



Banc Ceannais na hÉireann
Central Bank of Ireland

Eurosystem

Language Scheme 2016-2019

Under Section 15 of the Official Languages Act, 2003

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Chapter 1

Introduction and Background

1.1 Preparation and Approach to developing the second Scheme

This Scheme was prepared under Section 15 of the Official Languages Act 2003 ('the Act') by the Central Bank of Ireland ('the Bank'). The Act provides for the preparation by public bodies of a statutory Scheme detailing the services they will provide:

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

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

The draft Scheme was drawn up by the Bank having regard to the Guidelines prepared under Section 12 of the Act.

Irish Language Officer

Responsibility for preparing the draft Scheme was assigned to the General Secretariat Division (GSD), which provides certain services to all divisions of the organisation. Within GSD a dedicated Irish language officer was responsible for drafting the Scheme and for monitoring the level of demand for services in Irish on an ongoing basis and the fulfilment of the commitments under the organisation's first Scheme.

Divisional representatives

Within the Bank, each division with a commitment under the Scheme has a representative who monitors requests for services in Irish and the progress of each commitment under the Scheme. Each representative is responsible for reporting this information to GSD. GSD also monitors any request for services in Irish to those divisions that do not have any commitments under the Scheme so that any demand for a service in Irish can be tracked.

Public Consultation

This Scheme has been informed by the submissions that were received as part of the public consultation process undertaken in preparation for drafting the Scheme.

1.2 Objectives of second Scheme

The Bank aims to improve the provision of services through the Irish language within the organisation over the lifetime of the second Scheme. The Scheme builds on the extent to which services are currently available through Irish as a result of the first Scheme. Areas for future enhancement of the provision of services in Irish are identified in the Scheme and

include initiatives to make services already available in Irish more visible to the public. The Bank will commit to monitor the demand for Irish language services from the public throughout the course of the Scheme.

1.3 Review of the operation of the first Language Scheme

The Bank carried out a review of the organisation's first Scheme. The main commitments made in that Scheme related to the organisation's communications with the public. All commitments were fulfilled apart from certain consumer projects which related to the organisation's consumer information and education roles and these consumer information roles were transferred under legislation to the National Consumer Agency (NCA)¹ in 2010.

This second Irish Language Scheme is predicated on all of the commitments in the first Scheme being implemented. In the event of commitments within that Scheme not having been fully implemented to date, the matter has been dealt with by the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga.

The objective of this second Scheme is to continue the delivery of these commitments and build on the progress achieved across the Bank over the period of the last Scheme. It sets out a commitment on behalf of the organisation and staff to develop the extent to which services are currently available through Irish and it identifies areas for future enhancement.

1.4 Commencement date of the second Scheme

This Scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The Scheme commences with effect from 18 January 2016 and shall remain in force for a period of 3 years from this date or until a new Scheme has been confirmed by the Minister pursuant to Section 15 of the Act, whichever is the later.

¹ The NCA was subsequently merged with the Competition Authority in October 2014 to form the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission

Chapter 2 Overview of the Bank

2.1 What we do

In October 2010, under the Central Bank Reform Act, the organisation was restructured as a single body with responsibility for central banking and the regulation of Ireland's financial services sector. The Bank is a member of the European System of Central Banks (ESCB) and the Eurosystem. Under its Strategic Plan 2013-2015, the Bank has set out a series of high-level goals, which are based on the Bank's statutory responsibilities. These are:

- Eurosystem effectiveness and price stability
- Stability of the financial system
- Proper and effective regulation of financial institutions and markets
- Resolution of financial difficulties in credit institutions
- Protection of consumers of financial services
- Independent economic advice and high-level financial statistics
- Efficient and effective payment and settlement systems and currency services.

In addition, the Bank has, within its Strategic Plan 2013-2015, committed to:

- Operational efficiency and cost effectiveness.

2.2 Our Stakeholders

The Bank's primary stakeholders are:

- The Public
- The Government and Houses of the Oireachtas
- Consumers of financial products and services
- The regulated financial services industry
- The Eurosystem and other relevant international bodies

Chapter 3

Summary of current Irish language services and improvements planned for the period 2016-2018

3.1 The second Scheme

The second Irish Language Scheme builds on and continues the commitments made in the first Scheme. The organisation's focus in the period of the second Scheme will be to actively promote to the public any service that is provided in Irish and to continue to develop Irish language competency amongst staff to facilitate interpersonal Irish language service delivery on a general level. In practice, this means that selected staff will continue to be capable of providing general greetings and general information about the organisation and its overall services through Irish. However, the Bank will not be in a position to conduct detailed programme-specific business through Irish.

3.2 Provision of services in Irish to the public

The following services will continue to be made available in Irish during the second Scheme and certain enhancements as detailed below will also be made under the second Scheme.

First point of contact

During the course of the second Scheme, switchboard and receptionist staff in the public reception area in the Dame Street headquarters will be familiar with basic greetings in Irish and suitable arrangements will be in place so that they can refer customers without delay to whatever office or officer is responsible for providing the relevant service in Irish.

From the beginning of the second Scheme, an Irish speaker will be available to those members of the public who wish to carry out their banking transactions through Irish (e.g. exchange of Irish banknotes and coins for euro) at the Bank's Teller Service in Dame Street. Under the second Scheme, this service will be promoted by way of signage.

The consumer information helpline was discontinued following the transfer of consumer information related responsibilities to the NCA under the Central Bank Reform Act 2010. The Bank has retained a public contacts helpline, however, to facilitate those members of the public who wish to carry out their business with the Bank through Irish.

