdeán Gaeilge:** Ar chóir go mbeadh caighdeán bunúsacha anndo chomhlachtaí poiblí maidir leis an Ghaeilge?  
Aon bharúil eile?

Aontaím:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_
- 7. Limistéir Gaeltachta:** Ar chóir aitheantas agus tacaíocht a thabhairt do cheantair Ghaeltachta?  
Aon bharúil eile?

Aontaím:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_
- 8. Logainmneacha:** Ar chóir aitheantas a thabhairt do logainmneacha Gaeilge & iad a chur ar chomharthaíocht?  
Aon bharúil eile?

Aontaím:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_
- 9. Oideachas:** Ar chóir go mbeadh ceart agus fáil ar Ghaeloideachas ag gach duine ar mhaith leo é?  
Aon bharúil eile?

Aontaím:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_
- 10. Measúnacht Tionchair Chomhionannais:** An gcuideoidh na forálacha seo le cothromas do Ghaeilgeoirí a bhaint amach?  
Aon bharúil eile?

Aontaím:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Síniú: \_\_\_\_\_ Eagraíocht: \_\_\_\_\_

Seoladh (Ríomhphost nó Baile): \_\_\_\_\_



SAMPLAÍ DE LITREACHA FEACHTAIS AGUS ACHAINÍOCHA  
EXAMPLES OF CAMPAIGN LETTERS AND PETITIONS



## Proposals for an Irish Language Act

**1. Official Status:**

Should the Irish language be given official status here?  
Any other comments?

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**2. Irish language in the Courts:**

Should people be able to have their court cases heard through Irish if they chose to do so?  
Any other comments?

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**3. The Assembly:**

Should recognition be given to the use of Irish in the Assembly and equality be shown between the Irish and English language? Any other comments?

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**4. Irish Language Commissioner:**

Should a role be created for an Irish Language Commissioner who would be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Act and helping with the development of the Irish language? Any other comments?

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**5. Public Bodies:**

Should duties be placed on public bodies to recognise the Irish language and to provide services through Irish for people who would like them? Any other comments?

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**6. (A) Language Schemes:**

Should Language Schemes be used to help with the promotion of the Irish language in public life? Any other comments?

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**(B) Irish Language Standards:**

Should Language Schemes be used to help with the promotion of the Irish language in public life? Any other comments?

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**7. Gaeltacht Areas:**

Should recognition and assistance be given to Gaeltacht areas?  
Any other comments?

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**8. Place Names:**

Should recognition be given to placenames in Irish?  
Any other comments?

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**9. Education:**

Should the right to Irish-medium education be available to those who wish to access it?  
Any other comments?

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**10. Equality Impact Assessment:**

Would these provisions help to achieve equality for Irish speakers?  
Any other comments?

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**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Organisation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address (Email or Home):** \_\_\_\_\_

**SAMPLAÍ DE LITREACHA FEACHTAIS AGUS ACHAINÍOCHA  
EXAMPLES OF CAMPAIGN LETTERS AND PETITIONS**

Caral a chara,

Ba bhreá liom comhghairdeas a ghabháil leat as ucht na moltaí maidir le hAcht an Gaeilge. Rinne mé mionscrúdú ar na moltaí s'agat agus sílim gur bunús de reachtaíocht láidir iad.

Aontaím go huile is go hiomlán leis an mholadh chun an Ghaeilge a athint trí reachtaíocht, mar Theanga Oifigiúil sa Tuaisceart, ionas go gcinnteofar Oideachas agus seirbhísí trí mheán na Gaeilge a bheith ar aonchéim leo siúd atá ar fail i mBéarla. Sílim go mbunóidh a leithéid de reachtaíocht comhstádas don Ghaeilge, go n-ardófar an meas agus an mhuintir atá ann di, agus ar deireadh, go gcuirfear lena forbairt agus lena dul chun chin dá bharr.

Braithim go bhfuil aisghaireadh Acht Riar an Chirt 1737 fíor-thabhachtach, agus is fiú a lua ná go bhfuil sé aisghairithe cheana féin i Sasana, in Alban agus sa Bhreatain Beag.

Tá tagairt déanta ag COMEX do Acht Riar an Chirt 1737 cheana mar “cosc dochosanta ar an Teanga Gaeilge...in aghaidh spioraid agus spriocanna na Cairte”.

Is céim a bhfuil fáilte roimpi an socrú gur féidir leis na CTR a gcuid gnó a dhéanamh trí mhéan na Gaeilge. Is Gaeilgeoirí iad 10% de na CTR reatha agus ba choir go mbeadh an ceart acu a gcuid gnó a dhéanamh trí mhéan na Gaeilge, ar aonchéim leis an Bhéarla.

Is sraith ríthábhachtach do do chuid moltaí Coimisinéir Teanga Gaeilge. Ní mór go ndéanfar maoirseacht agus cur chun feidhme ar an Acht le go dtiocfaidh rath air. Cinnteofar ceapachán Choimisinéir Teanga Gaeilge a mbeidh sainchúram soiléir aige/aici agus bheidh freagrach as a chuid/cuid oibre, go gcosnófar agus go bpléifear leis an Ghaeilge agus le Cearta Gaeilgeoirí ar chomhbhunás.

Tá ról na gnomhlachtaí poiblí i gcur chun chinn na Gaeilge trí stádas oifigiúil na teanga agus na Gaeltachta a chur i bhfeidhm, ríthábhachtach maidir le cosaint, feabsú agus forbairt na teanga.

Is sraith tábhachtach den reachtaíocht seo ná gníomhaíocht dhearfach i bhfabhar Gaeilgeoirí a fhostú ar bhoird phoiblí, de réir mar is cuí. Cinnteoidh an chéim seo, má úsáidtear mar is ceart í, go mbeidh cur chuige sruthlíneach ann maidir le cúrsaí teanga agus cuideoidh sí le dúblailt a sheachaint.

Creidim go deimhin go bhfuil Acht na Gaeilge ag teastáil chun cearta daonna Gaeilgeoirí a chosaint agus gur chóir go gcosnófaí sa reachtaíocht iad. Sílim gurb é do chur chuige féin an chéad chéim i dtreo comhionannais don Ghaeilge a bhaint amach agus dá bharr sin, aontaím go huile is go hiomlán le do chuid moltaí.

Go raibh maith agat

Síniú: \_\_\_\_\_

**SAMPLAÍ DE LITREACHA FEACHTAIS AGUS ACHAINÍOCHA  
EXAMPLES OF CAMPAIGN LETTERS AND PETITIONS**

Caral a chara,

I would like to congratulate you for bringing forward proposals for an Irish Language Act. I have studied your proposals and feel they would form the basis of robust legislation.

I strongly agree with the proposal to define Irish as an Official Language in the north through legislation in such a way as to guarantee all levels of Education and services through Irish on a par with those available through English. I feel it would establish the equal status of the Irish language, enhance respect and esteem for it and ultimately contribute to its development and advancement.

I feel a repeal of the Administration of Justice Act 1737 is crucial, and it has already been repealed in England, Scotland and Wales.

