

An Coimisinéir Teanga

Address to: Senedd Cymru's Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and
International Relations Committee

Gysylltiadau rhwng Cymru ac Iwerddon (Wales-Ireland relations)

10 December 2025

A Chathaoirligh, agus a Bhaill an tSeanaid, mar Choimisinéir Teanga fáiltím roimh an deis teacht i láthair an Choiste Cultúir, Cumarsáide, Breatnaise, Spóirt agus Caidrimh Idirnáisiúnta le labhairt faoin ábhar tábhachtach, an caidreamh idir an Bhreatain Bheag agus Éire.

Chairperson and Members of Senedd Cymru, as Coimisinéir Teanga I very much welcome the opportunity to address the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee on the important matter of Wales-Ireland relations.

Historic links between Wales and Ireland

Ireland and Wales are woven together by a rich tapestry of historical, linguistic, and cultural connections that span thousands of years. Throughout history, waves of migration and trade across the Irish Sea have not only fostered economic exchanges but also nurtured vibrant cultural and social interactions.

Our native languages, Irish (Gaeilge, a term coined by the Welsh – Gwyddeleg from Proto-Brythonic *guið* cognate to *fiáin* in Irish and meaning ‘wild people’) and Welsh (Cymraeg), while distinct, belong to the Celtic language family. The shared linguistic roots highlight historical ties and cultural exchanges. Irish, being one of the oldest written languages in western Europe, was first written in Ogham in the 4th - 5th centuries. Further evidence of our shared heritage can be found in Pembrokeshire, in southwest Wales, where the largest collections of Ogham inscriptions outside Ireland are located, evidence of early Irish settlements.

Both Ireland and Wales also truly appreciate the importance of music and the arts in keeping their languages alive. Festivals like the Eisteddfod in Wales and Oireachtas na Samhna in Ireland celebrate and showcase our vibrant cultures and languages and our vibrant artistic traditions.

St. Patrick and St. David are two significant figures in Irish and Welsh history, respectively, who played crucial roles in the spread of Christianity and the cultural development of their regions. Their stories showcase the deep historical ties between Ireland and Wales. These ties between St. Patrick and St. David serve as a reminder of the deep cultural and spiritual links between Ireland and Wales, reflecting a shared past and an ongoing appreciation for each other's traditions.

The St. David's Day events that the Welsh Government runs annually in Ireland on February 28, which I have had the pleasure of attending on several occasions, are very important in building on the strong ties between our nations.

The Ireland-Wales Shared Statement 2030 is a significant initiative to strengthen the historic ties between Ireland and Wales. Building on the success of the 2021–2025 agreement, this framework sets a clear path for collaboration in six key areas: political engagement, climate and energy, economy and trade, education and research, culture and heritage, and community links. I see significant opportunities, for collaboration between my Office, Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga, and Comisiynydd y Gymraeg, to share knowledge and exchange strategic insights across the key domains of culture- (language) and education to strengthen language rights and improve public services in our respective jurisdictions. I wish to address opportunities for cooperation within these two domains in particular, in the context of the significant opportunities and challenges in the Irish language rights landscape at present.

My role as An Coimisinéir Teanga, and that of my Office (Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga), were established under the Official Languages Act 2003. My role includes monitoring over 500 public bodies for compliance with Irish language legislation and investigating complaints from the public. My Office also provides information on language rights to the public and advise public bodies on their obligations. The Official Languages

(Amendment) Act 2021 enhances the language rights of the Irish-speaking community by requiring public bodies to offer more public services in Irish. A very positive result of the amended 2021 language rights legislation has been the significant increase in advertising by public bodies in Irish. Audit results from a recent report published by my Office indicate that public bodies spent €19 million on advertising in the Irish language in 2024. In a relatively short timeframe, this provision has significantly increased the visibility of Irish across various media, which is instrumental in promoting the vibrancy and everyday use of the Irish language. The growth of advertising not only strengthens the language rights of the Irish-speaking community but also creates new revenue streams for Irish language professionals and contributes to the growth of Irish-language media sector. The audit report on advertising is attached in Appendix A.

Cornerstones of Cooperation

During 2024, important milestones were achieved in implementing the new language legislation contained in the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021. The Government of Ireland launched the first-ever statutory National Plan for Irish Language Public Services in the history of the Irish State in October 2024. The main aim of the Plan is to set out a clear pathway for the public sector in Ireland to build capacity for significantly improving public services in the Irish language. The cornerstones of the National Plan are outlined in Appendix B attached.

