



Iarnród Éireann

Language Scheme
2019-2022

Under Section 11 of the
Official Languages Act 2003

1. INTRODUCTION

This is the first Language Scheme prepared by Iarnród Éireann under section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003 ("the Act"), as part of the wider CIÉ Group Scheme.

Section 11 of the Act provides for the preparation by public bodies of a statutory scheme detailing the services which they will provide.

- Through the medium of Irish
- Through the medium of English; and through
- The medium of Irish and English

And the measures to be adopted to ensure that certain services not provided by Iarnród Éireann through the medium of the Irish Language shall be so provided within an agreed timeframe.

2. Preparation for the Language Scheme

This scheme has been prepared at the request of the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht Arts under Section 11 of the Act and, in accordance with the Guidelines under section 12 of the same Act.

In preparation for this scheme, an internal Irish Language Committee across the CIÉ Group was established to address the various areas of the scheme, taking into account what is achievable over the coming years.

Under section 13 of the Act, a public notice was published in of our intention to prepare a draft scheme under the Official Languages Act, 2003. Fifteen submissions were received and examined, and these were reviewed in preparing this scheme. CIÉ would like to thank everyone who took the time to engage with this process.

3. The content of the Language Scheme

The Scheme aims to improve and enhance the service that Iarnród Éireann has offered in the Irish language. It contains an outline of the services currently available in Irish and plans to improve the provision of services over the course of this three year scheme.

4. Commencement Date of Scheme

The scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The Scheme will commence with effect from the 26th February 2019 and shall remain in force for a period of three years from that date or until a new

Scheme is confirmed by the Minister, pursuant to Section 15 of the Act, whichever is the later.

5. Overview of Iarnród Éireann

Iarnród Éireann is a subsidiary of C.I.E. company registration number 119571. Head Office, Connolly Station, Amiens Street, Dublin 1, Ireland.

The core activities of Iarnród Éireann can be described as the transportation of people throughout the nation by rail in a safe manner. Train operations, infrastructure management and associated commercial and administrative functions are among the activities undertaken on a daily basis by Iarnród Éireann. Iarnród Éireann carried 45.5 million passengers in 2017.

Iarnród Éireann has seven board members, five of whom were appointed by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport and two members appointed by employees.

The current Board members are:

- Mr. Frank Allen (Chairman)
- Ms. Carolyn Griffiths
- Ms. Valerie Little
- Mr. Mal McGreevy
- Dr. Peter Mullholland
- Mr. Thomas Wynne

The Board oversees the work of Iarnród Éireann and ratifies all funding decisions and all aspects of policy making and industry development.

6. Commitment to service delivery in Irish

Iarnród Éireann supports the principles of Irish, English and duality, as outlined in the Official Languages Act 2003, and is committed to facilitating and accommodating its customers who wish to conduct their business through Irish to the greatest extent within its resources.

Iarnród Éireann endeavours to promote the Irish Language and improve our services to the public through Irish and welcomes the preparation of this Scheme as an opportunity to formalise the services already offered through Irish and to expand on the availability of services through Irish.

Principal Means of Communication with the Public

Face to Face Contact

Telephone Services

Electronic Communication

Website

Social Media

Press/Publicity

Letter

Services currently provided by Iarnród Éireann through Irish

Correspondence -

All letters and emails received in the Irish language are responded to in Irish.

Website –

Limited 'fixed' information bilingual

Social Media -

Responses to Irish through Irish

Advertising -

Public consultation notices are bilingual

On-board automated announcements –

Services other than the DART are bilingual. Station information is bilingual on DART services.

Station automated announcements

Limited announcements are bilingual

Station Staff

A small portion of Station Staff would have limited Irish.

Timetable/Posters

Some are bilingual.

Ticketing

The tickets are bilingual, or a choice is given to print them in Irish or English

Third-party contractors

Signage by contractors bilingual where providing services directly to public on our behalf – incorporated in tender processes.

