



**Ollscoil  
Mhá Nuad**  
Ollscoil na hÉireann  
Má Nuad

# Ár gCampas, Ár dTeanga

**Anailís bhonnline ar staid reatha na Gaeilge in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad**  
A baseline analysis of the status of Irish at Maynooth University

An Dr Joe Simpson  
Márta 2026

Lárionad na Gaeilge  
Taighde, Teagasc agus Tástáil

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Maigh Nuad,  
Co. Chill Dara, Éire

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# Clár an ábhair / Contents

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|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Achoimre fheidhmeach / <a href="#">Executive summary</a>  | 1         |
| Réamhrá / <a href="#">Introduction</a>  | 15        |
| Modheolaíocht / <a href="#">Methodology</a>   | 18        |
| Buíochas/ <a href="#">Acknowledgements</a>  | 21        |
| <b>1 Comhthéacs / <a href="#">Context</a></b>   | <b>22</b> |
| <b>1.1 Gearrchuntas ar stair na Gaeilge / <a href="#">A brief history of Irish</a></b>  | <b>26</b> |
| <b>1.2 Stair na Gaeilge in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad / <a href="#">The history of Irish in Maynooth University</a></b>                          | <b>30</b> |
| 1.2.1 Coláiste na nÉireannach i bPáras / <a href="#">The Irish College in Paris</a>   | 30        |
| 1.2.2 Coláiste Phádraig / <a href="#">St Patrick's College</a>  | 32        |
| <b>1.3 Foghlaim agus teagasc na Gaeilge / <a href="#">Learning and teaching Irish</a></b>   | <b>34</b> |
| 1.3.1 Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge ( <a href="#">Department of Modern Irish</a> )  | 34        |
| 1.3.2 Roinn na Sean-Ghaeilge / <a href="#">Department of Early Irish</a>  | 36        |
| 1.3.3 Lárionad na Gaeilge: Taighde, Teagasc & Tástáil / <a href="#">The Centre for Irish Language: Research, Teaching &amp; Testing</a> | 38        |
| 1.3.4 An Ghaeilge sa Centre Culturel Irlandais / <a href="#">Irish in the Centre Culturel Irlandais</a>                                 | 40        |
| <b>1.4 Cur chun cinn na Gaeilge ar an gcampus/ <a href="#">Promoting Irish on Campus</a></b>  | <b>44</b> |
| 1.4.1 Oifig na Gaeilge ( <a href="#">Irish Language Office</a> )  | 44        |
| 1.4.2 Coiste na Gaeilge ( <a href="#">Irish Language Committee</a> )  | 44        |
| 1.4.3 Cuallacht Cholm Cille   | 46        |
| 1.4.4 Aontas na Mac Léinn, Ollscoil Mhá Nuad / <a href="#">Maynooth Students' Union</a>   | 46        |
| 1.4.5 Seomra na Gaeilge ( <a href="#">The Irish-language Room</a> )   | 48        |
| 1.4.6 An Scéim Chónaithe ( <a href="#">The Residential Scheme</a> )   | 48        |
| 1.4.7 An Scríbhneoir Cónaithe / <a href="#">Irish Writer-in-Residence</a>   | 48        |

|            |   |           |
|------------|---|-----------|
| <b>1.5</b> | <b>Cúrsaí reachtaíochta agus pleanála teanga / Legislation and language planning</b>  | <b>50</b> |
| 1.5.1      | <b>Reachtaíocht náisiúnta / National policy and legislation</b>   | 50        |
| 1.5.1.1    | Acht na nOllscoileanna 1997 / <i>Universities Act 1997</i>  | 50        |
| 1.5.1.2    | Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla 2003 / <i>Official Languages Act 2003</i>  | 50        |
| 1.5.1.3    | <i>Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge 2010–2030 / 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010–2030</i>                             | 52        |
| 1.5.1.4    | Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021 / <i>Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021</i>  | 52        |
| 1.5.1.5    | <i>An Plean Náisiúnta um Sheirbhísí Poiblí Gaeilge 2024–2030 / The National Plan for Irish Language Public Services 2024–2030</i> | 54        |
| 1.5.2      | <b>Gealltanais áitiúla / Local commitments</b>  | 58        |
| 1.5.2.1    | <i>Plean Straitéiseach Ollscoil Mhá Nuad 2023–2028 / Maynooth University Strategic Plan 2023–2028</i>                             | 58        |
| 1.5.2.2    | Polasaí Comhionannais agus Éagsúlachta Ollscoil Mhá Nuad / <i>Maynooth University Equality and Diversity Policy</i>               | 60        |
| <b>2</b>   | <b>An Staid Reatha / Current Status</b>   | <b>62</b> |
| 2.1        | <b>Dearcthaí / Attitudes</b>  | 66        |
| 2.1.1      | <b>Bá agus dea-thoil / Support and goodwill</b>   | 66        |
| 2.1.1.1    | Luach na Gaeilge / <i>The value of Irish</i>  | 66        |
| 2.1.1.2    | Cur chun cinn na Gaeilge / <i>The promotion of Irish</i>  | 68        |
| 2.1.1.3    | Borradh faoin nGaeilge / <i>A resurgence of Irish</i>   | 68        |
| 2.1.2      | <b>Ábhair imní / Concerns</b>   | 70        |
| 2.1.2.1    | Faitíos roimh an nGaeilge / <i>“Irish is intimidating.”</i>   | 70        |
| 2.1.2.2    | Dearcthaí i leith mhúineadh na Gaeilge ar scoil / <i>Attitudes towards the teaching of Irish in school</i>                        | 72        |
| 2.1.2.3    | Dearcthaí cáinteacha / <i>Critical perspectives</i>   | 74        |
| 2.2        | <b>Cumas / Proficiency</b>  | 78        |
| 2.2.1      | <b>Cumas Gaeilge i measc na mball foirne / Staff proficiency in Irish</b>   | 78        |
| 2.2.1.1    | Cumas féintuairiscithe / <i>Self-reported proficiency</i>   | 78        |
| 2.2.1.2    | Dáileadh an chumais de réir na roinne / <i>Distribution of proficiency by department</i>  | 80        |
| 2.2.1.3    | Cumas faoi cheilt i measc na foirne / <i>Untapped staff proficiency</i>   | 82        |
| 2.2.2      | <b>Cumas Gaeilge i measc na mac léinn / Student proficiency in Irish</b>  | 82        |
| 2.2.2.1    | Cumas féintuairiscithe / <i>Self-reported proficiency</i>   | 82        |
| 2.2.2.2    | Cumas faoi cheilt i measc na mac léinn / <i>Untapped student potential</i>  | 84        |
| 2.3        | <b>Foghlaim na Gaeilge / Learning Irish</b>   | 88        |
| 2.3.1      | <b>Baill foirne agus foghlaim na Gaeilge / Staff and Irish language learning</b>  | 88        |
| 2.3.1.1    | Baill foirne atá ag foghlaim na Gaeilge faoi láthair / <i>Staff currently learning Irish</i>                                      | 88        |
| 2.3.1.2    | Baill foirne ar mhaith leo an Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim / <i>Staff who would like to learn Irish</i>                                   | 88        |
| 2.3.1.3    | Na bacanna ar fhoghlaim na Gaeilge – baill foirne / <i>Barriers to learning Irish – staff</i>                                     | 92        |
| 2.3.2      | <b>Mic léinn agus foghlaim na Gaeilge / Students and Irish language learning</b>  | 96        |
| 2.3.2.1    | Suim na mac léinn i bhfoghlaim na Gaeilge / <i>Student interest in learning Irish</i>   | 96        |
| 2.3.2.2    | Mic léinn atá ag foghlaim na Gaeilge / <i>Students who are learning Irish</i>   | 98        |
| 2.3.2.3    | Na bacanna atá ar fhoghlaim na Gaeilge – mic léinn / <i>Barriers to learning Irish – students</i>                                 | 98        |
| 2.3.2.4    | Modúil trí mheán na Gaeilge / <i>Irish-medium modules</i>   | 104       |

|            |   |     |
|------------|---|-----|
| <b>2.4</b> | <b>Seirbhísí Gaeilge / Irish-medium services</b>  | 108 |
| 2.4.1      | Seirbhísí do mhic léinn / <b>Student services</b>   | 108 |
| 2.4.2      | Seirbhísí do bhaill foirne / <b>Staff services</b>  | 108 |
| 2.4.3      | An fhorbairt ghairmiúil / <b>Professional development</b>   | 108 |
| 2.4.3.1    | Úsáid na Gaeilge san áit oibre / <b>Using Irish in the workplace</b>  | 112 |
| 2.4.3.2    | Cumas reatha na foirne maidir le seirbhísí a chur ar fáil trí mheán na Gaeilge / <b>Current capacity to provide Irish-medium services</b> | 112 |
| 2.4.3.3    | Na deiseanna atá ann cheana / <b>Immediate opportunities</b>  | 114 |
| 2.4.3.4    | Na bacanna ar úsáid na Gaeilge san obair / <b>Barriers to the use of Irish at work</b>  | 114 |
| 2.4.3.5    | Am cúitimh / <b>Time in lieu</b>  | 116 |
| <b>2.5</b> | <b>An Ghaeilge ar an gcampas / Irish on campus</b>  | 122 |
| 2.5.1      | Pobal agus imeachtaí / <b>Community and events</b>  | 122 |
| 2.5.1.1    | Cothú pobail / <b>Community-building</b>  | 122 |
| 2.5.1.2    | Imeachtaí le haghaidh na mac léinn / <b>Student events</b>  | 124 |
| 2.5.1.3    | Imeachtaí le haghaidh na mball foirne / <b>Staff events</b>   | 126 |
| 2.5.2      | An tearmann teanga / <b>Breathing spaces</b>  | 128 |
| 2.5.2.1    | Tearmainn don Ghaeilge ar champas na hOllscoile / <b>Breathing spaces for Irish on campus</b>   | 128 |
| 2.5.2.2    | Feiceálacht na Gaeilge agus comharthaíocht / <b>Visibility of Irish and signage</b>   | 130 |
| 2.5.2.3    | Bacanna struchtúir / <b>Structural barriers on campus</b>   | 134 |
| <b>2.6</b> | <b>An Ghaeilge i saol na mac léinn / Irish in student life</b>  | 140 |
| 2.6.1      | Aontas Mac Léinn Ollscoil Mhá Nuad / <b>Maynooth University Students' Union</b>   | 140 |
| 2.6.2      | Cuallacht Cholm Cille   | 142 |
| 2.6.3      | An Scéim Chónaithe / <b>Irish-Language Residential Scheme</b>   | 144 |
| <b>2.7</b> | <b>Comhionannas, éagsúlacht agus ionchuimsitheacht (CÉI) / Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)</b>                                    | 146 |
| 2.7.1      | Clár Rochtana Ollscoil Mhá Nuad / <b>Maynooth Access Programme</b>  | 146 |
| 2.7.2      | An Ghaeilge agus <i>Turn to Teaching</i> / <b>Irish and Turn to Teaching</b>  | 148 |
| 2.7.3      | An Ghaeilge agus an pobal idirnáisiúnta / <b>Irish and the international community</b>  | 150 |
| 2.7.4      | An Ghaeilge agus an polasaí CÉI / <b>Irish and EDI policy</b>   | 154 |
| <b>2.8</b> | <b>An polasaí teanga agus struchtúr na hinstitiúide / Language policy and the structure of the institution</b>                            | 160 |
| 2.8.1      | Oifig na Gaeilge ( <b>The Irish Language Office</b> )   | 160 |
| 2.8.1.1    | An brú atá ar Oifig na Gaeilge / <b>Pressures on Oifig na Gaeilge</b>   | 160 |
| 2.8.1.2    | Cúrsaí aistriúcháin / <b>The question of translation</b>  | 166 |
| 2.8.2      | Comhlíonadh agus freagracht / <b>Compliance and accountability</b>  | 168 |
| 2.8.2.1    | Coiste na Gaeilge ( <b>The Irish Language Committee</b> )   | 170 |
| 2.8.2.2    | Oifigeach na dTeangacha Oifigiúla / <b>Official Languages Officer</b>   | 172 |
| 2.8.2.3    | Dul i dtreo creat comhlíonta comhordaithe / <b>Towards a co-ordinated compliance framework</b>  | 172 |
| 2.8.2.4    | Tacaíocht institiúideach / <b>Institutional support</b>   | 174 |

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|            |   |     |
|------------|---|-----|
| <b>2.9</b> | <b>An caidreamh seachtrach / External relations</b>                                     | 178 |
| 2.9.1      | An caidreamh idir an Ollscoil agus an ceantar áitiúil / University-local area relations | 178 |
| 2.9.1.1    | Maigh Nuad / Maynooth town  | 178 |
| 2.9.1.2    | Contae Chill Dara / County Kildare  | 180 |
| 2.9.1.3    | Gaeltacht na Mí / Meath Gaeltacht   | 180 |
| 2.9.2      | Iarmhíic léinn le Gaeilge / Irish-speaking alumni                                       | 182 |
| 2.9.3      | An Ghaeilge sa Centre Culturel Irlandais / Irish in the Centre Culturel Irlandais       | 184 |
| 2.9.3.1    | Próifil agus spreagadh na bhfoghlaimeoirí / Learner profile and motivation              | 184 |
| 2.9.3.2    | Nósanna úsáide / Usage  | 186 |
| 2.9.3.3    | Pobal agus luach na Gaeilge / Community and the value of Irish                          | 186 |
| 2.9.3.4    | Dúshláin agus deiseanna / Challenges and opportunities                                  | 190 |
| 2.9.3.5    | Moltaí agus conclúidí / Recommendations and conclusions                                 | 192 |

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|          |                                       |     |
|----------|---------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>3</b> | <b>Súil chun cinn / Looking Ahead</b> | 194 |
|----------|---------------------------------------|-----|

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|            |   |     |
|------------|---|-----|
| <b>3.1</b> | <b>Moltaí / Recommendations</b>   | 198 |
| 3.1.1      | Feiceálacht agus an tearmann teanga / Visibility and breathing spaces                 | 198 |
| 3.1.2      | Deiseanna teagaisc agus foghlama / Teaching and learning opportunities                | 200 |
| 3.1.3      | Pobal Gaeilge a chothú ar an gcampas / Building an Irish-language community on campus | 206 |
| 3.1.4      | Cúrsaí ionchuisitheachta agus inrochtaineachta / Inclusion and accessibility          | 208 |
| 3.1.5      | An polasaí teanga agus an rialachas / Language policy and governance                  | 210 |
| 3.1.6      | An caidreamh seachtrach agus comhpháirtíochtaí / External engagement and partnerships | 218 |

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|            |                              |     |
|------------|------------------------------|-----|
| <b>3.2</b> | <b>Conclúid / Conclusion</b> | 222 |
|------------|------------------------------|-----|

---

|  |   |     |
|--|---|-----|
|  | <b>Liosta na léaráidí / List of figures</b> | 230 |
|--|---|-----|

---

|  |   |     |
|--|---|-----|
|  | <b>Liosta na dtáblaí / List of tables</b> | 231 |
|--|---|-----|

---

|  |  |     |
|--|--|-----|
|  | <b>Liosta na ngiorrúchán / List of abbreviations</b> | 231 |
|--|--|-----|

---

|  |   |     |
|--|---|-----|
|  | <b>Liosta tagairtí / List of references</b> | 232 |
|--|---|-----|

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# Achoimre Fheidhmeach Executive Summary

# Réamhrá

## Introduction

Is í an Ghaeilge teanga náisiúnta na hÉireann agus is cuid dhílis dár ndúchas í. Tá traidisiún uasal ag baint le Maigh Nuad mar ionad oideachais Gaeilge le breis is dhá chéad bliain: bunaíodh cathaoir sa Ghaeilge i gColáiste Phádraig in 1795 agus is ag cur leis an oidhreacht sin atá Ollscoil Mhá Nuad, an institiúid a bunaíodh in 1997. Sa lá atá inniu ann, is in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad atá an Cumann Gaelach is sine sa tír seo agus tá na ranna acadúla a phléann leis an nGaeilge inti ar thús cadhnaíochta i dteagasc, tástáil agus taighde na Gaeilge.

Is institiúid phoiblí í Ollscoil Mhá Nuad atá faoi réir ag creat soiléir reachtaíochta agus polasaí ó thaobh chur chun cinn na Gaeilge de. Is in Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla 2003 agus Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021 a leagtar síos an ceart chun Gaeilge a úsáid le comhlachtaí poiblí, agus na dualgais atá ar chomhlachtaí poiblí ar nós ollscoileanna ó thaobh seirbhísí, comharthaí agus cumarsáid dhátheangach. Is é an sprioc atá ag polasaí teanga an rialtais le fada seirbhís cheart dhátheangach a chruthú, agus aithnítear an ról lárnach atá ag institiúidí poiblí amhail an ollscoil chun an aidhm sin a bhaint amach.

Tá polasaithe na hOllscoile ag teacht leis na gealltanais náisiúnta sin. Gealltar in *Plean Straitéiseach Ollscoil Mhá Nuad 2023–2028* go 'leanfaimid le cultúir éagsúla na hÉireann agus le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge mar chuid lárnach agus saibhrithe de bheatha ár gcampais a chothú, agus le tacaíocht a sholáthar dóibh' agus táthar 'tiomanta don Ghaeilge a leabú ar fud ár gcampais fhisiciúil agus dhigitigh, do bharr feabhais a chur ar a feiceálacht agus chun deiseanna a mhéadú dá húsáid inár gcuid oibre agus i mbeatha an champais' (l. 26). Is é an sprioc sa pholasaí náisiúnta agus i straitéis na hOllscoile campas a fhorbairt a mbeidh an Ghaeilge mar chuid nádúrtha fheiceálach den ghnáthshaol ann.

### An tionscadal taighde agus an cur chuige

Is sa chomhthéacs cultúrtha reachtúil sin a tugadh faoi thionscadal taighde bliana le linn 2024–5 chun

Irish is the national language of Ireland and a core part of the country's cultural identity. Maynooth has a proud tradition as a centre of Irish language education for over two hundred years: a Chair of Irish was first established in St Patrick's College in 1795, a legacy continued by Maynooth University since its establishment in 1997. Today, Maynooth University is home to the oldest Irish-language student society in the country and to academic departments at the cutting edge of Irish-language teaching, testing and research.

As a public institution, Maynooth University operates within clear legislative and policy frameworks for the promotion of Irish. The Official Languages Act 2003 and the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021 establish the right to use Irish in the public sector and place obligations on public bodies, including universities, in relation to bilingual services, signage and communications. More broadly, the language policy of successive governments has had as its goal the creation of a truly bilingual public service, and public sector institutions such as universities are recognised as key players in achieving that aim.

The University's own policies echo these national commitments. The *Maynooth University Strategic Plan 2023–2028* pledges to 'embrace and support the diverse cultures of Ireland and the promotion of the Irish language as an integral and enriching part of our campus life' and commits to 'embedding the Irish language across our physical and digital campus, enhancing its visibility and increasing opportunities for its use in our work and campus life' (p. 26). In short, both national policy and the University's strategy envisage a campus where Irish is a natural and visible part of daily life.

### Research project and approach

Within this cultural and legislative context, a year-long research project was undertaken during the

iniúchadh a dhéanamh ar staid reatha na Gaeilge in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad.

Ba é sprioc an tionscadail iniúchadh a dhéanamh ar dheartháí i leith na Gaeilge, ar an inniúlacht sa Ghaeilge agus ar úsáid na Gaeilge i measc phobal uile na hOllscoile, agus teacht ar na chéad chéimeanna eile a bheidh ag teastáil lena chinntiú go mbeidh rath ar an teanga san Ollscoil amach anseo. Cuirtear torthaí an tionscadail sin i láthair sa tuarascáil seo agus leagtar conair straitéiseach amach do na blianta atá amach romhainn. Baineadh úsáid as cur chuige modhanna measctha: taighde deisce, suirbhéanna uile-Ollscoile, agus anailís cháilíochtúil ar agallaimh aonair agus ar ghrúpaí fócais le páirtithe leasmhara san Ollscoil agus taobh amuigh di.

Ghlac líon mór daoine páirt sa taighde, rud a léiríonn go bhfuil an-suíom ag pobal na hOllscoile sa togra. 651 ball foirne (46.8% d'fhoireann na hOllscoile) agus 2,678 mac léinn (16.6% de na mic léinn ar fad) a chomhlánaigh na suirbhéanna. Chomh maith leis sin, réachtáladh 50 agallamh aonair agus cúig ghrúpa fócais mar chuid den taighde.

Déantar achoimre san Achoimre Fheidhmeach seo ar phríomhthorthaí an tionscadail sin agus ar na moltaí a d'eascair astu.

2024–25 academic year to examine the current status of Irish at Maynooth University.

The project aimed to assess attitudes, proficiency and the use of Irish among the whole campus community and to identify the steps required to secure a vibrant future for Irish at Maynooth. This report presents the findings of that research and outlines a strategic path for the years ahead. The study used a mixed-methods design, combining desk-based research, institution-wide surveys of staff and students, and qualitative analysis of one-to-one interviews and focus groups within and outside the University.

Engagement with the research was high, indicating a strong level of interest across the University community. The staff survey was completed by 651 respondents, representing 46.8% of Maynooth University staff, while the student survey was completed by 2,678 respondents, representing 16.6% of students. 50 one-to-one interviews and five focus group discussions were also conducted as part of the research.

This Executive Summary highlights the main findings and recommendations of the project.



# Príomhthorthaí

## Main Findings

### Stair shaibhir agus dea-thoil

Dearbhaítear sa taighde go bhfuil traidisiún saibhir Gaeilge in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad agus go bhfuil pobal na hOllscoile go mór i bhfách lena cur chun cinn. Tá oidhreacht shaibhir agus traidisiún uasal san institiúid ó bhí Maigh Nuad ina lárionad inleachtúil le linn Athbheochan na Gaeilge, go dtí an obair reatha atá ar siúl inti i dtaighde agus i dteagasc na Sean- agus na Nua-Ghaeilge. Tagann an oidhreacht sin leis na gealltanais fhoirmiúla atá déanta ar bhonn institiúideach agus náisiúnta chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn.

Is díol suntais é an dea-thoil láidir atá san Ollscoil i leith na Gaeilge. I measc fhreagróirí na suirbhéanna ar fad, d'aontaigh 90% de na baill foirne agus 91% de na mic léinn go gcuireann an Ghaeilge go mór le saol na hOllscoile. Dúirt 90% de na freagróirí ar fad gur cheart an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar an gcampas, agus dúirt an chuid is mó de na freagróirí (85% de na baill foirne agus 82% de na mic léinn) gur mhaith leo feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge. Ba mhaith le 45% de na freagróirí foirne (21% den fhoireann trí chéile) cuid dá ról a dhéanamh trí Ghaeilge.

Ag an am céanna, bhí amhras ar thart ar dhuine as deichniúr faoi chur chun cinn na Gaeilge. I measc na n-ábhar imní ba mhó a luaigh na rannpháirtithe sin bhí easpa muiníne nó míshuaimhneas i leith na Gaeilge, eispéireas diúltach leis an nGaeilge ar scoil, nó an bhraistint go mbíonn an Ghaeilge á brú ar dhaoine. Léiríonn na dearthaí sin a thábhachtaí is atá an ionchuimsitheacht agus an neartú muiníne sa phleanáil teanga chun go mbeidh pobal na hOllscoile trí chéile in ann plé leis an nGaeilge mar is mian leo féin.

Léiríonn na torthaí sin gur mór an meas atá ar an nGaeilge agus í mar chuid de chultúr Ollscoil Mhá Nuad, agus gurb iomaí deis atá ann cur le húsáid na teanga i saol an champais, ach na tacaíochtaí cuí a chur ar fáil.

### Strong foundations and goodwill

The research confirms that Maynooth University benefits from a strong tradition in, and broad support for, the Irish language. There is a deep historical legacy and proud history of Irish at the institution from its origins as one of the intellectual centres of the Gaelic Revival to its current work teaching and researching Modern and Medieval Irish. This legacy is matched by formal commitments to promote Irish, shaped by both national obligations and the University's own strategic aims.

Overall, there is a strikingly high level of support for the Irish language in Maynooth University. 90% of staff survey respondents and 91% of student respondents agreed that Irish adds value to the University. Likewise, 90% of staff and student respondents agreed that Irish should be promoted on campus, and most respondents said they would like to improve their Irish (85% of staff and 82% of students). Notably, 45% of staff respondents (21% of the total staff population) said they would like to perform some or all of their role through Irish.

At the same time, around one in ten staff and students expressed reservations about the promotion of Irish. Common concerns included finding Irish intimidating, negative experiences with Irish in school, or a perception that the language is imposed on people. These perspectives underline the importance of a maximally inclusive, confidence-building approach to language planning, so that the entire university population feels able to engage with Irish on their own terms.

Taken together, these findings show that Irish is widely valued as part of Maynooth University's culture and that there is substantial openness to greater use of the language in campus life, provided practical supports are in place.

*“Cuireann an Ghaeilge le saibhreas na hOllscoile.”*

D’aontaigh

**90%**

de na baill foirne

D’aontaigh

**91%**

de na mic léinn

*“Irish adds value to the University.”*

**90%**

of staff respondents agreed

**91%**

of student respondents agreed

*“Ba cheart an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar an gcampas.”*

D’aontaigh

**90%**

de na baill foirne

D’aontaigh

**90%**

de na mic léinn

*“The Irish language should be promoted on campus.”*

**90%**

of staff respondents agreed

**90%**

of student respondents agreed

*“Ba mhaith liom feabhas a chur ar mo chuid Gaeilge.”*

D’aontaigh

**85%**

de na baill foirne

D’aontaigh

**82%**

de na mic léinn

*“I would like to improve my Irish.”*

**85%**

of staff respondents agreed

**82%**

of student respondents agreed

*“Bheadh spéis agam Gaeilge a úsáid i mo ról.”*

D’aontaigh

**45%**

de na baill foirne

*“I would be interested in using Irish in my role.”*

**45%**

of staff respondents agreed

## An inniúlacht, an t-éileamh agus an cumas ceilte

Léirítear sna torthaí go bhfuil leibhéal ard inniúlachta féintuairiscithe Gaeilge i measc na foirne agus na mac léinn. Bheadh measúnú foirmiúil de dhíth leis na torthaí sin a dhearbhu; díol suntais, mar sin féin, go ndúirt breis agus leath na foirne agus nach mór dhá thrían de na mic léinn a d'fhreagair an suirbhé go bhfuil a gcuid Gaeilge labhartha ag an meán- nó ag an ardleibhéal (B1+ FTCE). Ní raibh aon Ghaeilge labhartha ag 14% den fhoireann agus ag 12% de na mic léinn.

Léirigh na torthaí go bhfuil an-chuid den inniúlacht sin ceilte. Thuairiscigh an tríú cuid de na mic léinn agus an cúigiú cuid de na baill foirne meánleibhéal ard nó ardleibhéal a bheith acu sa Ghaeilge labhartha (B2+ sa FTCE). Ina measc siúd a bhfuil an teanga ar a dtail acu, áfach, dúirt 50% de bhaill foirne agus 57% de mhic léinn nach n-úsáideann siad an teanga ach uair sa mhí nó níos annaimhe ná sin. Dúirt leath na bhfreagróirí foirne nach dtuigeann siad cár féidir an Ghaeilge a úsáid ar an gcampas, agus ba mhaith le nach mór trí cheathrú de na mic léinn a thug freagra ar an suirbhé tuilleadh deiseanna a bheith acu chun an Ghaeilge a úsáid.

Ina theannta sin, is cosúil go mbeadh éileamh mór ar sheirbhísí Gaeilge do mhic léinn. Dúirt leath na mac léinn a thug freagra ar an suirbhé, agus 95% díobh siúd a tógadh sa Ghaeltacht, go mbainfidís úsáid as na seirbhísí sin ach iad a bheith ar fáil.

## Na deiseanna agus an luach straitéiseach

De réir thorthaí an tionscadail, is iomaí deis atá ann cur le húsáid na Gaeilge ar an gcampas. Níl tairbhe á baint as an mórchumas faoi cheilt ó thaobh na Gaeilge de, agus is léir go bhfuil éileamh ar sheirbhísí agus ar dheiseanna úsáide Gaeilge. Má ghlacann an Ollscoil le múnla polasaí agus pleanála teanga níos inbhuanaithe, beifear in ann na dualgais reachtúla a bhaineann le cur chun cinn na teanga a chomhlíonadh agus, ina theannta sin, beifear in ann cur le heispéireas na mac léinn agus dea-chlú a tharraingt ar an institiúid as barr feabhais a bhaint amach i soláthar seirbhísí Gaeilge.

Tá sé riachtanach, mar sin, go ndúnfar an bhearna atá ann idir an polasaí teanga agus an cleachtas, agus is mór an tairbhe is féidir le pobal na hollscoile ina iomláine a bhaint as an deis sin.

## Proficiency, demand and latent capacity

The results show that self-reported proficiency in Irish is high among staff and students. Formal assessment would be needed to confirm these results; nevertheless, it is noteworthy that, of the respondents, almost two thirds of students and more than half of staff reported their spoken Irish as intermediate or advanced (CEFR level B1+). Just 14% of staff and 12% of students reported having no spoken Irish at all.

The data also revealed that much of that proficiency is latent. A third of students and a fifth of staff reported having upper intermediate or advanced Irish (CEFR level B2+). However, of those proficient users of Irish, 50% of staff and 57% of students reported using Irish less than once a month on campus. Moreover, half of staff respondents said that they do not know where they can use Irish on campus, and almost three quarters of student respondents said that they would like to have more opportunities to use Irish on campus.

There also appears to be substantial demand for Irish-medium services. Just over half of student survey respondents said they would use Irish-medium student services if available, rising to 95% among those who grew up in the Gaeltacht.

## Opportunities and strategic value

The findings also point to clear opportunities to increase the use of Irish on campus, with strong latent capacity in the university community and proven demand for Irish-medium services and meaningful opportunities to use the language. By committing to a more sustainable model of language planning and policy implementation, Maynooth University will not only be able to meet its legal obligations concerning the promotion of Irish; it will also greatly enhance the experience of students and staff and distinguish itself as a leader in Irish-language service provision.

Closing the gap between policy and practice is therefore both an obligation and an opportunity, with tangible benefits for the whole university community.

## Bearnaí idir an polasaí agus an cleachtas

Ainneoin na láidreachtaí sin, aithnítear sa tionscadal taighde go bhfuil bearna ann idir na gealltanais atá tugtha ag an Ollscoil agus an méid atá curtha i bhfeidhm: níl cuid de na gealltanais teanga á gcomhlíonadh.

Tacaíocht shiombalach seachas tacaíocht iomlán chórasach atá i gceist le cuid de bhearta na hOllscoile agus ní i gcónaí a dhéantar beart de réir briathair maidir le polasaithe a bhaineann le seirbhísí nó comharthaíocht dhátheangach. Is ar dhea-thoil daoine aonair seachas ar thacaíocht leanúnach na hinstiúide atá roinnt tionscnamh ag brath. Nuair a bhíonn aird agus acmhainní na hOllscoile dírithe ar thosaíochtaí eile, is minic a fhágtar an Ghaeilge ar lár.

Braitheann mic léinn agus baill foirne go bhfágtar an Ghaeilge in áit na leathphingine uaireanta de bharr easpa acmhainní, easpa soiléire sna línte freagrachta a bhaineann le cur chun cinn na teanga san Ollscoil, nó de bharr go dtugtar tús áite do spriocanna eile instiúideacha. Ag deireadh an lae, mar sin, aithnítear na spriocanna teanga i bprionsabal, ach ní i gcónaí a chuirtear i bhfeidhm iad.

## Gaps between policy and practice

Despite these strong foundations, the study identifies significant gaps between commitment and implementation. In practice, not all of the University's Irish language commitments are being fulfilled.

Irish is sometimes given token attention rather than fully integrated support, and policies relating to bilingual services or signage are not always acted upon. Initiatives can also depend heavily on the goodwill and persistence of individuals rather than sustained structural backing. When other priorities compete for institutional attention and resources, Irish can be sidelined.

Staff and students pointed to limited resources, lack of clear accountability, and competing institutional priorities as factors that can cause Irish to fall off the agenda. In short, Irish-language goals are often acknowledged in principle but not consistently realised in everyday university operations.

**19%**

de na baill foirne

**30%**

de na mic léinn

**19%**

of staff

**30%**

of students

**A dúirt go bhfuil a gcuid Gaeilge labhartha ag an meánleibhéal ard nó ag an ardleibhéal (Leibhéal B2+ ar an FTCE)**

**14%**

de na baill foirne

**12%**

de na mic léinn

**14%**

of staff

**12%**

of students

**Reported having upper intermediate or advanced spoken Irish (CEFR level B2+)**

**A dúirt nach bhfuil aon Ghaeilge labhartha acu**

**Reported having no spoken Irish at all**

# Moltaí

## Recommendations

Tá na moltaí seo a leanas bunaithe ar thorthaí an taighde deisce, na sonraí cainníochtúla a bailíodh sna suirbhéanna, agus na sonraí cáilíochtúla a bailíodh sna hagallaimh aonair agus sna grúpaí fócais. Tá na moltaí ar fad bunaithe ar fhianaise agus tá sé mar aidhm acu a bheith sainiúil agus inghníomhaithe.

Titeann na moltaí faoi sé chatagóir éagsúla mar a léirítear thíos. Tugtar tuilleadh sonraí maidir le gach moladh i gCaibidil 3 den tuarascáil.

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### Feiceálacht agus an tearmann teanga

Tá tábhacht faoi leith ag baint leis an spás fisiciúil don phleanáil agus do chaomhnú teangacha mionlaithe. Ba cheart go leanfaí na moltaí seo a leanas chun *tearmainn teanga* a chur ar fáil don Ghaeilge agus chun go mbeidh sí fite fuaite i saol an champais agus feiceálach timpeall air:

- Glacadh le polasaí soiléir maidir le campas dátheangach** chun an Ghaeilge a leabú go córasach i gcomharthaí, i seirbhísí ollscoile, sa teagasc agus i saol an champais.
- ‘Ceathrú Ghaeltachta’ a chur ar bun** i bhFoirgneamh na nEalaíon mar thearmann teanga don Ghaeilge.
- An Ghaeilge a chomhtháthú le próisis oifigiúla maidir le hathfhorbairt an champais** lena chinntiú go bhfuiltear ag cloí le dea-chleachtas agus chun an Ghaeilge a chur i lár an aonaigh go fadtéarmach.
- Seirbhísí áirithe dátheangacha a chur ar fáil do mhic léinn ar bhonn píolótach** ar feadh tréimhse theoranta, chun an t-éileamh a bheadh orthu agus na himpleachtaí praiticiúla ó thaobh acmhainní de a mheas.

The recommendations in this section are informed by the results of the desk-based research, the quantitative data collected in the staff and student surveys, and the qualitative data collected in the one-on-one interviews and focus groups. The recommendations are evidence-based and are intended to be specific and actionable.

The recommendations are divided into six categories as shown below. Each recommendation is discussed in further detail in Chapter 3 of the report.

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### Visibility and breathing spaces

Physical space has a particular importance in minority language planning and maintenance. In order to provide *breathing spaces* for Irish, and to ensure the systematic integration and visibility of Irish across the campus, the University should:

- Adopt an explicit bilingual campus policy** to embed Irish systematically across signage, in university services, teaching, and campus life.
- Establish a ‘Gaeltacht Quarter’** in the Arts Building as a breathing space for Irish on campus.
- Integrate Irish into official processes related to campus redevelopment** to guarantee compliance and long-term visibility of Irish.
- Pilot bilingual provision for certain student-facing services** for a specified period of time, to enable the University to assess demand for, and the operational requirements and resource implications of, such bilingual service provision.

## Deiseanna teagaisc agus foghlama

Tá ról rithábhachtach le comhlíonadh ag Ollscoil Mhá Nuad chun an fhoireann agus na mic léinn a ullmhú le dul i dtreo córas poiblí iomlán dátheangach. Leis sin a dhéanamh, ní mór forbairt a dhéanamh ar na deiseanna foghlama Gaeilge atá ar fáil, tacú le daoine ardchaighdeán Gaeilge a bhaint amach, agus conairí creidiúnaithe foghlama a chruthú laistigh agus lasmuigh de Scoil an Léinn Cheiltigh. Moltar, mar sin:

5. **Tacaíocht a chur ar fáil do bhail foirne atá ag iarraidh Gaeilge a úsáid ina ról** trí dheiseanna struchtúrtha foghlama a fhorbairt agus trí aitheantas a thabhairt dóibh sa chóras forbartha gairmiúla.
6. **Cur leis na deiseanna atá ag mic léinn tabhairt faoi chúrsaí creidiúnaithe i nGaeilge** ag leibhéil éagsúla, agus conairí soiléire forbartha a chur ar fáil atá ailínithe leis na spriocanna náisiúnta atá ag an rialtas le haghaidh na Gaeilge sa tseirbhís phoiblí.
7. **Pobal na hOllscoile a chur ar an eolas faoin soláthar atá ann cheana féin** agus na ranganna, imeachtaí agus tacaíochtaí Gaeilge atá ar fáil san Ollscoil a chur chun cinn ionas gur féidir leo siúd ar suim leo iad teacht orthu go héasca.
8. **Dianchúrsaí gearra tumoideachais Gaeltachta a chur ar fáil** don fhoireann agus do mhic léinn ag an deireadh seachtaine nó le linn na sosanna lár téarma chun tacú leis an bhfoghlaim lasmuigh den seomra ranga.
9. **Píolótú a dhéanamh ar mhodúil Ghaeilge a sholáthar**, de réir éilimh, lasmuigh de Scoil an Léinn Cheiltigh i ranna acadúla ar nós: Gnó, Dlí, Stair agus Oideachas.
10. Deiseanna maoinithe agus/nó comhoibríthe a fhiosrú le hinstitiúidí ardoideachais eile chun **cur le soláthar an Ghaeloideachais ag an tríú leibhéal**, bunaithe ar mhúnla Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.

## Teaching and learning opportunities

Maynooth University has a critical role to play in preparing staff and students for the transition to a fully bilingual public sector by expanding access to Irish-language learning, supporting progression to higher levels of proficiency, and embedding accredited pathways within and beyond the School of Celtic Studies. In order to fulfil this role, the University should:

5. **Provide targeted support for staff who wish to use Irish in their work**, through structured learning opportunities and recognition within professional development.
6. **Increase opportunities for students across the University to take accredited courses in Irish** at multiple proficiency levels, with clear pathways for progression and alignment with national targets for Irish in the public sector.
7. **Raise awareness of current provision** by promoting existing Irish-language classes, events, and supports more effectively so that students and staff who are interested can easily find and engage with them.
8. **Provide short immersive Gaeltacht courses** for staff and students during weekends or term breaks to support learning beyond the classroom.
9. **Pilot the provision of demand-driven Irish-medium modules** outside the School of Celtic Studies, in areas such as Business, Law, History, and Education.
10. Investigate potential opportunities for funding and/or collaboration with other higher education institutions, to **expand the provision of Irish-medium third-level education**, based on the Welsh Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol model.

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## Pobal Gaeilge a chothú ar an gcampas

Beidh pobal Gaeilge bríomhar ag teastáil in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad chun go mbeifear in ann sprioc straitéiseach na hOllscoile a bhaint amach, is é sin an Ghaeilge a 'leabú' ar champas na hOllscoile. Is féidir leis na moltaí seo a leanas tacú leis an aidhm sin:

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11. **Líonra Gaeilge a chothú** ar an gcampas trí imeachtaí rialta neamhfhoirmiúla i rith na bliana agus trí liosta seachadta agus féilire roinnte imeachtaí.
  12. **Tairiscint Ghníomhach a thabhairt isteach** chun go mbeidh pobal na hOllscoile in ann a chur in iúl go héasca go bhfuil siad sásta an Ghaeilge a úsáid trí láinnear ar leith nó a mhacasamhail.

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## Cúrsaí ionchuimsitheachta agus inrochtaineachta

Is gá go mbeidh cur chun cinn na Gaeilge ionchuimsitheach agus go bhfaighidh sé tacaíocht uathu siúd nach raibh mórán teagmhála acu leis an teanga nó a bhraitheann nach leo an teanga. Is féidir leis an nGaeilge pobal na hOllscoile a thabhairt le chéile ach na moltaí seo a leanas a chur i bhfeidhm:

- 
13. **An Ghaeilge a fhí le creat agus clár oiliúna comhionannais, éagsúlachta agus ionchuimsitheachta (CÉI) na hOllscoile** chun a chinntiú go mbeidh an phleanáil teanga ionchuimsitheach.
  14. **An ceangal idir Oifig na Gaeilge agus Oifig an CÉI a chothú** le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge a ailíniú le creat CÉI na hOllscoile ar bhonn struchtúrtha.
  15. **For-rochtain spriocdhírthe do mhic léinn a bhfuil Clár For-Rochtana Mhá Nuad ag tacú leo agus do mhic léinn idirnáisiúnta** chun a chinntiú go mbeidh an Ghaeilge inrochtana do gach mac léinn.
  16. **Leas a bhaint as na seisiúin ionduchtaithe agus an tSeachtain Fáilte** chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar bhonn ionchuimsitheach.

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## Building an Irish-language community on campus

The strategic aim of 'embedding' Irish on campus relies on building a vibrant Irish-language community in Maynooth University. This aim can be supported by the following recommendations:

- 
11. **Build an Irish-language network on campus** through regular informal events throughout the year shared via a mailing list and event calendar.
  12. **Introduce an Active Offer** to enable staff and students to signal their openness to use Irish through simple cues such as a themed lanyard.

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## Inclusion and accessibility

The promotion of Irish must be inclusive, reaching those who have had less exposure to the language or who may feel excluded. Irish can become a unifying and welcoming part of university culture by the following recommendations:

- 
13. **Integrate Irish into the University's EDI Framework** and training to ensure that language planning efforts are maximally inclusive.
  14. **Foster the link between the Irish Language Office and the EDI Office** to structurally align the promotion of Irish with wider EDI efforts.
  15. **Targeted outreach to students supported by the Maynooth Access Programme and international students** to ensure Irish is accessible to all students.
  16. **Use induction sessions** and Welcome Week to promote Irish inclusively from the outset.

## Polasaí teanga agus rialachas

Beidh struchtúir láidre institiúideacha ag teastáil chun a chinntiú go ndéanfar dul chun cinn ar bhonn leanúnach. Déanfar an phleanáil teanga a leabú i gcórais rialachais agus chomhlíonta na hOllscoile ach na moltaí seo a leanas a thógáil ar láimh:

17. Cloí leis an dualgas reachtúil agus **Oifigeach Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla** a cheapadh a chinnteoidh go bhfuil an Ollscoil ag cloí leis an reachtaíocht teanga.
18. Cur le hacmhainní Oifig na Gaeilge, athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar na riachtanais foirne atá aici agus a chinntiú go bhfuil a dóthain acmhainní aici.
19. **Athstruchtúró a dhéanamh ar an gcóras soláthair aistriúcháin:** córas a chur i bhfeidhm chun tionscadail aistriúcháin a bhainistiú go héifeachtach agus a chur in ord tosaíochta; na féidearthachtaí a bhaineann leis an aistriúchán ríomhchuidithe a fhiosrú, le cur le héifeachtúlacht agus le leanúnachas na hoibre.
20. Athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar **Théarmaí Tagartha Choiste na Gaeilge** chun a chinntiú go bhfuil siad soiléir oiriúnach.
21. Plean gnímh institiúideach don **Ghaeilge a chur i bhfeidhm** chun iarrachtaí na hOllscoile a stiúradh maidir le pleanáil teanga.
22. Fóram tras-aonaid **Acht na dTeangacha a bhunú** chun eolas a scaipeadh faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, agus chun comhordú agus tuairisciú a dhéanamh ar a chur i bhfeidhm.
23. Cur leis an tacaíocht a thugtar do mhic léinn agus post lánaimseartha a dhéanamh d'Oifigeach Gaeilge Aontas na Mac Léinn Mhá Nuad; breis tacaíochta a thabhairt do Chuallacht Cholm Cille agus don Scéim Chónaithe.

## Language policy and governance

Sustained progress requires strong institutional structures. The following recommendations will embed language planning into university governance and compliance systems:

17. Comply with the statutory obligation to **appoint an Official Languages Officer** to oversee compliance with language legislation.
18. **Expand the capacity of the Irish Language Office**, re-evaluate its staffing requirements and ensure adequate resourcing.
19. **Re-structure the procurement of translations.** Introduce a system to triage, track, and manage translation work more effectively; investigate the opportunities afforded by machine-aided translation to maximise the efficiency and consistency of translation work.
20. **Review the Irish Language Committee's Terms of Reference** to ensure that they are clear and appropriate.
21. **Implement an institutional Irish Language Action Strategy** to guide language planning efforts in the University.
22. **Establish a cross-unit Official Languages Forum** to support the dissemination of information on the Official Languages Act and to coordinate and report on their implementation.
23. **Increase support for students** by making the MSU Irish Language Officer a full-time sabbatical role and strengthening institutional provision for Cuallacht Cholm Cille and the Scéim Chónaithe (Irish-language residential scheme).

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## An caidreamh seachtrach agus comhpháirtíochtaí

Ba cheart go gcuirfí leis an ról atá ag Ollscoil Mhá Nuad mar ollscoil phobail agus an caidreamh atá aici le heagraíochtaí Gaeilge lasmuigh den champas a neartú:

- 
- 24. Cur leis an gcaidreamh atá ag an Ollscoil le heagraíochtaí Gaeilge:** cur leis an gcomhoibriú ar bhonn foirmiúil le *Gaeilge Nuada*, Cill Dara le Gaeilge, Comhairle Contae Chill Dara, Gaeltacht Ráth Chairn agus le céimithe a bhfuil Gaeilge acu.
- 
- 25. Tógáil ar an gcomhpháirtíocht idir OMN agus an Centre Culturel Irlandais** chun an Ghaeilge a theagasc agus a chur chun cinn i bPáras agus san Eoraip, agus cur leis an dea-thionchar a bhaineann leis trí dheiseanna taistil a chruthú agus trí chomhoibriú níos dlúithe le hAmbasáid na hÉireann i bPáras.

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## External engagement and partnerships

Finally, Maynooth University should strengthen its role as a civic university by deepening meaningful engagement with Irish-speaking organisations beyond the campus:

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- 24. Deepen links with Irish-language organisations:** formalise cooperation with *Gaeilge Nuada*, Cill Dara le Gaeilge, Kildare County Council, the Ráth Chairn Gaeltacht, and Irish-speaking alumni.
- 
- 25. Build on the partnership between MU and the Centre Culturel Irlandais** through continued support for Irish-language teaching and promotion in Paris, and enhance its positive impact through increased mobility opportunities and closer collaboration with the Irish Embassy in Paris.

Foirgneamh na nEalaíon / Arts Building





Ár dTeanga, Ár gCampas / Our Language, Our Campus:

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# Réamhrá

# Introduction

## Is í an Ghaeilge teanga náisiúnta na hÉireann agus is í príomhtheanga oifigiúil na tíre í de réir Bhunreacht na hÉireann. Tá tábhacht faoi leith aici i gcultúr agus i bhféiniúlacht náisiúnta na tíre.

Tá ról lárnach ag ollscoileanna na hÉireann in athbheochan na Gaeilge le céad bliain anuas. Eiseamláir is ea Coláiste Phádraig mar gheall ar an traidisiún teagaisc, taighde agus foilsithe i réimse na Gaeilge siar níos mó ná dhá chéad bliain. Leanann an traidisiún ársa céanna ar aghaidh in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad (OMN) anuas go dtí an lá atá inniu ann.

Ag an am céanna, táthar ag aithint níos mó agus níos mó go bhfuil ról lárnach ag institiúidí poiblí i gcur chun cinn na dteangacha mionlaithe agus in iarrachtaí chun sochaí a chruthú atá dátheangach i ndáiríre – sprioc a bhfuil rialtais i ndiaidh a chéile ag tacú léi agus atá le feiceáil i bpolasaithe teanga áitiúla.

San fhoilseachán seo déantar tuairisciú ar shonraí tionscadal taighde bliana a rinneadh ar champas OMN, tionscadal darb ainm *Ár gCampas, Ár dTeanga*. Is ionann an tionscadal agus iniúchadh cuimsitheach bonnlíne ar staid reatha na Gaeilge san Ollscoil, agus is é an chéad staidéar dá leithéid é in earnáil ardoideachais na hÉireann. Is tráthúil an tionscadal seo i bhfianaise na leasuithe atá á gcur i bhfeidhm san earnáil poiblí mar gheall ar Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021 agus i bhfianaise an phlé atá ar siúl faoi láthair ag Comhchoiste na Gaeilge, na Gaeltachta agus Phobal Labhartha na Gaeilge maidir le teagasc agus stádas na Gaeilge sna hinstiúidí tríú leibhéal agus is iomaí uair a rinneadh tagairt don taighde seo le linn an phlé sin. Tionscadal ceannródaíoch atá in *Ár gCampas, Ár dTeanga* agus cur chuige fianaisebhunaithe ann ar eiseamláir ábhartha é d'institiúidí eile ar fud an oileáin.

Aithnítear go bhféadfadh teannas a theacht chun cinn, agus an Ollscoil ag cur Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021 agus a Plean Straitéiseach 2023-2028 i bhfeidhm, idir na gealltanais a rinne an Ollscoil agus na dualgais atá uirthi i leith na Gaeilge, ar thaobh amháin agus na spriocanna straitéiseacha atá aici maidir le hidirnáisiúnú, comhionannas, éagsúlacht agus ionchuimsitheacht ar an taobh eile.

Cuireann an tionscadal taighde seo tús le comhrá uile-Ollscoile maidir le ról na Gaeilge in OMN. Déantar iniúchadh ar conas a thuigeann baill foirne agus mic léinn a gcaidreamh féin leis an teanga, agus

## Irish is the national language of Ireland, the first official language in the Constitution of Ireland, and a crucial element of Irish culture and national identity.

Universities have played a vital role in the revitalisation of Irish for the past century. St Patrick's College stands out for its long-standing contribution to Irish-language education, research, and publication over more than two hundred years. Maynooth University (MU) continues to build on that noble tradition.

At the same time, public sector institutions are increasingly recognised as playing a vital role in promoting minoritised languages and in efforts to create a truly bilingual society – an aim consistently endorsed by successive governments and reflected in local language policies.

This publication reports on a year-long research project undertaken on the MU campus. *Ár gCampas, Ár dTeanga (Our Campus, Our Language)* constitutes a comprehensive baseline assessment of the current status of Irish within the University and represents the first study of its kind in the Irish higher education sector. The project is particularly timely in light of ongoing public-sector reform arising from the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021, and the continuing inquiry of the Oireachtas Committee on the Irish Language, the Gaeltacht and the Irish-speaking Community into the teaching and status of Irish in third-level education during which the present research was referenced on several occasions. *Ár gCampas, Ár dTeanga* makes an original contribution to institutional language policy, providing an evidence-based model of relevance to higher education institutions across the island.

As the University implements the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021 and continues the implementation phase of its 2023–28 Strategic Plan, there is a potential tension between the University's commitment and obligations in relation to Irish, on the one hand, and its strategic goals related to internationalisation and equality, diversity and inclusion on the other.

The research project presented in this report marks the beginning of a University-wide conversation about the place of Irish at Maynooth. It examines how staff and students understand their own relationships with the language, and how Irish shapes identity within the University community. This

ar an tionchar a bhíonn ag an nGaeilge ar cheisteanna féiniúlachta i measc phobal na hOllscoile. Is é atá i gceist leis an tuarascáil seo ná eolas a scaipeadh faoin nGaeilge san Ollscoil, machnamh a spreagadh, agus fianaise a chur ar fáil le haghaidh na pleanála teanga amach anseo.

Ceann de na spriocanna a bhain leis an tionscadal ná iniúchadh a dhéanamh ar bhealach cruthaitheach eitneagrafach ar na dearcthaí éagsúla atá ag pobal OMN i leith na Gaeilge, agus ar na bealaí ina bhfuil an Ghaeilge fite fuaite le saincheisteanna ar nós: féiniúlacht agus muintearas; ionchuimsitheacht agus eisiámh; agus mórtas agus náire, i measc téamaí eile. Sprioc bhreise ba ea léargais a thabhairt ar an méid atá ag teastáil chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar an gcampas, ar na dearcthaí atá ag daoine maidir leis an ábhar céanna, ar sholáthar an teagaisc sheirbhíse, ar áit na Gaeilge san fhorbairt ghairmiúil, agus ar chur i bhfeidhm polasaithe teanga in OMN, le tacú le tograí pleanála teanga atá spriocdhírthe, freagrúil agus ionchuimsitheach. Is ar an dara sprioc sin go háirithe atá an tuarascáil seo dírithe.

Obair dheisce agus allamuigh a bhí i gceist leis an taighde féin. Tuairiscítear torthaí na hoibre deisce sin i gCaibidil 1 den tuarascáil seo, áit a ndéantar achoimre ar an gcomhthéacs náisiúnta agus áitiúil atá ag teastáil chun stair, staid reatha agus todhchaí na Gaeilge in OMN a thuiscint; achoimre ar stair na Gaeilge in Éirinn agus i Maigh Nuad; cur síos ar na ranna is ar na hoifigí in OMN a bhíonn ag plé le teagasc agus le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge; agus achoimre ar an gcreat reachtaíochta náisiúnta a stiúránn polasaí teanga in eagraíochtaí poiblí in Éirinn. Déantar plé gairid ar scóip agus ar mhodheolaíocht an tionscadail chun deireadh a chur le Caibidil 1.

Déantar tuairiscíú i gCaibidil 2 den tuarascáil seo ar thorthaí na hoibre allamuigh, arbh é a bhí i gceist léi iniúchadh modhanna measctha ar chumas, ar nósanna úsáide agus ar dhearcthaí na mac léinn agus na mball foirne in OMN i leith na Gaeilge.

I gCaibidil 3 den tuarascáil seo breathnaítear ar thodhchaí na Gaeilge ar champas i bhfianaise na dtorthaí taighde. Samhlaítear sa chuid sin cén chuma a bheadh ar an Ollscoil dá gcuirfí na gealltanais áitiúla agus na dualgais reachtúla a bhaineann leis an athneartú teanga i bhfeidhm go rathúil. Pléitear na dúshláin agus na féidearthachtaí a bhainfidh leis an athneartú sin agus déantar moltaí réadúla infheidhmithe a éascóidh comhlíonadh na gealltanais siúd.

report thus aims to raise awareness of issues relating to Irish in MU, encourage reflection, and provide an evidence base for future language planning initiatives.

Among the project's objectives were to explore, through a creative ethnographic approach, the diverse and often complex attitudes to Irish across the MU community, and the ways in which the language intersects with questions of identity and belonging; inclusion and exclusion; and pride and shame, among other themes. A further objective was to generate insights into attitudes and needs relating to the promotion of Irish on campus, the provision of service-teaching and professional development, and the implementation of national language policy within MU, in order to inform the design of language planning initiatives that are targeted, responsive, and inclusive. The findings reported here address both objectives, with a particular focus on the second.

The research comprised a desk-based and a field-based component. The findings of that desk research are presented in Chapter 1 of this report, where the national and local contexts needed to understand the past, present and future of the Irish language in Maynooth University are outlined. This section comprises a brief history of the Irish language in Ireland and in Maynooth; an overview of the academic and administrative departments and offices in Maynooth University that support the teaching and promotion of the language; and a summary of the national statutory framework that guides language policy in Irish public institutions. The section concludes with a brief discussion of the scope and methodology of the project.

Chapter 2 of the report presents the findings of the field-based component of the project, a mixed-methods investigation of MU staff and students' ability in, usage of, and attitudes towards the Irish language.

On the basis of those results, Chapter 3 of the report looks to the future of Irish on campus. This section imagines what a successful fulfilment of local commitments and statutory obligations regarding Irish language revitalisation would look like. It notes the challenges and opportunities that are likely to present themselves over the coming years in that context. Finally, it outlines a series of practical and achievable recommendations that will facilitate the fulfilment of those commitments.

# Modheolaíocht

## Methodology

Rinneadh taighde an tionscadail idir Nollaig 2024 agus Bealtaine 2025. Cur chuige modhanna measctha a bhí i gceist leis an taighde: bailíodh sonraí cainníochtúla trí shuirbhéanna ar líne agus bailíodh sonraí cáilíochtúla trí agallaimh aonair agus trí ghrúpaí fócais.

Bailíodh na sonraí cainníochtúla idir Eanáir agus Márta 2025. Bailíodh na sonraí trí dhá shuirbhé dhigiteacha, ceann amháin le haghaidh bhaill foirne OMN agus ceann eile le haghaidh mhic léinn na hOllscoile. Ceisteanna dúnta a bhí i gceist leis na suirbhéanna den chuid is mó. Bhain na ceisteanna le cumas, le pátrúin úsáide na Gaeilge ar champas na hOllscoile agus le dearcthaí na bhfreagróirí i leith na Gaeilge. Bhí buncheisteanna déimeagrafacha san áireamh freisin. Dáileadh na suirbhéanna ar na mic léinn agus ar na baill foirne trí liostaí seachadta agus trí fheachtas ar láthair an champais a reáchtáladh le tacaíocht ó ambasadóirí Rath na Mac Léinn.

Chomhlánaigh 651 ball foirne an suirbhé – thart ar 46.8% de bhaill foirne uile na hOllscoile. 2678 mac léinn a chomhlánaigh an suirbhé – thart ar 16.6% de mhic léinn uile na hOllscoile. Bhí an dá shuirbhé ar fáil i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla.

Tá na sonraí a chuirtear i láthair sa tuarascáil seo bunaithe ar shampla féinroghnaithe de rannpháirtithe suirbhé agus agallaimh. Fuarthas ráta freagartha sách ard i measc na mball foirne, rud a fhágann bonn réasúnta láidir don anailís. I measc na mac léinn, áfach, bhí an ráta níos ísle, rud a chuireann teorainn leis na féidearthachtaí a bhaineann le ginearálú a dhéanamh ar na torthaí sin. Caithfear a bheith aireach leis na torthaí mar sin; ní féidir a mhaíomh gur léiriú iad ar dhearcthaí phobal na hollscoile ar fad, go háirithe i gcás na mac léinn.

Mar sin féin, ós rud é nach gcaitheann formhór na mac léinn ach tréimhse ghearr ar an gcampas i gcomparáid leis an bhfoireann, is fiú tábhacht ar leith a thabhairt do dhearcthaí na mball foirne. Bíonn mic léinn fochéime san Ollscoil de ghnáth ar feadh trí nó ceithre bliana, ach bíonn an fhoireann níos ‘leabaithe’ san institiúid. Is cinnte go dtagann athrú ar an

The field-based research for this project was carried out between December 2024 and May 2025. The research comprised a mixed-methods approach: quantitative data was collected by means of online surveys and qualitative data by means of one-on-one interviews and focus groups.

The quantitative data was collected between January and March 2025. Data was collected in the form of two digital surveys; one for MU staff and one for MU students. The surveys contained mostly closed-field questions about respondents’ proficiency in Irish, their patterns of usage on campus, and their attitudes towards the language. The surveys also contained basic questions about demographics. The surveys were distributed to staff and students via mailing lists and through an on-the-ground campaign led by a team of Student Success ambassadors.

651 members of staff filled in the staff survey – approximately 46.8% of the total staff population. The student survey was completed by 2678 students, or 16.6% of the University’s student population. Both surveys were available in Irish and English.

It must be borne in mind that the data presented in this report are drawn from a self-selecting sample of survey and interview participants. While the high response rate among staff represents a relatively robust basis for analysis, the lower rate of student participation limits the generalisability of those findings. Caution should therefore be exercised in interpreting the results as representative of the wider university population, particularly in the case of students.

That said, given that most students spend a relatively short time on campus compared to staff, it is useful to place particular weight on staff perspectives. Students are typically present for only three or four years, whereas staff are more embedded in the institution. While staff turnover does occur, their relative continuity means their responses can provide a more stable basis for

bhfoireann, ach fágann an leanúnachas a bhaineann leis an bhfoireann gur féidir lena bhfreagraí siúd a bheith ina mbunús níos seasmhaí i gcomhthéacs na dtosaíochtaí fadtéarmacha agus pleanála teanga.