Two cornerstones included in the amended 2021 Act in particular will underpin the National Plan during its lifespan to 2023:

- firstly, **the language standards system**, which will specifically set out the services that public bodies must provide in Irish, and the language proficiency level in Irish that staff providing those services must have
- the second cornerstone is the statutory provision that 20% of staff recruited (**workforce planning**) to the Public Service between June 2022 and December 2030 must be proficient in Irish.

Language Standards

As we anticipate the forthcoming publication of the first draft-language standards by the Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht in Ireland, there exists a considerable body of valuable insights to be drawn from the Comisiynydd y Gymraeg's notable accomplishments in the oversight of language standards implementation in Wales.

The First Minister of the Welsh National Assembly, Carwyn Jones AM, eloquently outlined in 2015 both the challenges and opportunities inherent in the language standards system when presenting the initial standards regulations to the Assembly:

‘Our ultimate aim is for the Welsh language to be considered as more than just a translation issue, becoming an automatic part of service provision in Wales. We want to see the Welsh language being normalised in all parts of private and public life and, of course, in the workplace. We are confident, therefore, that the standards will be a key step towards that.’

The language standards in Wales deserve recognition for their comprehensive approach to essential areas of public service delivery, policy making, and internal operations. Sections 11–12 (Standards 52–60) of the Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015, I believe, exemplify the succinct, yet versatile nature of the Welsh language standards. They effectively leverage the significant potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to address the evolving public service needs of Welsh speakers.

A considerable number of the 600 complaints my office receives each year relate to the lack of online ICT and customer support services in Irish for regarding basic public services. While the availability of online public services is increasing rapidly, the quality of services in Irish lags significantly behind those in English. This situation undermines the confidence of the Irish-speaking community in the State's commitment to providing equal access to public services for Irish speakers. The Irish Government has emphasised the importance of online services in strategies such as 'Connecting Government 2030', which aims to have 80% of citizens use platforms like MyGovID by 2030. The MyGovID

portal allows access to essential services, including driver's licences and passports. While the services available in English are comprehensive, the current offerings in Irish on MyGovID are deficient. The initial set of language standards in Ireland needs to address this issue, ensuring that essential public services are adequately accessible in Irish to serve the needs of the Irish-speaking community better.

Since the introduction of language standards a decade ago, respective Comisiynydd y Gymraeg have decisively recognised their critical role in enhancing clarity and accountability regarding the delivery of key services by public bodies. The comprehensive framework established by the Welsh language standards plays a vital role in ensuring that public services are thoughtfully designed and effectively aligned with the dynamic needs of the Welsh-speaking community. I note the incumbent Comisiynydd y Gymraeg, Efa Gruffudd Jones, prioritising the introduction of a new co-regulation approach aimed at enhancing compliance with the Welsh Language Standards through strategic collaboration with organisations. A primary focus has been on working with the health sector to improve adherence to Standard 110, which addresses the planning of clinical care in Welsh, with notable progress achieved.

Systematic Workforce Planning

The nature of complaints that my Office receives annually also reflects a notable shortage of staff with the necessary proficiency in Irish to provide public services in Irish. The Official Languages Act (amendment) 2021 includes a new provision that public bodies must ensure that one in every five staff members recruited between May 2022, and December 2030 are proficient in Irish. For public bodies to have sufficient staff competent in Irish to effectively deliver the new public services that will be set out in the language standards, planning for an Irish language-proficient workforce must be embedded in the organisational planning of public bodies across the public service. Ongoing coordination, oversight and reporting will be required at a national level to measure progress on achieving the overarching requirement of recruiting staff with fluency in Irish, in sufficient numbers.

Comisiynydd y Gymraeg's recent report:

'Empowering the Welsh language through strong governance: Report on the performance of organisations 2024-25',

sheds important light on some of the challenges that public organisations in Wales face in meeting their commitments regarding recruiting staff proficient in Welsh.

Section 4.2.35 in particular is worth noting:

'Over the past few years, much attention has been given to skills assessment approaches and job advertising, as well as to the need for organisations to **consider linguistic needs as part of their workforce planning**. Although a lot of worthwhile work is being done to improve these aspects, there is still considerable variation in the way the linguistic needs of vacant posts are identified and expressed in adverts. As a result, it is still unclear to candidates at times exactly what the linguistic requirements are for the post.'

This observation highlights the crux of the challenge we face in both our jurisdictions: embedding the recruitment of staff proficient in Irish and Welsh, respectively, in the organisational planning of bodies involved in public service delivery.

The pivotal importance of the educational sector in cultivating a pipeline of prospective staff skilled in the Welsh language is thoughtfully emphasised in section 4.2.36 of the same report.

'We will continue to work closely with organisations over the next period to address the inconsistencies. This work will also be part of the wider preparation for possible changes due to the passing of the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025, which is likely to introduce a new national framework for assessing language skills and workforce planning.'

The estimate of students in higher education courses in Ireland with Irish as a subject is around 1%. To achieve the goal of 20% of new entrants proficient in Irish by 2030, a national effort from the university sector is essential to produce enough graduates in

various fields like administration, corporate governance, and teacher training. Long-term planning must include Irish-medium education at all levels to ensure a steady influx of students into Irish-medium university programs. The Government of Ireland recently announced further funding for the national centre Lárionad na Gaeilge based in Maynooth University involved in Irish-language proficiency tests for the public sector.

Recognising the critical role of the education sector in ensuring an adequate supply of staff proficient in our respective languages to provide outstanding public services, my Office is eager to explore collaborative opportunities to inform public policy on this critical issue.

International Association of Language Commissioners (IALC)

Founded in 2013 in Dublin, Ireland, the IALC is dedicated to promoting and advancing language rights, equality, and diversity. The organisation plays a vital role in facilitating knowledge exchange among language commissioners and encouraging the sharing of best practices in the field. Current membership includes representatives from regions and countries with language commissioners from Wales, Canada (incl. Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Indigenous Languages), Catalonia, the Basque Region, Navarra, Kosovo and Ireland.

The 2024 IALC International Conference, hosted by Comisiynydd y Gymraeg, exemplified the potential for sharing knowledge and best practices to safeguard language rights and promote understanding of multilingual and human rights policies across our jurisdictions. The next IALC International Conference will be held in Gaillimh (Galway), Ireland, in September 2026. I wish to take this opportunity to commend Comisiynydd y Gymraeg and her team again for running such an excellent event.

Northern Ireland

Both the British and Irish governments recognised the importance of language traditions in Northern Ireland in the Good Friday Agreement of 1998. The Agreement committed to:

“recognise the importance of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to linguistic diversity ... including the Irish language”

That commitment by both governments was further reflected in the New Decade, New Approach agreement in 2020, which declared that an Office of Identity and Cultural Expression (OICE) would be established in Northern Ireland. That commitment was brought to fruition in recent weeks with appointments to the roles of Irish Language Commissioner, Commissioner for the Ulster Scots and the Ulster British tradition, and Office Director. As the current chair of the IALC, and my colleagues in the IALC, we look forward to exploring opportunities for cooperation through the IALC association and offering any support we can to the OICE.

In conclusion, I extend my sincere thanks to the Chair and members of the Committee for granting me the opportunity to participate in the important discussions regarding Wales-Ireland relations. I look forward to furthering our collaborative efforts with all stakeholders involved in this very important initiative.

An Coimisinéir Teanga

Séamas Ó Concheanainn

An Coimisinéir Teanga
Aitheasc do: Coiste Cultúir, Cumarsáide, Breatnaise, Spóirt, agus Caidrimh
Idirnáisiúnta Senedd Cymru
Gysylltiadau rhwng Cymru ac Iwerddon (caidreamh na Breataine Bige - na hÉireann)
10 Nollaig 2025

A Chathaoirligh, agus a Bhaill an tSeanaid, fáiltím mar Choimisinéir Teanga roimh an deis a theacht i láthair an Choiste Cultúir, Cumarsáide, Breatnaise, Spóirt agus Caidrimh Idirnáisiúnta le labhairt faoi ábhar tábhachtach, an caidreamh idir an Bhreatain Bheag agus Éire.

Naisc stairiúla idir an Bhreatain Bheag agus Éire

Tá naisc nach beag staire, theanga agus chultúir idir Éire agus an Bhreatain Bheag leis na mílte bliain, rud a fhágann go bhfuil an dá thír fite fuaite ina chéile. Chuaigh muintir an dá thír i mbun trádála agus ar imirce go mion minic trasna Mhuir Éireann in imeacht na tréimhse sin, rud a chothaigh malartuithe eacnamaíocha ar láimh amháin agus caidreamh bríomhar cultúir agus sóisialta freisin.

Is teangacha ceilteacha iad an dá theanga atá againn, an Ghaeilge (téarma a chum na Breatnaigh – Gwyddeleg ó Phróta-Bhriotainic *guið* ónar díorthaíodh fiáin i nGaeilge - 'daoine fiáine ') agus an Bhreatnais (Cymraeg), cé go bhfuil siad éagsúil óna chéile ar go leor bealaí. Léiríonn na comhfhréamhacha teanga ceangail stairiúla agus malartuithe cultúir. Breacadh an Ghaeilge, atá ar cheann de na teangacha scríofa is sine in iarthar na hEorpa, síos i bhfoirm ar a dtugtar Ogham den chéad uair sa 4^ú - 5^ú haois. Tá fianaise bhreise ar ár gcomh-oidhreacht le fáil in Sir Benfro, in iardheisceart na Breataine Bige, mar a bhfuil na bailiúcháin is mó d'inscríbhinní Ogham lasmuigh d'Éirinn, rud a léiríonn lonnaíochtaí luatha na nGael.

Is mór ag Éirinn agus ag an mBreatain Bheag araon freisin an tábhacht a bhaineann leis an gceol agus leis na healaíona chun a dteangacha a choinneáil beo. Déanann féilte dá leithéidí Eisteddfod sa Bhreatain Bheag agus Oireachtas na Samhna in Éirinn ár gcultúir, ár dteangacha agus ár dtraidisiúin bhisiúla a cheiliúradh agus a léiriú.

Is beirt phearsan shuntasacha iad Naomh Pádraig agus Naomh Dáibhí (Dewi Sant) i stair na hÉireann agus na Breataine Bige, faoi seach, beirt a raibh ról ríthábhachtacha acu i scaipeadh na Críostaíochta agus i bhforbairt chultúir a réigiúin. Taispeánann a gcuid scéalta na ceangail dhoimhne stairiúla idir Éire agus an Bhreatain Bheag. Is meabhrú iad na ceangail seo idir Naomh Pádraig agus Naomh Dáibhí ar na naisc nach beag chultúir agus spioradáltachta idir Éire agus an Bhreatain Bheag, agus léiríonn siad stair chomhroinnte agus meas leanúnach ar thraidisiúin a chéile.

Tá imeachtaí Lá Fhéile Dáibhí a reáchtálann Rialtas na Breataine Bige in Éirinn an 28 Feabhra gach bliain, imeachtaí a raibh sé de phléisiúr agam féin freastal orthu roinnt uaireanta, an-tábhachtach chun na naisc láidre idir ár náisiúin a chothú.

Is tionscnamh suntasach é Comh-Ráiteas na hÉireann - na Breataine Bige 2030 chun na naisc stairiúla idir Éire agus an Bhreatain Bheag a neartú. Ach cur leis an méid a baineadh amach le comhaontú 2021-2025, leagtar amach sa chreat seo conair shoiléir le haghaidh an chomhoibrithe i sé phríomhréimse: rannpháirtíocht pholaitiúil, aeráid agus fuinneamh, geilleagar agus trádáil, oideachas agus taighde, cultúr agus oidhreacht, agus naisc phobail. Feicim deiseanna suntasacha comhoibre idir m'Oifigse, Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga, agus Coimisinéir na Breatnaise (Comisiynydd y Gymraeg), chun eolas a roinnt agus léargais straitéiseacha a mhalartú faoi phríomhréimsí na teanga, an oideachais agus an chultúir chun cearta teanga a neartú agus seirbhísí poiblí a fheabhsú inár ndlínsí faoi seach. Is mian liom aghaidh a thabhairt ar dheiseanna comhoibre laistigh den dá réimse seo go háirithe, i gcomhthéacs na ndeiseanna agus na ndúshlán suntasach i dtírdhreach chearta na Gaeilge faoi láthair.

Bunaíodh mo ról mar Choimisinéir Teanga, agus ról m'Oifige faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003. Cuimsíonn mo ról monatóireacht a dhéanamh a ghéilliúla atá breis is 500 comhlacht poiblí don reachtaíochta Gaeilge agus gearáin ón bpobal a fhiosrú. Cuireann m'Oifig eolas ar fáil freisin faoi chearta teanga agus cuirtear comhairle ar chomhlachtaí poiblí maidir lena ndualgais. Treisíonn Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú), 2021 cearta teanga phobal na Gaeilge ach dualgas a leagan ar chomhlachtaí poiblí níos mó seirbhísí poiblí a thairiscint i nGaeilge. Toradh an-dearfach ar an reachtaíocht leasaithe um

chearta teanga 2021 is ea an méadú suntasach a tháinig ar an bhfógraíocht a dhéanann comhlachtaí poiblí i nGaeilge. Tugann torthaí na tuarascála iniúchta a d'fhoilsigh m'Oifig le déanaí le fios gur chaith comhlachtaí poiblí €19 milliún ar fhógraíocht i nGaeilge in 2024. I dtréimhse réasúnta gearr, mhéadaigh an fhoráil seo infheictheacht na Gaeilge go mór ar fud na meán éagsúil, rud atá lárnach i gcur chun cinn bhisiúlacht agus úsáid laethúil na Gaeilge . Ní hamháin go neartaíonn fás na fógraíochta cearta teanga phobal na Gaeilge, ach cruthaíonn sé sruthanna nua ioncaim agus leathnaíonn sé earnáil na meán Gaeilge freisin, agus fáiltítear go mór roimh an bhforáil seo. Tá an tuarascáil iniúchta ar fhógraíocht faoi iamh in Aguisín A.

Clocha Coirnéil an Chomhair

Le linn 2024, baineadh garspriocanna tábhachtacha amach agus an reachtaíocht teanga nua in Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú), 2021 á cur i bhfeidhm. Sheol Rialtas na hÉireann an Plean Náisiúnta um Sheirbhísí Poiblí Gaeilge, an chéad phlean dá leithéid riamh i stair an stáit, i mí Dheireadh Fómhair 2024. Is é príomhaidhm an Phlean conair shoiléir a leagan amach don earnáil phoiblí in Éirinn d'fhonn acmhainn a thógáil chun feabhas suntasach a chur ar sheirbhísí poiblí i nGaeilge. Leagtar bunchlocha an Phlean Náisiúnta amach in Aguisín B atá faoi iamh.

Beidh dhá bhunchloch go háirithe a áirítear in Acht leasaithe 2021 ina mbonn agus ina dtaca leis an bPlean Náisiúnta le linn a shaolré go 2023:

- ar **an gcéad dul síos tá córas na gcaighdeán teanga**, a leagfaidh amach go sonrach na seirbhísí a chaithfidh comhlachtaí poiblí a chur ar fáil i nGaeilge, agus an leibhéal iniúlachta i nGaeilge a chaithfidh a bheith ag an bhfoireann a chuireann na seirbhísí sin ar fáil
- is é an dara bunchloch an fhoráil reachtúil go gcaithfidh 20% den fhoireann a earcaíodh (**pleanáil don fhórsa saothair**) leis an tSeirbhís Phoiblí idir Meitheamh 2022 agus Nollaig 2030 a bheith inniúil sa Ghaeilge.

Na Caighdeáin Teanga

Agus muid ag súil le foilsiú na chéad dréachtchaighdeáin teanga a fhoilseoidh an tAire Forbartha Tuaithe agus Pobail agus Gaeltachta, tá corpas nach beag de léargais luachmhara le baint as éachtaí suntasacha Choimisinéir na Breatnaise maidir le maoirseacht a dhéanamh ar chur i bhfeidhm na gcaighdeán teanga sa Bhreatain Bheag.

Thug Céad-Aire Thionól Náisiúnta na Breataine Bige, Carwyn Jones AC, cuntas den scoth in 2015 ar na dúshláin agus na deiseanna a bhaineann le córas na gcaighdeán teanga agus é ag cur na rialacháin tosaigh um chaighdeán teanga i láthair an Tionóil:

'Is í an mhór-aidhm atá againn nach gcaithfear leis an mBreatnais mar a bheadh ceist aistriúcháin amháin ach go mbeidh sí ina cuid uathoibríoch den soláthar seirbhíse sa Bhreatain Bheag. Ba mhaith linn go ndéanfaí normalú ar an mBreatnais i ngach cuid den saol príobháideach agus poiblí agus, ar ndóigh, san ionad oibre. Táimid muiníneach, dá réir, gur príomhchéim ina threo sin a bheidh sna caighdeáin.'

Ní mór aitheantas a thabhairt do na caighdeáin teanga sa Bhreatain Bheag as an gcur chuige cuimsitheach a ghactar i leith réimsí riachtanacha de sheachadadh na seirbhíse poiblí, de cheapadh beartais, agus d'oibríochtaí inmheánacha. Is eiseamláir iad Ailt 11 - 12 (Caighdeáin 52 -60) de Rialacháin Chaighdeáin na Breatnaise (Uimh. 1) 2015, dar liom, ar a ghontacht, ach ar a ilchuimsithí atá caighdeáin na Breatnaise. Baineann siad an leas is fearr is féidir as acmhainn shuntasach Teicneolaíochtaí Faisnéise agus Cumarsáide (TFC) chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar riachtanais athraitheacha na gcainteoirí Breatnaise sa státseirbhís.

Baineann líon suntasach den 600 gearán a fhaigheann m'oifig gach bliain leis an easpa seirbhísí TFC agus tacaíochta do chustaiméirí ar líne i nGaeilge i ndáil le bunseirbhísí poiblí. Cé go bhfuil níos mó agus níos mó seirbhísí poiblí le fáil ar líne agus an líon sin ag méadú go tapa, tá caighdeán na seirbhísí i nGaeilge go mór taobh thiar de chaighdeán na seirbhísí i mBéarla. Baineann an scéal seo an bonn de mhuintir phobal na Gaeilge as tiomantas an Stáit rochtain chomhionann ar sheirbhísí poiblí a chur ar fáil do chainteoirí Gaeilge. Tá Rialtas na hÉireann tar éis béim a leagan ar an tábhacht a bhaineann le

seirbhísí ar líne i straitéisí amhail 'Cónascadh Rialtais 2030', arb é is aidhm leis na straitéisí sin go mbainfeadh oiread agus 80% de shaoránaigh úsáid as ardáin amhail MyGovID faoi 2030. Cuireann tairseach MyGovID ar chumas an phobail teacht ar sheirbhísí riachtanacha, cuir i gcás ceadúnas tiomána agus pas. Cé go bhfuil na seirbhísí atá ar fáil i mBéarla cuimsitheach, tá na tairiscintí reatha atá i nGaeilge ar MyGovID easnamhach. Caithfidh an tacar tosaigh caighdeán teanga in Éirinn aghaidh a thabhairt ar an gceist seo, agus a chinntiú go bhfuil teacht leordhóthanach ar sheirbhísí riachtanacha poiblí i nGaeilge d'fhonn freastal níos fearr ar riachtanais phobal na Gaeilge.

Ó tugadh caighdeán teanga na Breatnaise isteach deich mbliana ó shin, tá Coimsinéir na Breatnaise tar éis a ról ríthábhachtach a aithint maidir le soiléireacht agus cuntasacht a fheabhsú agus comhlachtaí poiblí ag seachadadh príomhsheirbhísí. Tá ról ríthábhachtach ag an gcreat cuimsitheach a bhunaigh caighdeán na Breatnaise maidir lena chinntiú go ndéantar seirbhísí poiblí a dhearadh go stuama agus a ailíniú go héifeachtach le riachtanais dhinimiciúla phobal na Breatnaise. Tugaim faoi deara go bhfuil Coimisinéir reatha na Breatnaise, Efa Gruffudd Jones, ag tabhairt tús áite do chur chuige nua comhrialála a thabhairt isteach, arb é is aidhm leis géilliúlacht do Chaighdeán na Breatnaise a fheabhsú de bhun comhoibriú straitéiseach le heagraíochtaí. Díriodh go príomha ar obair i gcomhar leis an earnáil sláinte chun feabhas a chur ar ghéilliúlacht do Chaighdeán 110, a thugann aghaidh ar phleanáil an chúraim chliniciúil i mBreatnais, agus táthar tar éis dul chun cinn suntasach a bhaint amach.