Documents and Publications

- From the commencement of the second Scheme, at least 25 percent of all press releases will be published simultaneously in Irish and English.
- Any new corporate booklets, either online or hard copy, aimed at the public describing the work of the Bank will be available bilingually and, where feasible, within one cover.
- From the commencement of the second Scheme, an Irish language Overview *Section* of the biannual Macro-Financial Review will be included within the main publication.
- The Irish language version of the Comment in the Quarterly Bulletin will be published within the main English publication.

- Information in relation to security features of banknotes will be made available in both Irish and English versions. Under the second Scheme, an Irish version will be available to the public in the Bank's Reception Area in Dame Street.
- Collector coin brochures will be bilingual.

Order Forms

The following order forms will be available in bilingual format or in separate Irish and English versions:

- Order forms for all collector coins and coin sets
- Irish Pound Legal Tender Notes/ Redemption form
- Various forms in relation to legacy Bond Redemptions

Both language versions of the order forms for collector coins and coin sets will be available on the organisation's website and in hard copy. Both versions of the Irish pound legal tender notes/redemption form will be available in hard copy. Bilingual insert cards will also continue to be issued with collector coins.

Internal Communications and Procedures

- New staff will be informed of the Bank's obligations under the Act.
- External recruitment advertisements and internal competition notices will indicate, in Irish, that applications will be accepted in the Irish language i.e. the following line will be included: '*Cuirfear fáilte roimh chomhfhreagras i nGaeilge*'.
- Information will be provided to all staff in advance of the commencement of the second Scheme to inform them of our commitments under the Scheme and to encourage their support in this regard.
- Regular Irish articles will be published in the quarterly staff magazine 'Newsleaf'.
- Under the second Scheme, a list of companies offering translation services will be available and, in addition, guidance and advice on the practices to be followed in the engagement and facilitation of these services will also be provided to staff on request.
- A central database of Irish language terminology will continue to be updated and maintained and to be freely available to all staff and to all relevant third party suppliers.
- Twice-yearly notices will be sent to Heads of Division reminding them of the Bank's language obligations under the Act.
- From the commencement of the second Scheme, a dedicated page will be available on the Bank's intranet, which will serve as an OLA information portal for members of staff.

Website/Email

- Any development of new websites or re-development of existing websites used to deliver services to the public, including interactive systems, will have a bilingual capability built in. A project is currently underway to re-develop the Bank's existing website and the provision of bilingual capability has been identified as a requirement for that project. It is planned that this project will be completed in late 2016, at which time the Bank will prioritise the provision of relevant consumer-related material in Irish on its re-developed website.
- Order forms for all collector coins and coin sets will be available in Irish on the Bank's website.
- Any other publications, press releases, forms and leaflets produced bilingually will be made available on the Bank's websites.
- The disclaimer on all outgoing emails will continue to be published bilingually.

3.3 Services not available in Irish

Certain documents and electronic communications will continue to be available in English only. These include documents, communications, services and operations of a specialist or technical nature produced by the organisation and not designed for the public, or which are primarily industry-targeted.

Note

Speeches or statements will be made available in the language in which they are delivered.

Chapter 4

Irish Language Recruitment and Training

The Bank is an equal opportunities employer, committed to filling all vacancies in an efficient and flexible manner. Its recruitment policy aims to ensure that all recruitment and selection is carried out in accordance with current legislation and best recruitment practices.

The Bank will assess, over the lifetime of the Scheme, whether the level of demand for Irish language technical competency for inspections is sufficiently strong to warrant its inclusion as a criterion for consideration during recruitment for particular roles within supervisory and inspection areas.

During the course of the second Scheme, the organisation's Human Resources Division will continue to make every effort to assist in building the Irish language capability of staff in the following ways:

- Provide access for staff to recognised Irish language courses together with eLearning courses where business needs are identified.
- Facilitate Irish language learning for staff dealing directly with the public to contribute to their ability to provide a bilingual service to the public.

There are a number of Central Bank staff who have proficiency in the Irish language (some of whose roles include Irish language responsibilities), however there are no designated Irish language posts.

Chapter 5
Services in the Gaeltacht

The Bank does not have offices situated in Gaeltacht areas. However, in its regulatory role, it does have some dealings with Gaeltacht-based credit unions. In an effort to cater to the particular language requirements of credit unions in the Gaeltacht, the Registrar of Credit Unions (RCU) will, as a first step, ensure that any bilateral correspondence between it and such credit unions is in Irish or bilingual. The RCU will also review other publications, on a case-by-case basis, to assess their suitability for translation into Irish, based on demand and on a cost/value evaluation. Furthermore, as stated in **Chapter 4** above, the Bank will, in the context of recruitment and training, monitor and assess the demand for Irish language technical competency for inspections.

Chapter 6
Monitoring and Review of Second Scheme

As part of the ongoing evaluation of the Scheme, the Bank will monitor the total number of consumers/customers who have requested a service through Irish.

Chapter 7
Publicising of second Scheme

The contents of this Scheme along with the commitments and provisions of the Scheme will be publicised to the public by means of

1. Press Release
2. Placement in a prominent position on the Bank's website.

In addition to these measures, during the course of the second Scheme, the Bank will take every opportunity in its day-to-day interactions with the public to promote and publicise the services it provides through Irish, including:

- The display of notices at reception areas indicating the Irish language services that are available and also by prominently listing these on the Bank's website.
- Footnotes on selected leaflets and application forms explaining that they are also available in Irish (in cases where bilingual material is not produced within a single cover).

A copy of the Scheme has been forwarded to Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga.

The English language version of this Scheme is the original version