Customer Forms

Bilingual

Automated email responses

Email responses where providing services directly to public are bilingual.

Services currently available through English only

All other services are delivered through English only

Services currently available through Irish & English

- Annual Report
- Publications – Customer Charter, Policy documents, Public consultation
- Information Posters

7. Enhancement of service to be provided bilingually

Telephone Services - Customer Information

An Irish speaking agent to be available at all times during opening hours of customer information centre.

Timeframe for completion: within the first six months of this scheme

Iarnród Éireann Head Office telephone number –

The option to choose service through an automated Irish menu of options shall be made available.

Timeframe for completion: End of second year of this scheme

Face to face contact

Should an employee be unable to engage in Irish at stations, they will be provided with a contact in our Customer Information Centre with whom a customer can engage in Irish should they prefer.

Timeframe: Within six months of this scheme.

Email messages -

In addition to existing centralised customer contact points, which are bilingual, individual staff members shall be encouraged to use the non-system generated part of 'out of office' replies in both Irish and English.

Timeframe for completion: End of first year of this scheme

Correspondence

In addition to fulfilling its legal obligation to reply in Irish to correspondence received in Irish, Iarnród Éireann will initiate correspondence in Irish with those who are known to prefer correspondence in Irish.

Timeframe for completion: from the commencement of this Scheme.

Staff Training & Development

Irish language training courses will be provided for reception staff and all other staff who wish to avail of same. The focus of these language training programmes will be railway relevant training to specifically increase the capability of Iarnród Éireann staff in dealing with Irish Language customer requests.

Timeframe for completion: End of first year of this scheme

- The commitments made by Iarnród Éireann in this Scheme will be brought to the attention of staff through an internal communications campaign.
- Iarnród Éireann proposes to enhance the celebration of certain public/cultural events in Irish such as St. Patrick's Day with a particular focus on celebrations through and promotion of the Irish Language. Iarnród Éireann will participate in Seachtain na Gaeilge where all staff will be encouraged to communicate in their daily tasks through the medium of Irish.

Publications

Major reports published by Iarnród Éireann such as the annual report, public policy proposals, audited accounts or financial statements, and any other documents that fall under section 5 of the Official Languages Act, shall be published bilingually, with the exception of specialised internal instruction manuals or documents of a technical, scientific nature, which will be available in English only. Where length of any bilingual publication would reduce its effectiveness or involve excessive additional cost, separate Irish and English language versions may be provided. In this regard, each will contain a statement that a version is available in the other language.

Timeframe for completion – End of first year of this scheme

Press Releases

All press releases pertaining to social/cultural events shall be issued and posted to the Company's website bilingually. These will be issued simultaneously with the English Version. Upon request by local and/or national media press releases shall be made available in Irish.

All press releases and statements connected with the issuing of bilingual reports (such as the annual report) will be issued bilingually from the commencement of the scheme.

Timeframe for completion: From the commencement of this Scheme

Communication

Upon request by local and/or national media, Iarnród Éireann will aim to ensure that an Irish speaking spokesperson, of sufficiently authority, will be available for media interviews.

Timeframe for completion: End of first year of this scheme

Website

All fixed content shall be made available through Irish

Timeframe for completion: By end of this scheme.

Monitoring and Review of the Scheme

The overall responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the scheme shall be assigned to the Corporate Communications Department.

Annual updates on progress shall be reported to the Board of Iarnród Éireann

It is intended that the operation of this scheme will be reviewed from 18 months of its commencement and again at the end of the three year period to ensure delivery of agreed targets and adequate provision of services and initiatives through Irish in line with present and future demand from the industry and the Official Languages Act 2003.

Publication of agreed scheme

The contents of the final approved scheme along with the commitments and provisions of the scheme shall be publicised to staff and the general public by means of –

- Internal Newsletter
- Press Release
- Company Website

A copy of the Scheme has been forwarded to the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga.