

## **20-Year Strategy for the Irish language 2010-2030**

### **Progress Report: July 2013 - September 2014**

#### **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

The position of Irish as an official and working language of the European Union was appropriately recognised in the provision of interpretation services, in the EU Presidency website and in promotional activities and materials aimed at EU delegates and participants in Ireland and in Brussels during the Irish Presidency of the EU.

The Irish Government, through the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht as well as through representatives of their Departments, continues to support the proposed Irish Language Act in Northern Ireland through contact with counterparts in the Northern Ireland Executive and the British Government. The Government continues to follow developments closely in relation to the proposed Act, as well as the overall enhancement and protection of the Irish language in Northern Ireland, and remains fully committed to the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement and the St Andrews Agreement, including the provisions relating to the Irish language.

Cooperation between the British and Irish Governments, the Northern Ireland Executive and the relevant broadcasting authorities over the period since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement has ensured a significant improvement in the availability of TG4, as well as RTÉ1, RTÉ2 and RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta, to residents of Northern Ireland. In fact, the range of broadcasting services available has surpassed what was called for in the Agreement with approximately 94% of homes in Northern Ireland now having access to these channels.

#### **Measures for Irish in the Public Service**

The Department has identified both the Passport Office and Consular Section as the main areas which interface with the public and accordingly have requirements for officers with fluency in Irish. In addition, the Department recognises that it would have a general requirement for officers who can provide services in Irish throughout the Department. In accordance with Government policy, future language schemes of the Department under the Official Languages Act will specify the posts/areas that have an Irish language competency requirement.