COMEX has already referred to the Administration of Justice (Language) Act (Ireland) 1737 as ‘an unjustified prohibition on the Irish language.....contrary to the spirit and objectives of the Charter’

Provision for MLAs to conduct their business in Irish, within the chamber or committee, is a welcomed step. 10% of current MLAs are Irish speakers and should have the right to do their business through Irish, on an equal footing to English.

The Irish Language Commissioner is a vital strand to your proposals. Oversight and implementation of the Act is fundamental to success. The appointment of a commissioner with a clear remit and accountability would ensure the Irish Language, and the rights of Irish speakers are protected and dealt with on an equal basis.

The role of public bodies in the promotion of Irish through the application of the official status of the language and that of the Gaeltacht areas is essential to the protection of, enhancement and development of the language.

Affirmative action, where appropriate, in favour of Irish speakers in recruitment by Public Bodies is an important strand of this legislation. If used properly, this would ensure a streamlined approach to language issues and help avoid duplication.

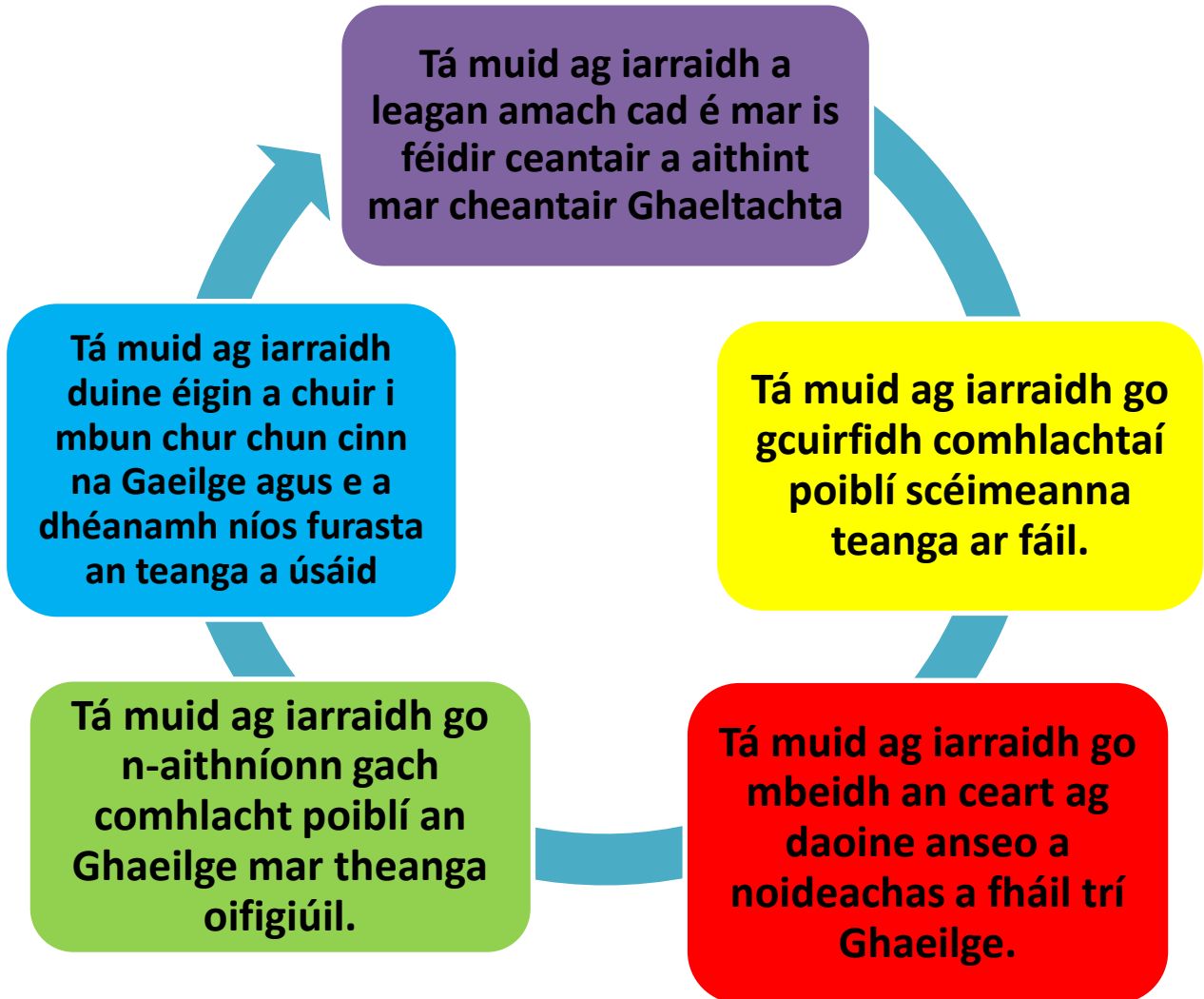
I firmly believe that Acht na Gaeilge is needed to protect the human rights of Irish language speakers and that these should be protected in law. I feel your approach is the first step in achieving equality for the Irish Language and it is on that basis that I fully support your proposals.

Go raibh maith agat

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_

SAMPLAÍ DE LITREACHA FEACHTAIS AGUS ACHAINÍOCHA  
EXAMPLES OF CAMPAIGN LETTERS AND PETITIONS

## Ba cheart go mbeadh an Ghaeilge ina teanga Oifigiúil anseo!



**Má thugtar an dlí nua isteach, féadfaidh sé dea-chaidreamh a fheabhsú idir daoine anseo tríd an Ghaeilge a dhéanamh níos oscailte do gach duine.**

**Aontaím**

Ainm \_\_\_\_\_

Scoil \_\_\_\_\_

SAMPLAÍ DE LITREACHA FEACHTAIS AGUS ACHAINÍOCHA  
EXAMPLES OF CAMPAIGN LETTERS AND PETITIONS

## Irish should become an official Language here!



**Making this law could improve good relations between people here by making the Irish language more open to everyone.**

**I agree**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

**SAMPLAÍ DE LITREACHA FEACHTAIS AGUS ACHAINÍOCHA  
EXAMPLES OF CAMPAIGN LETTERS AND PETITIONS**

Date

Address

Dear Response Co-ordinator,

I am writing to respond to the consultation on a proposed an Irish Language Act. I am surprised why there is the need for an Irish Language Act as I don't believe there is much support for one. I believe such a proposal is both divisive and politically motivated and is wrong.

Is there really any need for a Irish Language Act when only 5% of the population speak the Irish Language. I would also point out that the Irish language is already protected under European law as a minority language, and as such does not need any further protection or rights.

I also believe that at a time when there are so many cuts to Government Departments that this is just a sheer waist of public money, which could be better, spent on our Health Service and Education System. As such I don't believe there is any need for an Irish language act, and I do not support or want one for Northern Ireland.

Yours sincerely,

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**SAMPLAÍ DE LITREACHA FEACHTAIS AGUS ACHAINÍOCHA  
EXAMPLES OF CAMPAIGN LETTERS AND PETITIONS**

Date:

Address:

Dear Response Co-ordinator

I am writing to respond to the consultation on a proposed Irish Language Act. I wish to register my objection to any proposed Irish Language Act.