Pleanáil Córasach don Fhórsa Saothair

Léiríonn cineál na ngearán a fhaigheann m'Oifig gach bliain freisin ganntanas suntasach foirne ag a bhfuil an inniúlacht riachtanach Ghaeilge chun seirbhísí poiblí a sholáthar i nGaeilge.

Cuimsítear in Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (leasú), 2021 foráil nua lena bhforáiltear go gcaithfidh comhlachtaí poiblí a chinntiú go bhfuil duine as gach cúigear ball foirne a earcaítear idir Bealtaine 2022 agus Nollaig 2030 inniúil sa Ghaeilge. Ionas go mbeidh dóthain foirne ag comhlachtaí poiblí atá inniúil sa Ghaeilge chun na seirbhísí poiblí nua a leagfar amach sna caighdeán teanga a sheachadadh go héifeachtach, ní mór pleanáil

d'fhórsa saothair atá iniúil sa Ghaeilge a neadú i bpleanáil eagraíochtúil na gcomhlachtaí poiblí ar fud na seirbhíse poiblí. Beidh gá le comhordú, maoirseacht agus tuairisciú leanúnach ar leibhéal náisiúnta chun dul chun cinn a thomhas i dtaca leis an riachtanas forghabhálach a bhaineann le líon leordhóthanach ball foirne atá líofa sa Ghaeilge a earcú.

Tharraing Tuarascáil Choimisinéir na Breataine le déanaí dar teideal, 'Grymuso'r Gymraeg drwy lywodraethiant cadarn: Adroddiad ar berfformiad sefydliadau 2024-25' (An Bhreatainis a chumhachtú trí rialachas láidir: Tuarascáil ar fheidhmíocht eagraíochtaí 2024 -25), aird thábhachtach ar chuid de na dúshláin atá roimh eagraíochtaí poiblí sa Bhreatain Bheag agus iad ag freastal ar a ngealltanais maidir le baill foirne atá iniúil sa Bhreatainis a earcú.

Is díol suntais í mír 4.2.35 go háirithe:

'Le blianta beaga anuas, leagadh béim mhór ar chuir chuige measúnaithe scileanna agus ar fhógraíocht poist, chomh maith leis an ngá go bhféachfadh eagraíochtaí **ar riachtanais teanga mar chuid dá bpleanáil fórsa saothair**. Cé go bhfuil go leor obair fhiúntach ar bun chun feabhas a chur ar na gnéithe seo, tá éagsúlacht mhór fós idir an chaoi a ndéantar riachtanais teanga na bpost folamh a thabhairt faoi deara agus an chaoi a gcuirtear i láthair i bhfógraín iad. Dá bharr sin, ní léir fós d'iarrthóirí in amanna go cé na riachtanais teanga atáthar a lua leis an bpost.'

Leagtar béim sa bhreathnóireacht seo ar chroí an dúshláin atá romhainn inár ndlínsí faoi seach: earcú foirne atá iniúil sa Ghaeilge agus sa Bhreatainis, faoi seach, a neadú i bpleanáil eagraíochtúil na gcomhlachtaí a bhfuil baint acu le seirbhís phoiblí a sheachadadh.

Leagtar béim go stuama i mír 4.2.36 den tuarascáil chéanna ar a thábhachtaí atá an earnáil oideachais maidir le soláthar foirne ionchais atá oilte sa Bhreatainis a chothú.

'Leanfaimid orainn ag obair go dlúth le heagraíochtaí sa chéad tréimhse eile chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar na neamhréireachtaí. Cuid den ullmhúchán níos leithne d'athruithe a d'fhéadfadh tarlú mar gheall ar an Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025 a achtú a bheidh san obair seo. Táthar ag súil go dtabharfaidh an tAcht creat náisiúnta nua isteach chun scileanna teanga agus pleanáil don fhórsa saothair a mheas.'

Meastar go bhfuil um 1% de mhic léinn ar chúrsaí ardoideachais in Éirinn i mbun ábhar Gaeilge. Chun an sprioc a bhaint amach go mbeidh 20% d'earcaithe nua inniúil sa Ghaeilge faoi 2030, tá iarracht náisiúnta ón earnáil ollscoile riachtanach d'fhonn dóthain céimithe a chéimniú i réimsí éagsúla dá leithéidí riaracháin, rialachais chorparáidigh, agus oiliúint múinteoirí. Ní mór an t-oideachas lán-Gaeilge ar gach leibhéal a bheith san áireamh i bpleanáil fhadtéarmach chun a chinntiú go mbeidh mic léinn ag sruthú isteach go seasta i gcláir ollscoile lán-Ghaeilge. D'fhógair Rialtas na hÉireann maoiniú breise le déanaí do Lárionad na Gaeilge atá lonnaithe in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad, lárionad a bhfuil baint aige le tástálacha Gaeilge don earnáil phoiblí.

