

Language use in public administration in Ireland

Public Service. Private Choice.

EFNIL Conference, Helsinki, 8th October 2015

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Ireland

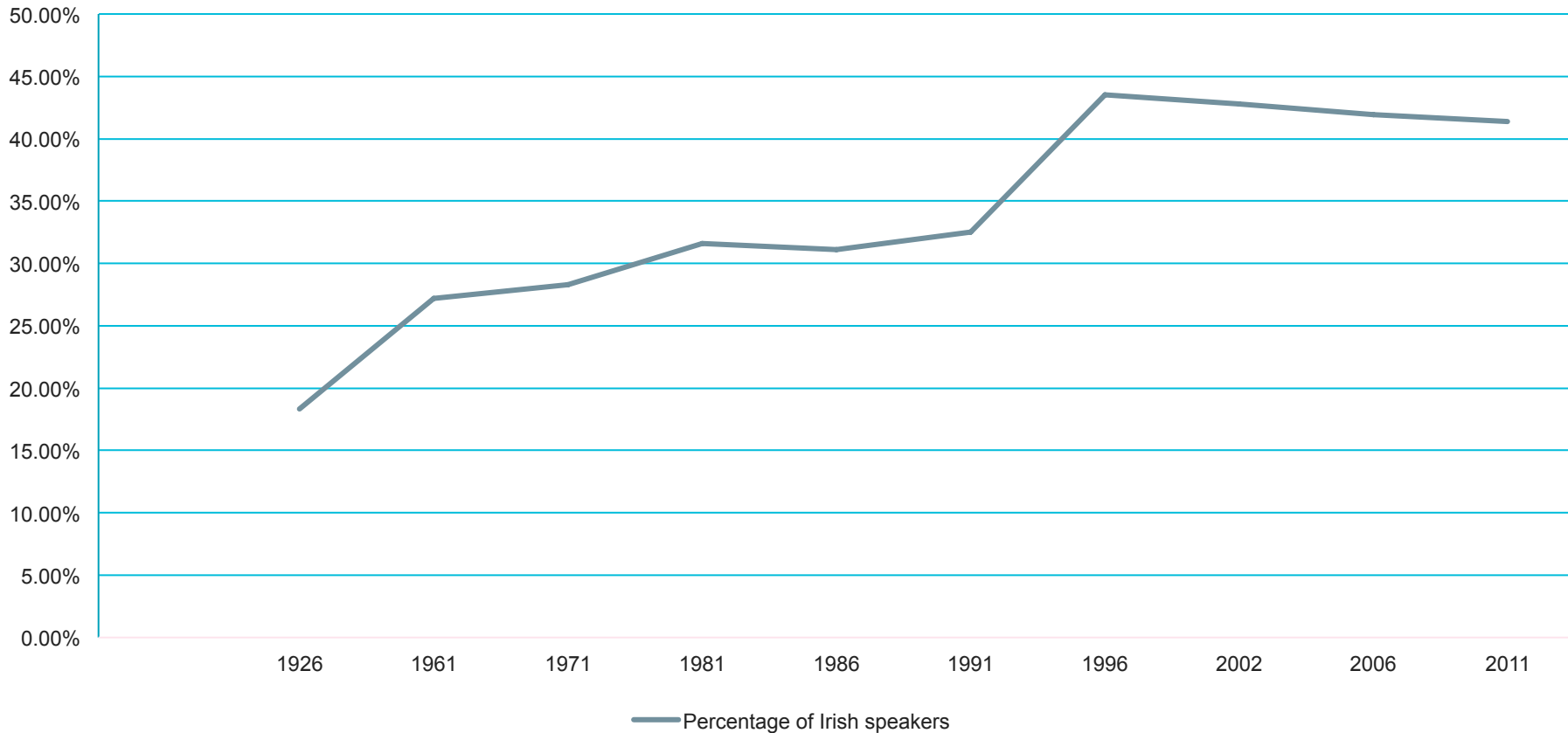
1. The Irish language as the national language is the first official language.
2. The English language is recognised as a second official language.
3. Provision may, however, be made by law for the exclusive use of either of the said languages for any one or more official purposes, either throughout the State or in any part thereof.

Bunreacht na hÉireann: 1937

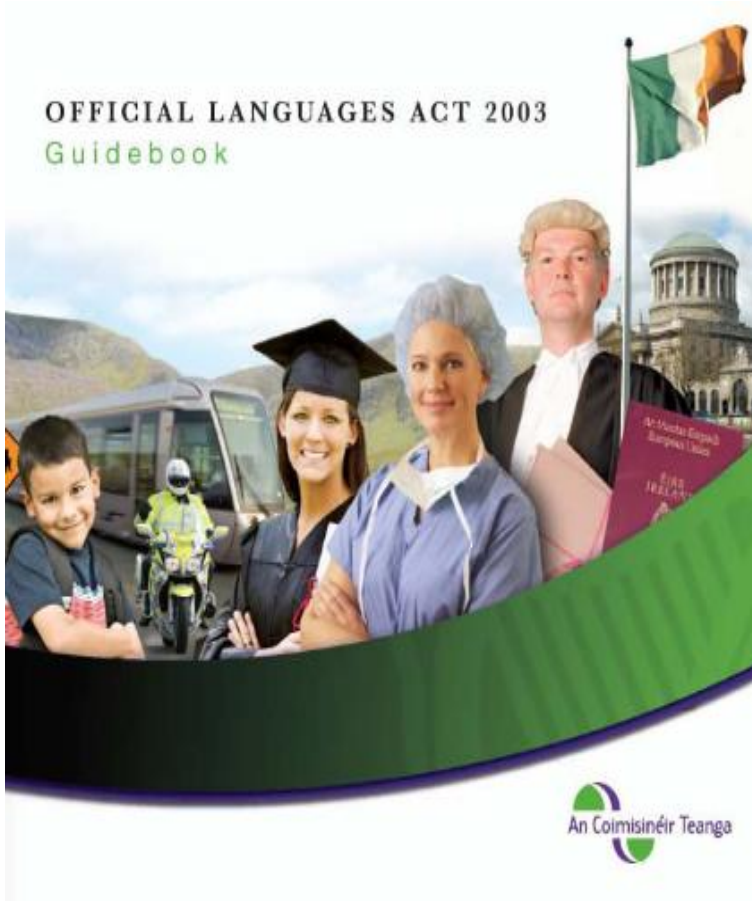
Ireland is unique in being the only European country that has attempted to restore the national language with the ‘top down approach by re-establishing Irish as the language of everyday life’

Romaine: 2008: 17

Number of Irish speakers by % of the total population in the Republic of Ireland (Central Statistics Office, 2012)



OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT 2003
Guidebook



Included in the list of public bodies are:

- Government departments and offices;
- Local authorities;
- Health Service Executive;
- Universities, other third-level institutions and vocational education committees;
- Agencies, boards and state companies (commercial and non-commercial).



20-YEAR STRATEGY
FOR THE IRISH LANGUAGE
2010 – 2030

Government of Ireland

- to increase the number of people who speak Irish on a daily basis outside the education system from 83,000 to 250,000;
- to increase by 25% the number of people who speak Irish on a daily basis in the Gaeltacht;
- and to increase the number of people who use State services through Irish and who can access television, radio and print media through Irish

20 Year Strategy for the Irish Language (2010: 9)

11%

Percentage of the population who have some knowledge of Irish in Northern Ireland

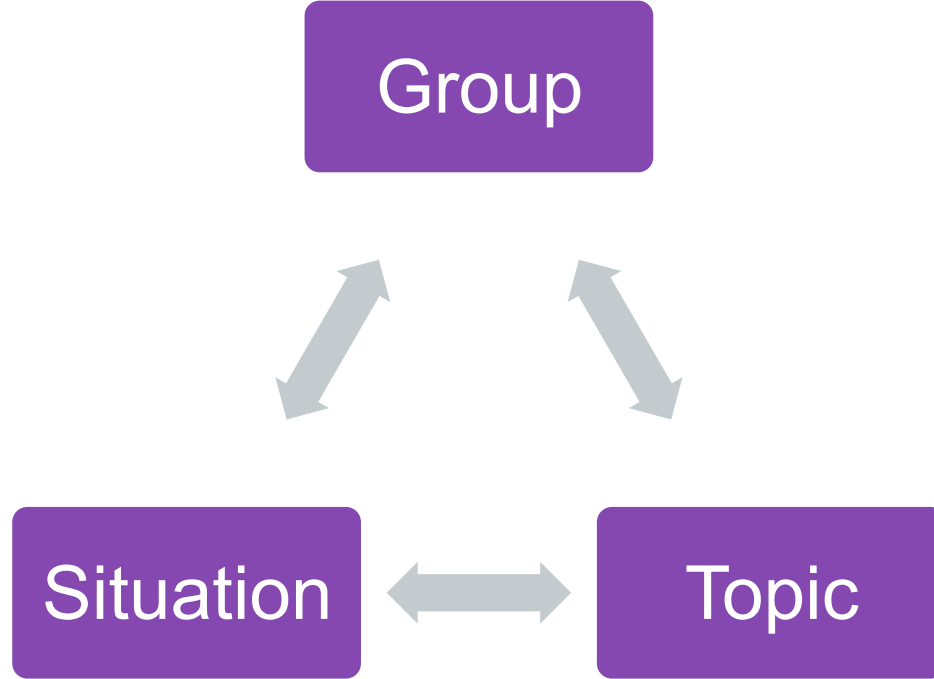
Guidance document provides examples of what councils have done and can do in three categories:

- (i) Service provision for those who choose to use Irish
- (ii) The development of the Councils' capacity to deliver services in Irish;
- (iii) Support that councils can provide towards the development of Irish in their areas.



41.4%

Percentage of people (1.77M) who are able to speak Irish in the Republic of Ireland



Fishman (2000)

‘That in itself is a matter of concern but the situation is made worse by the knowledge that the practice of failing to award bonus marks correctly is common throughout the Civil Service.’

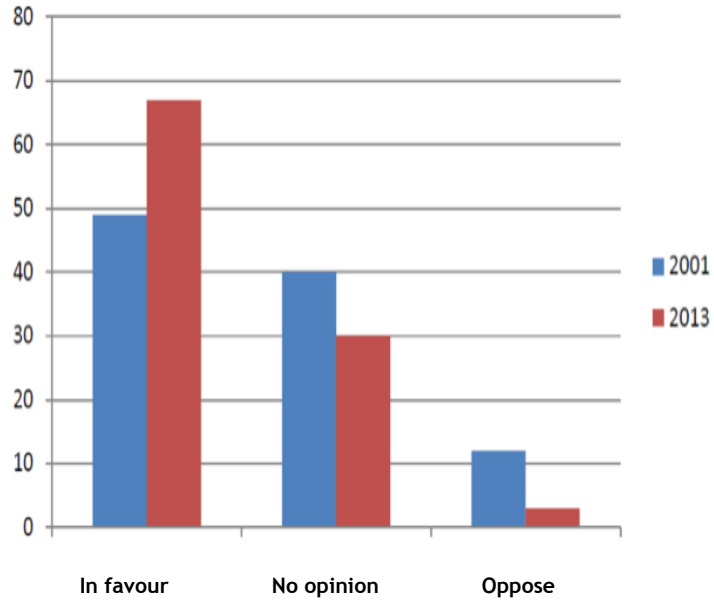
An Coimisinéir Teanga, Annual Report: 2011

‘Despite the enormous goodwill of the vast majority of the people of this country, the language continues to drift further to the margins of society including within much of the public sector; bringing it back to the mainstream is no simple procedure.’

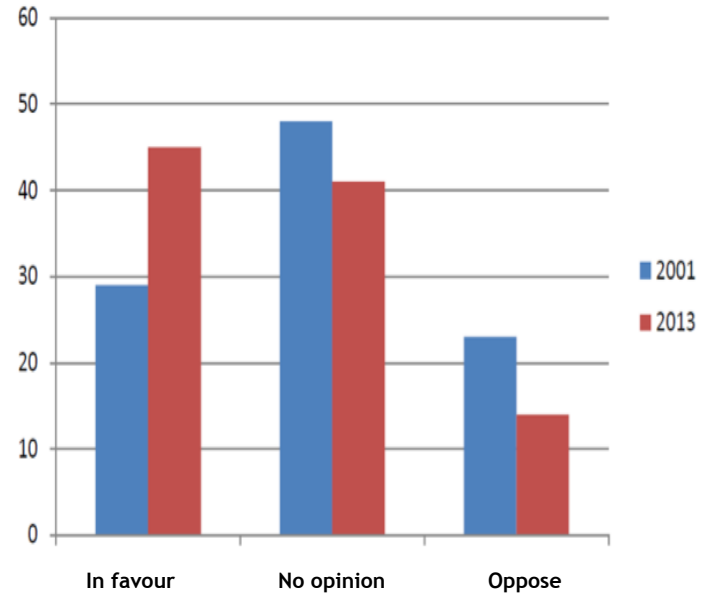
Former Language Commissioner Seán Ó Cuirreáin in the office's
Annual Report for 2013

Public Support for Irish

Republic of Ireland

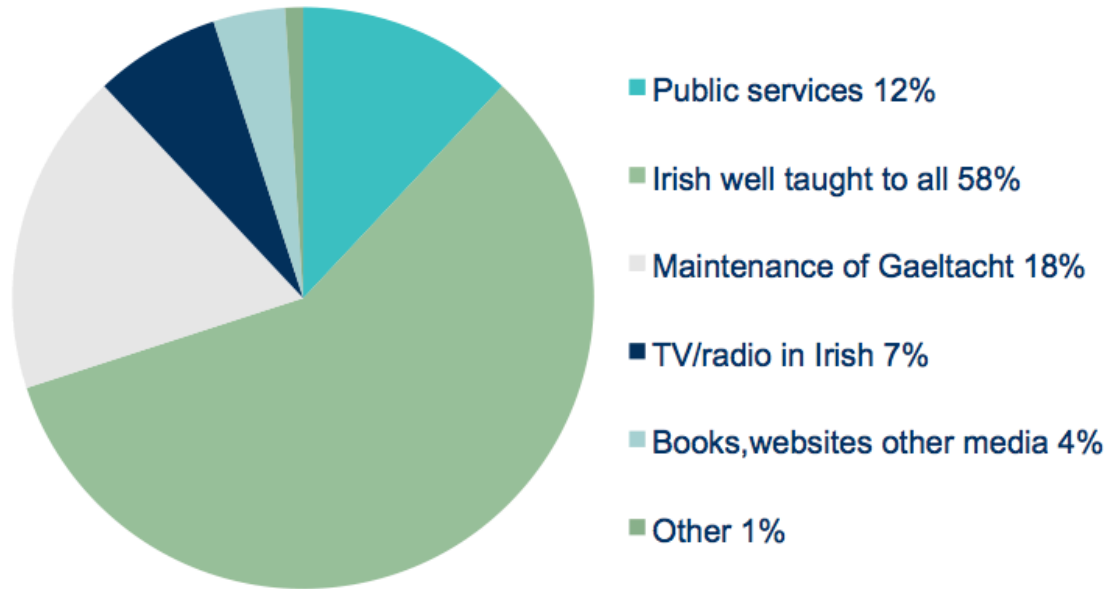


Northern Ireland



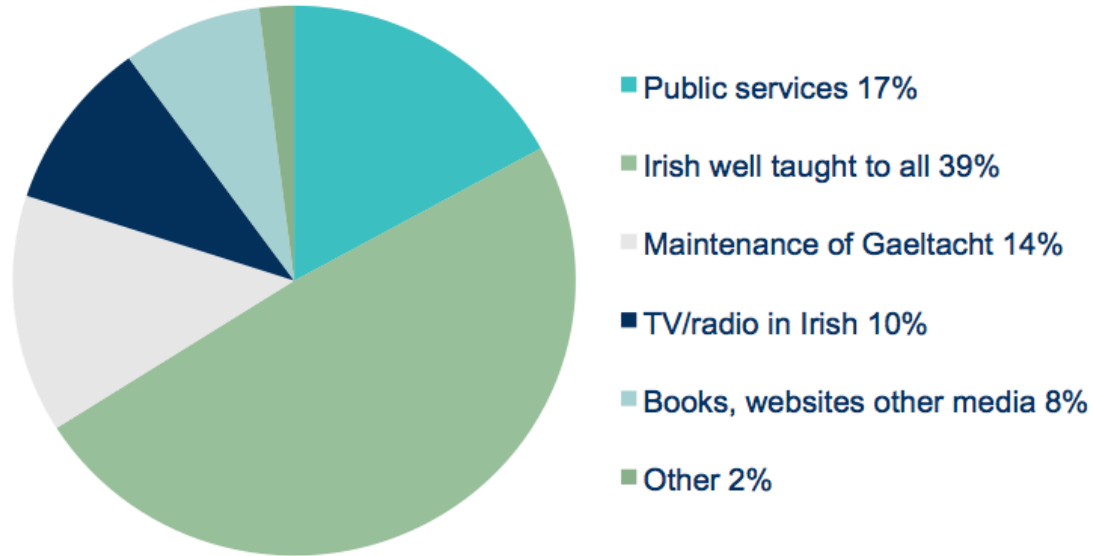
Choice of Government Initiative

Republic of Ireland



Choice of Government Initiative

Northern Ireland



Straitéis le Forbairt na
Gaeilge a Fheabhsú agus a
Chosaint

Strategy to Enhance and
Protect the Development
of the Irish Language

2015 – 2035

Strategy to Enhance and Protect the Development of the Irish Language 2015-2035

- Official status
- Language Commissioner
- Obligations for Public Bodies
- Language Schemes

Go raibh maith agaibh - Thank you



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