The reasons for my objection are:

- Irish Language is protected under European law as a minority language.
- According to the last census, only 5% of the population speak the language, therefore it is clearly not a priority in times of increased pressure on public spending.
- This proposal is clearly intended to be divisive and politically motivated. Until all aspects of culture and identity in Northern Ireland are properly recognised, it is unfair to promote the Irish language over and above all other expressions of culture and identity.

Yours sincerely

---

**LIOSTA EAGRAÍOCHTAÍ A CHUIR TUAIRIMÍ IN IÚL  
LIST OF ORGANISATIONS THAT RESPONDED**

Thug na heagraíochtaí seo a leanas freagra ar an chomhlaireachán:

The following organisations responded to the consultation:

An Carn Consulting Ltd  
An Carn Limited T/A Siopa An Carn  
An Ceathrú Póilí – Cultúrlann McAdam Ó Fiaich  
An Droichead  
An Gaeláras  
Ards Borough Council  
Aughlisnafin GAC  
Ballindarragh L.O.L. No. 689  
Ballycarry and District Community Association  
Ballydonaghy Mount Hall LOL 351  
Beechfield Residents Association, Donaghadee  
Bunscoil an Iúir  
Bunscoil Cholmcille  
Cairde Droim nDamh  
CAIRDE Teo  
Cairde Uí Néill, Oileán an Ghuail agus Cluain Eo, Co Thír Eoghain  
Ceoltóirí Luraigh Machaire Rátha agus Carn Tóchair  
Chraobh Chonradh na Gaeilge d'Oscoil Uladh, Cúil Raithin [Ulster University Coleraine]  
Ciaroga An Ceide  
Ciste Infheistíochta Gaeilge  
CLG An T-Iompu Mag Uidir – Tempo Maguires GAA  
CLG De Bhuilbh Tóin, Doire Mhic Cais  
Club Óige Setanta  
Coiste Forbartha Charn Tóchair  
Coiste Gaeloideachais Chromghlinne  
Coláiste an Phobail Cultúrlann Uí Chanáin  
Coláiste na nGael  
Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann - Dún Uladh  
Committee on the Administration of Justice  
Community Relations Council  
Conradh na Gaeilge  
Conradh na Gaeilge Boirche Íochtar  
Conradh na Gaeilge Charn Tóchair  
Council for Church in Society of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland  
County Fermanagh Grand Orange Lodge  
Craobh an Iúir de Chonradh na Gaeilge  
Craobh Chabhán an Chaorthainn de Chomhaltas Uladh agus Conradh na Gaeilge  
(Tír Eoghain)  
Creggan Youth Drop-in Centre  
Croí Éanna, Glengormley  
Cuchulainn Hurling Club  
Cultúrlann McAdam Ó Fiaich  
Cultúrlann Uí Chanáin  
Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise  
Cumann Iománaíochta - Craobh Rua Camlocha - Hurling Club



**LIOSTA EAGRAÍOCHTAÍ A CHUIR TUAIRIMÍ IN IÚL  
LIST OF ORGANISATIONS THAT RESPONDED**

Cumann Gaelach Charn Tóchair  
Cumann Lúthchleas Gael - Coiste Chontae Dhoire  
Dearcán Media  
Donemana LOL No. 503  
Dove House Community Trust  
Droichead, Derry  
Dungannon Volunteer LOL 178  
Enniskillen True Blues L.O.L No 217  
Equality Commission for Northern Ireland  
European Language Equality Network  
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council  
Fourtowns LOL 69  
Gaeilge Locha Riach  
Gael Linn  
Gaelcholáiste Dhoire  
Gaelphobal Cheantar an tSratha Báin  
Gaelscoil an Chaistil  
Gaelscoil Éanna, Glengormley  
Gaelscoil na mBeann  
Gaelscoil na Móna  
Glass Roots Renewables CIC  
Glór Dhal Riada  
Glór Dhún Geimhin  
Glór na Móna  
Glór na nGael  
Glór Uachtar Tíre  
Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland  
Ionad Uíbh Eachach  
Iontaobhas na Gaelscolaíochta  
Keady and District Angling Club  
Laochra Loch Lao  
Liatroim Fontenoys GAC  
LOL 739  
Mentrau Iaith Cymru | Welsh Language Initiative  
Mid Ulster District Council  
Moneysslane LOL 569  
Mountjoy Faith Defenders LOL 750  
Naíscóil and Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir  
Naíscóil Charn Tóchair  
Naíscóil Mhachaire Rátha  
Naíscóil na mBeann  
Naomh Éanna CLG, Glengormley  
Northern Ireland Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (NICILT),  
School of Education, QUB  
Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment CCEA  
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission  
Ógras, Óg-Eagras Gaeilge

**LIOSTA EAGRAÍOCHTAÍ A CHUIR TUAIRIMÍ IN IÚL  
LIST OF ORGANISATIONS THAT RESPONDED**

Oifig an Phoist Thir Chiana  
Phobal an Chaistil  
POBAL  
Pobal ar a'n Iúl, Craobh na hÓmaí  
Saint Canice's G.A.A. Club  
Seapatrik Loyal Orange Lodge  
Sruth na hÉirne  
St Mary's University College  
St Mary's University, Twickenham  
TACA  
Teanga CIC  
Tír na nÓg GAA, Portadown  
Triax Neighbourhood Partnership Board  
Tullintrain Purple Star Loyal Orange Lodge No. 1969, Claudy  
Tullygarley Orange Lodge  
Turas, East Belfast Mission  
Ulster Place-Name Society  
Watty Graham's GAA Club, Maghera  
West Armagh Consortium

Fuarthas freagraí óna páirithe polaitíochta agus óna hionadaithe tofa seo a leanas chomh maith:

Responses were also received from the following political parties and elected representatives:

Alex Easton MLA  
Charles Flanagan TD, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Irish Government  
Comhairle Ceantair Shinn Féin, Doire  
Councillor Cadogan Enright, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council  
Councillor John Finlay, Causeway Coast and Glens District Council  
Dominic Bradley MLA  
Jim Shannon MP  
Jonathan Craig MLA  
Martina Anderson MEP  
Rosie McCorley MLA  
Sinn Féin – Oifigeach Náisiúnta Gaeilge  
Trevor Clarke MLA  
Ulster Unionist Party

**LIOSTA EAGRAÍOCHTAÍ A CHUIR TUAIRIMÍ IN IÚL  
LIST OF ORGANISATIONS THAT RESPONDED**

Litir ag tacú le hAcht na Gaeilge do TÉ – Eisiúint 2 le POBAL, sínithe ag na saineolaithe teanga seo a leanas:

A letter in support of POBAL's *The Irish Language Act NI – 2nd Issue* was signed by the following language experts:

Emeritus Professor Dónall P. Ó Baoill, Irish and Celtic Studies, Queen's University, Belfast

Dr Fionntán de Brún, Irish Languages and Literature, University of Ulster, Belfast

Professor Linda Cardinal, School of Political Studies, University of Ottawa, Canada

Professor Tony Crowley, Department of English Language, University of Leeds

Professor Robert Dunbar, Celtic and Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh

Professor Conchúr Ó Giollagáin, Director of Soilse and Gaelic Research Professor,  
University of the Highlands and Islands, Skye

Professor Wilson McLeod, Celtic and Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh

Dr Fernand de Varennes, Scientific Advisor, Observatoire International des droits  
linguistiques, University of Moncton, Canada

Professor Colin H. Williams, Department of Welsh, Cardiff University

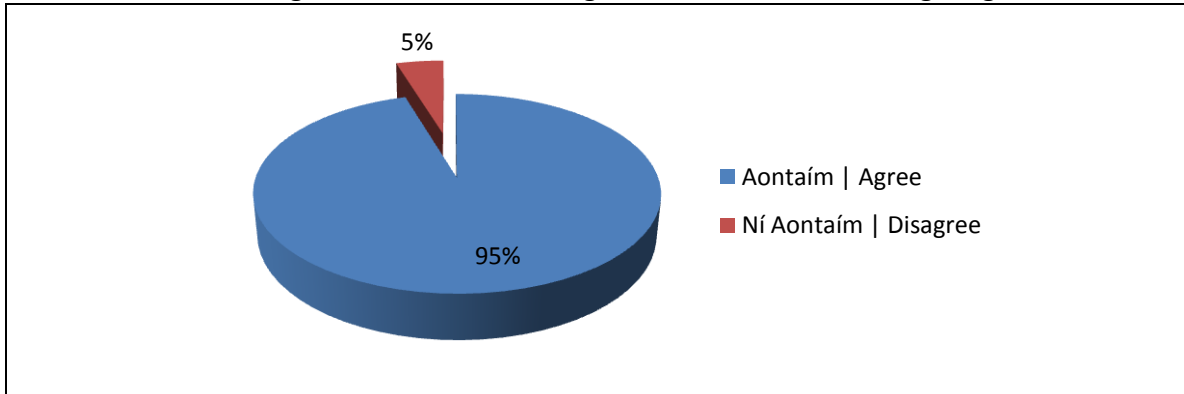
**TORTHAÍ AN CHOMHAIRLEACHÁIN – CAIRTEACHA**  
**RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION – CHARTS**

**MÍR 1: STÁDAS OIFIGIÚIL NA GAEILGE**

**PART 1: OFFICIAL STATUS OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE**

An bhfuil tú i bhfách le Stádas Oifigiúil a thabhairt don Ghaeilge trí reachtaíocht?

Do you agree with the Irish language being given Official Status through legislation?

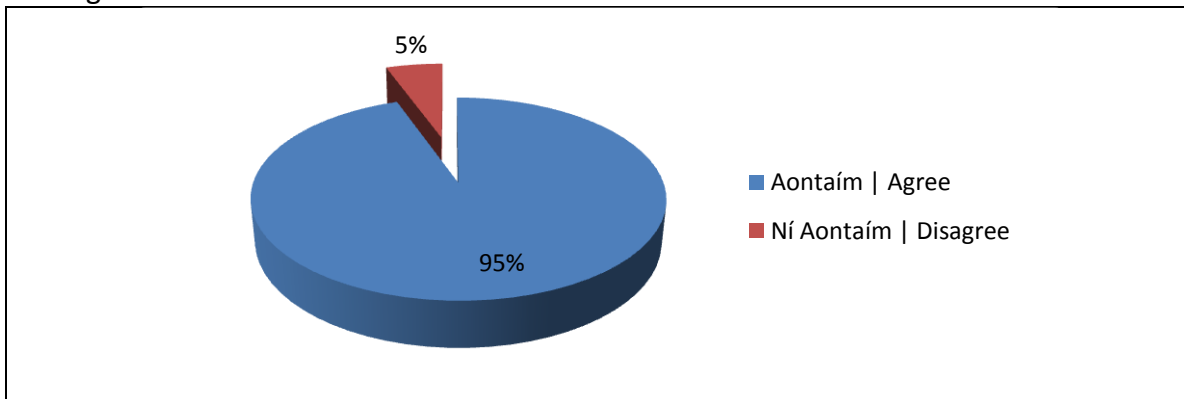


**MÍR 2: AN GHAELIGE SNA CÚIRTEANNA**

**PART 2: IRISH IN THE COURTS**

An bhfuil tú i bhfách le forálacha a bheith san áireamh a cheadódh úsáid na Gaeilge in imeachtaí cúirte?

Do you agree with the inclusion of provisions to allow Irish to be used in the Courts?

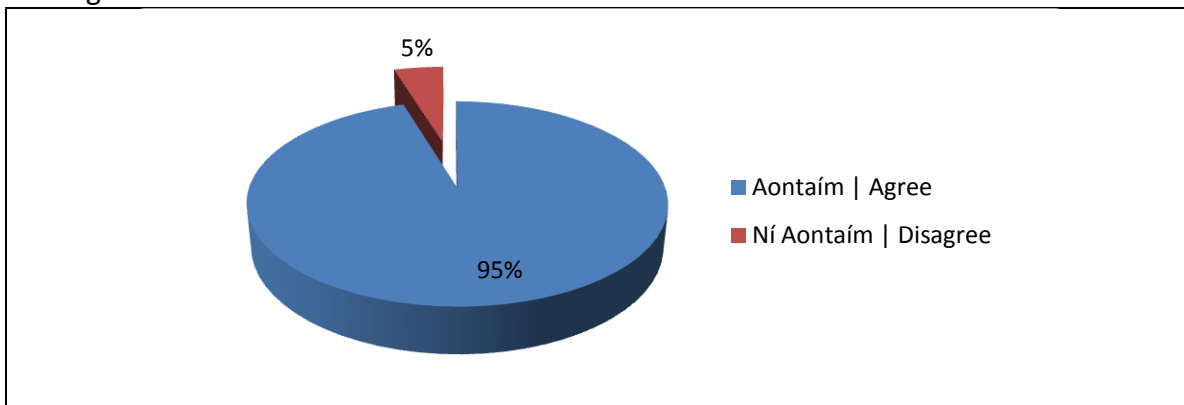


**MÍR 3: AN TIONÓL**

**PART 3: THE ASSEMBLY**

An bhfuil tú i bhfách le forálacha a bheith san áireamh a cheadódh úsáid na Gaeilge sa Tionól?

Do you agree with the inclusion of provisions to allow Irish to be used in the Assembly?