Tuigeann m'Oifig ról ríthábhachtach na hearnála oideachais maidir le soláthar leordhóthanach foirne atá inniúil inár dteangacha faoi seach a chinntiú chun seirbhísí poiblí den scoth a sholáthar, agus chuige sin tá fonn ar m'Oifig deiseanna comhoibríocha a fhiosrú chun bonn eolais a chur faoi bheartas poiblí i dtaca leis an gceist ríthábhachtach seo.

Cumann Idirnáisiúnta na gCoimisinéirí Teanga (IALC)

I mBaile Átha Cliath sa bhliain 2023 a bunaíodh IALC atá meáite ar chearta teanga, ar an gcomhionannas agus ar an éagsúlacht a chothú agus a chur chun cinn. Tá ról ríthábhachtach ag an eagraíocht maidir le háisitheoireacht a dhéanamh d'eolas a mhalartú i measc coimisinéirí teanga agus comhroinnt dea-chleachtas sa réimse a spreagadh. Cuimsíonn ballraíocht reatha ionadaithe ó réigiúin agus ó thíortha a bhfuil coimisinéirí teanga acu, eadhon an Bhreatain Bheag, Ceanada (lena n-áirítear Québec, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nunavut, na Críocha Thiar-Thuaidh, Teangacha Dúchais), an Chatalóin, Réigiún na mBascach, Navarra, an Chosaiv agus Éire.

Eiseamláir ba ea Comhdháil Idirnáisiúnta IALC 2024, a d'óstáil Coimisinéir na Breataine den acmhainn atá ann eolas agus dea-chleachtais a roinnt chun cearta teanga a chosaint agus tuiscint ar bheartais ilteangacha agus ar chearta an duine a chothú ar fud ár ndlínsí. Reáchtálfar an chéad Chomhdháil Idirnáisiúnta IALC eile i nGaillimh i mí Mheán Fómhair 2026. Is mian liom an deis seo a thapú chun Coimisinéir na Breataine agus a foireann a mholadh arís as imeacht den scoth a réachtáil.

Tuaisceart Éireann

D'aithin rialtais na Breataine agus na hÉireann araon tábhacht na dtraidisiún teanga i dTuaisceart Éireann i gComhaontú Aoine an Chéasta 1998. Gealladh sa Chomhaontú:

“aithníonn na rannpháirtithe uile tábhacht na hurraime, na tuisceana agus na caoinfhulaingthe i ndáil le héagsúlacht teanga, ar a n-áirítear ... an Ghaeilge”

Léiríodh tiomantas an dá rialtas arís sa chomhaontú New Decade, New Approach in 2020, a dhearbhaigh go mbunófaí Office of Identity and Cultural Expression (OICE) i dTuaisceart Éireann. Tugadh an gealltanais sin chun críche le seachtainí beaga anuas ach ar ceapadh Coimisinéir Gaeilge, Coimisinéir um Albainis Uladh agus um Thraidisiún Briotanach Uladh, agus Stiúrthóir Oifige. Táim féin mar chathaoirleach reatha IALC, agus mo chomhghleacaithe san IALC, ag tnúth le deiseanna comhoibrithe a fhiosrú trí IALC agus aon tacaíocht is féidir linn a thairiscint don OICE.

Mar fhocal scoir, gabhaim buíochas ó chroí leis an gCathaoirleach agus le comhaltaí an Choiste as an deis a thabhairt dom páirt a ghlacadh sa phlé tábhachtach maidir le caidreamh na Breataine Bige - na hÉireann. Táim ag tnúth lenár gcomh-iarrachtaí a chur chun cinn i gcomhar leis na páirtithe leasmhara go léir a bhfuil baint acu leis an tionscnamh fíorthábhachtach seo .

An Coimisinéir Teanga

Séamas Ó Concheanainn