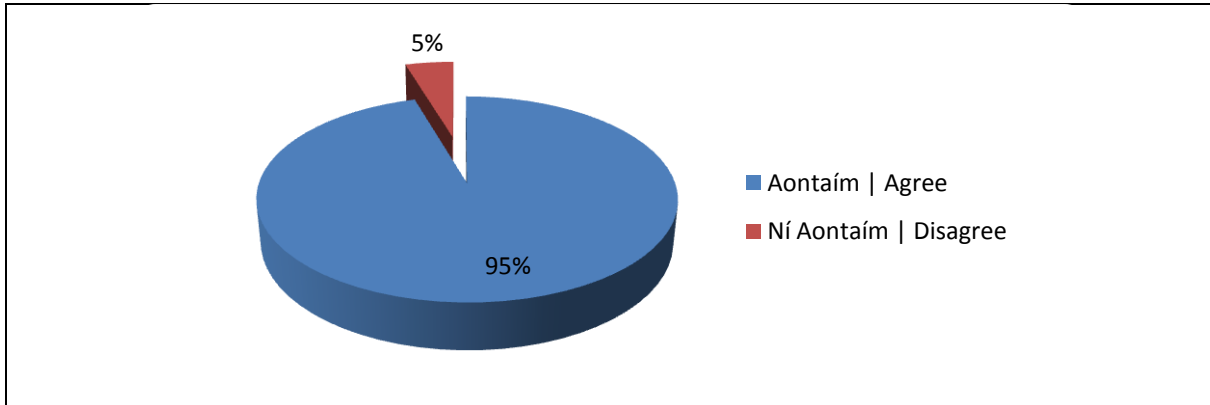


**TORTHAÍ AN CHOMHAIRLEACHÁIN – CAIRTEACHA**  
**RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION – CHARTS****MÍR 4: AN COIMISINÉIR GAEILGE**

An bhfuil tú i bhfách le forálacha a bheith san áireamh le post an Choimisinéara Gaeilge a chruthú?

**PART 4: THE IRISH LANGUAGE COMMISSIONER**

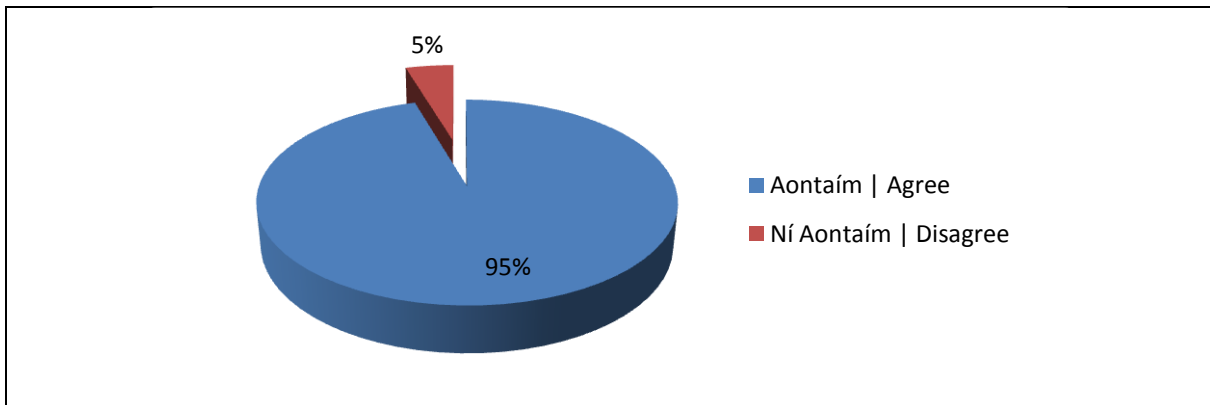
Do you agree with the inclusion of provisions to create the position of an Irish Language Commissioner?

**MÍR 5: COMHLACHTAÍ POIBLÍ**

An bhfuil tú i bhfách le forálacha a bheith san áireamh do Chomhlachtaí Poiblí?

**PART 5: PUBLIC BODIES**

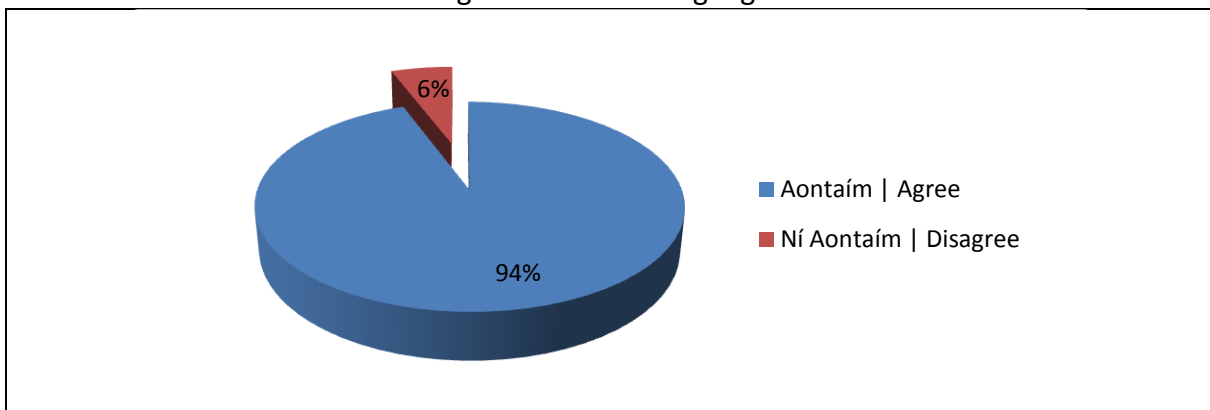
Do you agree with the inclusion of provisions for Public Bodies?

**MÍR 6: SCÉIMEANNA TEANGA**

An bhfuil tú i bhfách le forálacha a bheith san áireamh do Scéimeanna Teanga?

**PART 6: LANGUAGE SCHEMES**

Do you agree with the inclusion of provisions for Language Schemes?

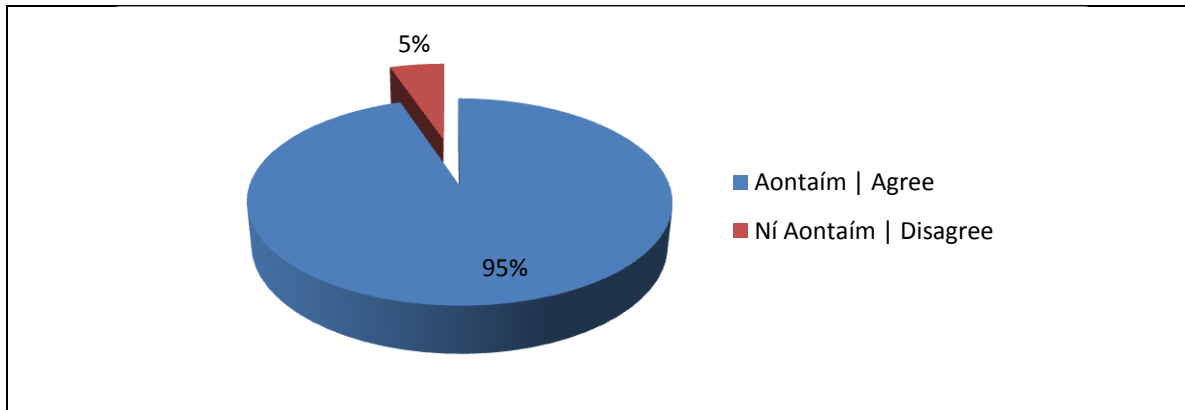


**TORTHAÍ AN CHOMHAIRLEACHÁIN – CAIRTEACHA**  
**RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION – CHARTS****MÍR 7: LIMISTÉIR GHAELTACHTA**

An bhfuil tú i bhfách le forálacha a bheith san áireamh do na limistéir Ghaeltachta?

**PART 7: GAELTACHT AREAS**

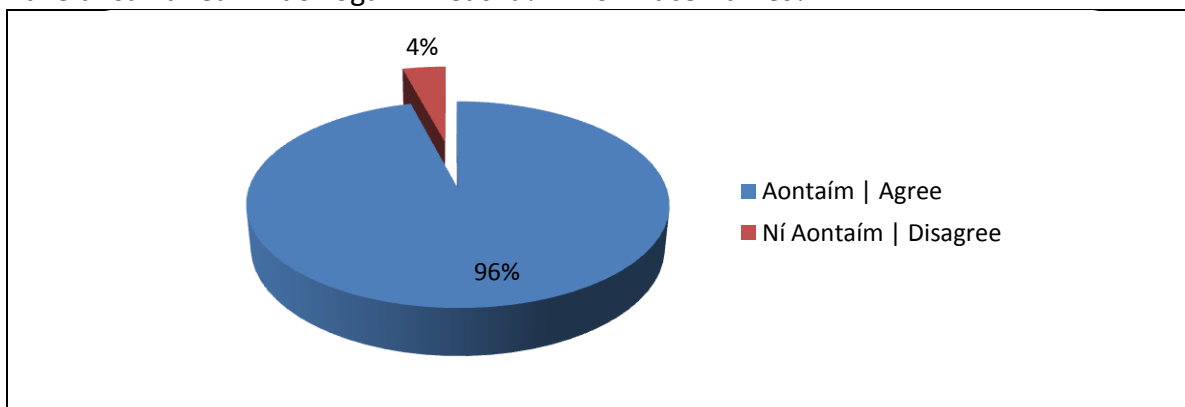
Do you agree with the inclusion of provisions for Gaeltacht Areas?

**MÍR 8: LOGAINMNEACHA**

An bhfuil tú i bhfách le forálacha a bheith san áireamh do Logainmneacha?

**PART 8: PLACE-NAMES**

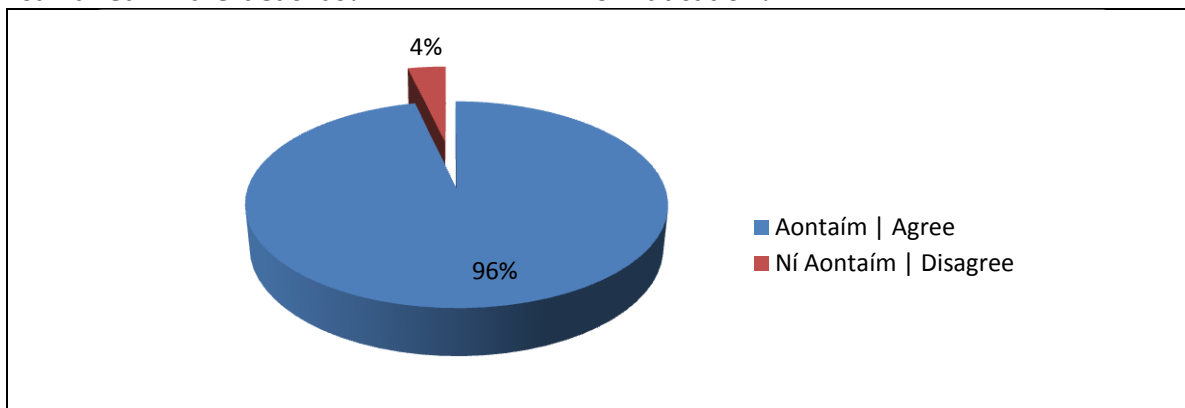
Do you agree with the inclusion of provisions for Place-names?

**MÍR 9: OIDEACHAS**

An bhfuil tú i bhfách le foráil a bheith san áireamh d'Oideachas?

**PART 9: EDUCATION**

Do you agree with the inclusion of a provision for Education?



## NA TOGRAÍ | THE PROPOSALS

MÍR 1  
STÁDAS OIFIGIÚIL NA GAEILGE

1. Saineofar an Ghaeilge ina Teanga Oifigiúil sa tuaisceart sa dóigh go ndearbhófar seirbhísí trí mheán na Gaeilge a bheas ar comhchéim leo sin atá ar fáil trí Bhéarla.

MÍR 2  
AN GHAEILGE SNA CÚIRTEANNA

2. (a) Foráil a thabharfaidh ceart Gaeilge a labhairt in imeachtaí dlí sa tuaisceart.
- (b) Foráil a thabharfaidh ceart Gaeilge a úsáid i gcúirt nó binsear bith agus i gcomhthéacsanna dlí.
- (c) Foráil, sa chás gur páirtí é an Stát nó aon chomhlacht poiblí in imeachtaí sibhialta os comhair cúirte, le go n-úsáidfí siad an teanga oifigiúil, Gaeilge nó Béarla, is rogha leis an pháirtí eile.
- (d) Foráil a shaineoidh nach dtabhóidh duine ar bith aon mhíchaoithiúlacht nó aon chostas breise dó/di féin de thoradh na teanga a roghnóidh sé/sí.
- (e) Foráil le socruithe a dhéanamh le go gcuirfear seirbhís ateangaireachta ar fáil, nuair is gá, gan an duine aonair aon mhíchaoithiúlacht nó costas breise a thabhu dó/di féin.
- (f) Foráil go ndéanann an tAcht seo na hailt ábhartha den Acht um Riar an Chirt (Teanga) (Éire) 1737, nach gceadaíonn ach Béarla amháin a úsáid sna cúirteanna, a aisghairm.

MÍR 3  
AN TIONÓL

3. (a) Foráil lena dtabharfar isteach ceanglas go gcaithfear leis an Ghaeilge agus leis an Bhéarla ar bhonn comhionann i réachtáil

PART 1  
OFFICIAL STATUS OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE

1. Irish to be defined as an Official Language in the north in such a way as to guarantee services through Irish on a par with those available through English.

PART 2  
IRISH IN THE COURTS

2. (a) Provision conferring the right to speak the Irish language in legal proceedings in the north.
- (b) Provision giving the right to use Irish in any court or tribunal and in legal contexts.
- (c) Provision that if the State or a public body is party to civil proceedings before a court, they will use the official language, Irish or English, chosen by the other party.
- (d) Provision stating that a person will not be put to any inconvenience or additional expense by his/her choice of language.
- (e) Provision to make arrangements for an interpretation service to be provided, where necessary, at no inconvenience or additional expense to the individual.
- (f) Provision that this Act repeals the relevant sections of the Administration of Justice (Language) Act (Ireland) 1737, which allows only English to be used in the courts.

PART 3  
THE ASSEMBLY

3. (a) Provision to require the Irish and English languages to be treated on the basis of equality in the conduct of the

## NA TOGRAÍ | THE PROPOSALS

imeachtaí an Tionóil.

- (b) Foráil le go mbeidh sé de cheart ag duine a c(h)uid gnó a phlé os comhair an Tionóil nó os comhair Choistí de chuid an Tionóil as Gaeilge.
- (c) Foráil le go mbeidh córas ateangaireacht chomhuaineach ar fáil sa Tionól lena chinntiú nach mbeidh aon duine gan Gaeilge/Béarla faoi mhíbhuntáiste nuair a bhíonn Gaeilge/Béarla á labhairt.
- (d) Foráil le go mbeidh d'iallach ar an Tionól gach Acht agus Bille a fhoilsiú i gcomhthráth i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla.
- (e) Foráil lena chinntiú go mbeidh meas ar úsáid na Gaeilge sa Tionól agus i gCoistí an Tionóil.

## MÍR 4

## AN COIMISINÉIR GAEILGE

- 4. (a) Foráil le post an Choimisinéara Gaeilge a chruthú.
- (b) Foráil le gurb iad an Chéad-Aire agus an LeasChéad-Aire a cheapfaidh an Coimisinéir Gaeilge.
- (c) Foráil le go mairfidh an ceapachán tréimhse sheasta de 5 bliain agus cáilitheacht ag an cheapaí go n-athcheapfar é/í sa phost ar feadh 2 téarma eile.
- (d) Foráil le go gcomhlíonfaidh an Coimisinéir Gaeilge a c(h)uid dualgas go neamhspleách ar an rialtas.
- (e) Is é is príomhaidhm don Choimisinéir Gaeilge úsáid na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn agus a éascú.
- (f) Foráil lena saineofar go mbeidh an Coimisinéir in ann foireann a cheapadh.
- (g) Ar fheidhmeanna an Choimisinéara Gaeilge, d'áireofaí:

proceedings of the Assembly.

- (b) Provision for a person to have the right to conduct his/her business before the Assembly or before Assembly Committees through Irish.
- (c) Provision for a simultaneous interpretation system to be available in the Assembly to ensure that a person without Irish/English is not at a disadvantage when Irish/English is spoken.
- (d) Provision for the Assembly to be required to publish all Acts and Bills simultaneously in Irish and English.
- (e) Provision to ensure respect for the use of Irish in the Assembly and its Committees.

## PART 4

## THE IRISH LANGUAGE COMMISSIONER

- 4. (a) Provision to create the position of an Irish Language Commissioner.
- (b) Provision that appointment of an Irish Language Commissioner will be by the First Minister and deputy First Minister.
- (c) Provision that appointment will be for a fixed period of 5 years with eligibility for reappointment for a total of 2 terms.
- (d) Provision that the Irish Language Commissioner will carry out his/her duties independent of government.
- (e) Principal aim of the Irish Language Commissioner is to promote and facilitate the use of the Irish language.
- (f) Provision stating that the Commissioner can appoint staff.
- (g) The functions of the Irish Language Commissioner would include:



## NA TOGRAÍ | THE PROPOSALS

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|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) maoirsiú, stiúradh agus monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar fhorfheidhmiú an Achta;</li> <li>(ii) faomhadh, monatóireacht, athbhreithniú agus iniúchóireacht a dhéanamh ar scéimeanna teanga;</li> <li>(iii) comhairle a sholáthar don phobal agus do chomhlachtaí poiblí;</li> <li>(iv) imscrúduithe a dhéanamh ar a c(h)onlán féin, ar iarratas ón Aire iomchuí agus imscrúdú a dhéanamh ar ghearáin ón phobal;</li> <li>(v) tuairisc scríofa a ullmhú i dtaca le gach imscrúdú, a bhféadfadh sé go n-áireofaí inti na moltaí a measann sé/sí iad a bheith iomchuí;</li> <li>(vi) a chinntiú go gcaithfear leis an Ghaeilge chomh fabhrach céanna leis an Bhéarla; agus</li> <li>(vii) tuairisc bhliantúil ar a c(h)uid oibre a sholáthar lena cur faoi bhráid an Tionóil agus teacht i láthair Coiste Tionóil le ceisteanna a fhreagairt i dtaca leis an tuairisc sin.</li> </ul> <p>(h) Beidh de chumhacht ag an Choimisinéir Gaeilge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) comhlachtaí poiblí a threorú le scéimeanna teanga a dhréachtú.</li> <li>(ii) eolas scríofa nó ó bhéal a fháil ó chomhlachtaí poiblí lena c(h)umasú dualgais na hoifige a chomhlíonadh.</li> <li>(iii) iallach a chur ar dhuine teacht os a c(h)omhair chun na críche sin agus ní mór don duine sin an ceanglas sin a chomhall. Beidh an duine sin i dteideal na ndíolúintí agus na bpríbhleáidí céanna a mbeadh sé/sí ina dteideal dá mba fhinné os comhair na hArd-Chúirte é/í.</li> <li>(iv) ionchúisimh a thionscnamh i gcion achomair nuachruthaithe diúltú comhoibriú nó gan comhoibriú le hobair an Choimisinéara Gaeilge.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) overseeing, controlling and monitoring the implementation of the Act;</li> <li>(ii) approving, monitoring, reviewing and auditing language schemes;</li> <li>(iii) providing advice to the public and public bodies;</li> <li>(iv) conducting investigations on his/her own initiative, on request from the appropriate Minister and investigating complaints from the public;</li> <li>(v) preparing a written report in respect of each investigation which may include the recommendations he/she considers appropriate;</li> <li>(vi) ensuring that the Irish language is treated no less favourably than the English language; and</li> <li>(vii) providing an annual report on his/her work to be laid before the Assembly and to appear before an Assembly Committee to answer questions in respect of the report.</li> </ul> <p>(h) The Irish Language Commissioner will have the power to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) instruct public bodies to draft language schemes.</li> <li>(ii) obtain written or oral information from public bodies in order to enable the fulfilment of the duties of the office.</li> <li>(iii) compel a person to attend before him/her for that purpose and the person must comply with that requirement. The person will be entitled to the same immunities and privileges as if he or she were a witness before the High Court.</li> <li>(iv) initiate prosecutions for a newly created summary offence of refusing or failing to co-operate with the work of the Irish Language</li> </ul> |
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## NA TOGRAÍ | THE PROPOSALS

- (i) Foráil le go ndéanfar an gearánach a chúiteamh sa chás go seastar leis an ghearán nó le cuid de.

MÍR 5  
COMHLACHTAÍ POIBLÍ

5. (a) Déanfaidh gach comhlacht stáit agus leathstáit agus eagraíochtaí, institiúidí, údaráis áitiúla, agus tionscnaimh phríobháideacha airgeadais de chuid an stáit, an Tionól agus gach comhlacht/coiste dá chuid, na cúirteanna agus an tseirbhís póilíneachta an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn trí stádas na Gaeilge mar theanga Oifigiúil agus stádas mar Ghaeltacht oifigiúil aon limistéir atá ainmnithe dá réir a aithint agus a chur i bhfeidhm (déanfar na comhlachtaí a bheas faoi réir na bhforálacha seo a liostú i sceideal).
- (b) Forálacha lena cheadú don Choimisinéir Gaeilge comhlachtaí poiblí a chur leis an Sceideal.
- (c) Foráil le haghaidh idirdhealú dearfach ar son Gaeilgeoirí in earcaíocht sa Státseirbhís agus i gcomhlachtaí poiblí eile.
- (d) Forálacha le go mbeidh d'iallach ar Chomhlachtaí Poiblí comhoibriú leis an Choimisinéir Gaeilge i gcomhlíonadh fheidhmeanna na hOifige sin.
- (e) Beidh dualgas ar Chomhlachtaí Poiblí:
- (i) a chinntiú go bhfreagrófar i nGaeilge aon chomhfhreagras a chuirfear chucu as Gaeilge gan aon mhoill mhíchuí;
- (ii) a chinntiú, nuair a sholáthraítear faisnéis don phobal, go ndéanfar cumarsáid i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla;
- (iii) doiciméid ina leagtar amach tograí polasaithe poiblí, tuairiscí bliantúla, cuntais iniúchta nó ráitis airgeadais

Commissioner.

- (i) Provision for compensation to the complainant where the complaint is upheld or partially upheld.

PART 5  
PUBLIC BODIES

5. (a) All state and semi-state bodies, organisations, institutions, local authorities, private finance initiatives, Assembly and bodies/committees thereof, the courts, the police service to promote Irish by recognising and putting into effect the official language status of Irish and the official Gaeltacht status of any so designated areas (bodies subject to these provisions to be listed in a schedule).
- (b) Provisions to allow public bodies to be added to the Schedule by the Irish Language Commissioner.
- (c) Provision for affirmative action in favour of Irish speakers in recruitment to the Civil Service and other public bodies.
- (d) Provision that public bodies are required to cooperate with the Irish Language Commissioner in the performance of the functions of that Office.
- (e) Public bodies to have a duty:
- (i) to ensure that correspondence sent to them in Irish is replied to in Irish without undue delay;
- (ii) to ensure that when information is provided to the public the communication is in Irish and English;
- (iii) to publish simultaneously in Irish and English documents setting out public policy proposals, annual

## NA TOGRAÍ | THE PROPOSALS

srl. a fhoilsiú i gcomhthráth i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla;

- (iv) scéimeanna teanga a chomhaontú leis an Choimisinéir Gaeilge agus na gealltanais ina leithéid de scéimeanna reachtúla a chur i bhfeidhm; agus
- (v) tabhairt faoi chomhairliúcháin phoiblí le cuidiú le hullmhú scéimeanna teanga.

## MÍR 6

## SCÉIMEANNA TEANGA

- 6. (a) Foráil le go mbeidh d'iallach ar gach comhlacht poiblí scéimeanna a eisiúint, ina leagfar amach na dóigheanna a ndéanfar seirbhísí Gaeilge a sholáthar.
- (b) Foráil le go mbeidh 6 mhí ag comhlacht poiblí le dréachtscéim a ullmhú, ón dáta ar a dtreoraíonn an Coimisinéir Gaeilge dó é sin a dhéanamh.
- (c) Foráil le go ndéanfar gach scéim a ullmhú de réir mar is iomchuí do chliaint/custaiméirí an chomhlachta phoiblí sin.
- (d) Foráil ionas go gcuirfear san áireamh i scéimeanna teanga seachadadh seirbhísí i limistéir atá sainithe ina limistéir Ghaeltachta faoin Acht seo.
- (e) Foráil le go gcomhaontóidh agus go bhfaomhfaidh an Coimisinéir Gaeilge na scéimeanna teanga.

## MÍR 7

## LIMISTÉIR GHAELTACHTA

- 7. (a) Sainmhíniú ar na coinníollacha faoina n-aithneofar limistéir Ghaeltachta, idir Thuaithe agus Uirbeacha.
- (b) Údarás le bheith ag an Aire iomchuí le teorainneacha limistéir Ghaeltachta a shocrú.
- (c) Údarás le stádas oifigiúil limistéir Ghaeltachta a bhronnadh ar limistéir

reports, audited accounts or financial statements etc.;

- (iv) to agree language schemes with the Irish Language Commissioner and to implement the commitments of such statutory schemes; and
- (v) to undertake public consultation exercises to assist in the preparation of language schemes.

## PART 6

## LANGUAGE SCHEMES

- 6. (a) Provision that all public bodies be required to produce schemes, which set out how Irish language services will be provided.
- (b) Provision that a public body will have 6 months to prepare a draft scheme from the date it is directed to do so by the Irish Language Commissioner.
- (c) Provision that each scheme would be prepared according to what is appropriate for the clients/customers of the public body.
- (d) Provision that language schemes will take account of service delivery to areas defined as Gaeltachts under this Act.
- (e) Provision that language schemes will be agreed and approved by the Irish Language Commissioner.

## PART 7

## GAELTACHT AREAS

- 7. (a) Definition of conditions for recognition of Gaeltacht areas, both Rural and Urban.
- (b) Authority to fix the boundaries of a Gaeltacht area to lie with the appropriate minister.
- (c) Authority to grant official Gaeltacht area status to areas within the northern

## NA TOGRAÍ | THE PROPOSALS

laistigh de dhlínse an tuaiscirt.

- (d) Foráil le go n-ainmneoidh an tAire iomchuí limistéir Ghaeltachta breise nó úra.
- (e) Foráil le teorainneacha na limistéar Ghaeltachta a shíneadh.
- (f) Forálacha leis na limistéir Ghaeltachta ainmnithe seo a chosaint agus a fhorbairt.
- (g) Déanfar na limistéir Ghaeltachta oifigiúla a ainmneofar faoin Acht seo a liostú i sceideal.

MÍR 8  
LOGAINMNEACHA

8. (a) Sainmhíniú ar “logainm”.
- (b) Foráil a bhunóidh freagracht as logainmneacha in Oifig an Choimisinéara Gaeilge.
- (c) Foráil le go mbeidh aitheantas dlíthiúil oifigiúil ag logainmneacha Gaeilge.
- (d) Foráil lena gcuirfear ceangal ar Sheirbhísí Talaimh & Réadmhaoine/Land & Property Services aitheantas a thabhairt do logainmneacha Gaeilge ina gcuid léarscáileanna, foilseachán, srl.
- (e) Foráil faoi choinne comharthaí bóthair dátheangacha ar a mbeidh an Ghaeilge ar comhchéim leis an Bhéarla.

MÍR 9  
OIDEACHAS

9. (a) Foráil le ceart ar oideachas trí mheán na Gaeilge.

jurisdiction.

- (d) Provision for further or new Gaeltacht areas to be designated by the appropriate minister.
- (e) Provision for extending the boundaries of Gaeltacht areas.
- (f) Provisions to protect and develop these designated Gaeltacht areas.
- (g) Official Gaeltacht areas designated under this Act to be listed in a schedule.

PART 8  
PLACE-NAMES

8. (a) Definition of “place-name”.
- (b) Provision locating responsibility for place-names, in the Irish Language Commissioner’s Office.
- (c) Provision for place-names in Irish to be given official and legal recognition.
- (d) Provision obliging Land & Property Services to give recognition to Irish language place-names in its maps, publications, etc.
- (e) Provision for bilingual road signs to have the Irish content on a par with English.

PART 9  
EDUCATION

9. (a) Provision to guarantee the right to education through the medium of Irish.

Comhairliúchán ar Thograí faoi choinne Bille Gaeilge  
Consultation on Proposals for an Irish Language Bill



An Roinn

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agus Fóillíochta**

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