Baineadh úsáid as féinmheasúnú chun cumas Gaeilge na bhfreagróirí a thomhas. D'fhreagair siad ceisteanna cumais a bhí ailínithe le leaganacha simplithe de bhandaí an *Fhráma Tagartha Comónta Eorpach (FTCE)*, arb ionann é agus an caighdeán idirnáisiúnta do chumas teanga arna fhorbairt ag Comhairle na hEorpa. Is uirlis phraiticiúil é an féinmheasúnú agus suirbhéanna móra i gceist, agus bíonn torthaí dá leithéid iontaofa go ginearálta ach tuairiscíní bailí a úsáid agus na ceisteanna á gcur. Ní mór a aithint, áfach, go bhfuil laigí áirithe ag baint leis an bhféinmheasúnú freisin. Féadann na freagróirí a gcumas teanga a mheas faoi nó thar a luach mar gheall ar an bhféinmhuinín, mar gheall ar an taithí foghlama a bhí acu roimhe sin, nó mar gheall ar an tuiscint a bhaineann siad as na bandaí cumais. Is ar an ábhar seo go gcaitear leis na torthaí cumais mar léargas táscach seachas mar thorthaí deifnídeacha, agus gur fearr ciall a bhaint astu i gcomhthéacs na dtorthaí a bhaineann le húsáid agus le dearchtaí na rannpháirtithe a thugtar i gCaibidil 2. Déanann Ross (2006) tuilleadh plé ar na lochtanna atá ar an bhféinmheasúnú mar uirlis mhodheolaíoch.

identifying long-term priorities and informing language planning.

Respondents' proficiency in Irish was measured through self-assessment questions aligned with simplified bands of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*, the international standard developed by the Council of Europe for describing language ability. While self-assessment is a practical tool in large-scale surveys and generally provides a reliable indication of communicative ability when framed by valid descriptors, it is subject to well-documented limitations. Respondents may under- or over-estimate their competence due to issues such as confidence, previous learning experience, or differing interpretations of the proficiency bands. For this reason, the findings on proficiency should be treated as indicative rather than definitive and are best understood in combination with the findings on language use and attitudes outlined in Chapter 2. See also Ross (2006) for further discussion of the limitations of self-assessment as a methodological tool.



Bhí modhanna staitistiúla tuairisciúla agus infearacha araon i gceist leis an anailís a rinneadh ar thorthaí na suirbhéanna. Baineadh úsáid as staitisticí tuairisciúla (minicíochtaí, céatadáin agus trastábluithe ina measc) chun achoimre a dhéanamh ar fhreagraí na suirbhéanna agus chun treochtaí ginearálta a aithint. Baineadh úsáid as staitisticí infearacha bunúsacha (trialacha chi-chearnóige agus t-thástálacha ina measc) chun iniúchadh a dhéanamh ar an gcaidreamh a bhí ann idir na príomhathróga. Rinneadh próiseáil agus anailís ar na sonraí trí Microsoft Excel agus trí SPSS Statistics (leagan 29). Bhí líon beag ceisteanna oscailte san áireamh sa dá shuirbhé, ceisteanna a ndearnadh anailís théamach orthu taobh leis na sonraí cáilíochtúla.

Rinneadh na hagallaimh eitneagrafacha idir Nollaig 2024 agus Bealtaine 2025. Rinneadh 50 agallamh aonair le baill foirne agus le mic léinn ar fud OMN agus le páirtithe leasmhara in institiúidí ardoideachais eile agus sa cheantar áitiúil.

Ba é sprioc na n-agallamh léargas ní ba chaolchúisí a fháil ar an gcaidreamh a bhí ag na baill foirne agus na mic léinn leis an nGaeilge, agus ar a gcuid dearchtaí ina leith, léargas nárbh fhéidir a fháil trí na suirbhéanna amháin. I dteannta na n-agallamh sin rinneadh cúig ghrúpa fócais le mic léinn agus le baill foirne na hOllscoile. Rinneadh iniúchadh sna grúpaí fócais sin ar théamaí agus ar na húdair imní a bhain le grúpa mac léinn nó ball foirne faoi leith; mic léinn an chláir rochtana *Turn to Teaching*, mar shampla. Rinneadh na hagallaimh agus na grúpaí fócais i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla.

Rinneadh na hagallaimh a thras-scríobh agus rinneadh anailís théamach orthu ag baint úsáid as an gclár anailíse sonraí NVivo (leagan 14). Rinneadh cuíchóiriú ar an anailís théamach mar gheall ar scóip agus achar ama an tionscadail. Dhírigh an códú ar phátrúin théamacha, ar thopaicí a tháinig aníos arís agus arís eile, agus ar na sleachta ab ábhartha do na ceisteanna taighde. Forbraíodh na téamaí ar bhonn ionductaitheach agus pléadh leis na sonraí ar bhonn atriallach.

The survey data were analysed using a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics (including frequencies, percentages and cross-tabulations) were used to summarise participant responses and identify general trends. Basic inferential statistics (including chi-square and t-tests) were conducted to explore relationships between key variables. Data processing and analysis were carried out using Microsoft Excel and SPSS Statistics (version 29). Both surveys contained a small number of open-field questions which were analysed thematically alongside the qualitative data.

The ethnographic interviews took place between December 2024 and May 2025. A total of 50 one-on-one interviews were carried out with staff and students across Maynooth University and with external stakeholders in other higher education institutions and in the local area.

The purpose of the interviews was to gain a more nuanced, personal insight into staff and students' relationship with, and attitudes towards, the Irish language than was possible to gain by means of the surveys. Additionally, five focus groups were carried out with staff and students from across Maynooth University. These focus groups allowed for an exploration of themes and concerns specific to a particular group of staff or students; for example, students learning Irish as part of the *Turn to Teaching* access programme. Interviews and focus groups were carried out in both Irish and English.

Interview data were transcribed and analysed thematically using the data analysis programme NVivo (version 14). Given the scope and timeframe of the project, a streamlined thematic analysis was conducted. Coding focused on identifying key patterns, recurring topics, and illustrative quotes relevant to the research questions. Themes were developed inductively through iterative engagement with the data.

# Buíochas

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Tá mé buíoch d'fhoireann agus de mhic léinn Ollscoil Mhá Nuad a chuidigh leis an staidéar seo tríd an suirbhé a chomhlánú, nó trí pháirt a ghlacadh in agallamh nó i ngrúpa fócais. Ba mhaith liom mo bhuíochas a ghabháil freisin leis na rannpháirtithe taobh amuigh den Ollscoil a bhí an-fhlaithiúil lena gcuid ama agus a bhí sásta a gcuid tuairimí a nochtadh.

Gabhaim buíochas le maoinitheoirí an taighde seo, Lárionad na Gaeilge agus Ciste Straitéiseach Ollscoil Mhá Nuad, ar chuir a gcuid acmhainní ar mo chumas an taighde a dhéanamh agus an tuarascáil seo a chur le chéile.

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Tá súil agam go gcuirfidh an tuarascáil seo tús le comhrá ar fud phobal na hOllscoile faoi ról na Gaeilge in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad, agus faoi na céimeanna praiticiúla ar féidir leo tacú le normálú na Gaeilge i saol na hOllscoile. Mise amháin atá freagrach as aon earráid nó as aon rud atá fágtha ar lár sa saothar seo.

I would like to express my thanks to everyone who contributed to this research project and who gave me their time, expertise, and support as I have carried it out.

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My thanks to all those who assisted with the research and the preparation of the report. I am grateful to Prof. Fionntán de Brún and Aoife Ní Ghloinn for their supervision, guidance, and support throughout the project.

I hope that this report will serve as a starting point for a conversation across the University community about the place of Irish at Maynooth University, and about the practical steps that can support its use in everyday University life. Any errors or omissions in this work remain my own.

—  
An Dr Joe Simpson

# Comhthéacs Context



Bhí dhá chomhpháirt mar bhonn faoin taighde ar a bhfuil an tuarascáil seo bunaithe: ceann amháin a bhaineann le taighde deisce agus ceann eile a bhaineann le taighde allamuigh. Leagtar amach sa chuid seo den tuarascáil torthaí an taighde deisce, taighde a rinneadh chun go mbeifí in ann cur síos a dhéanamh ar theagasc, úsáid agus cur chun cinn na Gaeilge in OMN mar a bhí go stairiúil agus mar atá faoi láthair.

Tugtar léargas anseo ar an gcomhthéacs áitiúil agus náisiúnta ina bhfuil an Ollscoil ag feidhmiú. Tá an chuid seo ina bunchloch, mar sin, chun tuiscint a fháil ar na deiseanna agus ar na dúshláin a bhaineann leis an gcleachtas reatha agus le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge ar an gcampas amach anseo.

The research underpinning this report consisted of both a desk-based and a field-based component. This part of the report outlines the findings of the desk-based research, which was designed to establish the wider context in which Maynooth University has historically operated, and continues to operate, with regard to the teaching, use, and promotion of the Irish language.

By situating the University within its national and local contexts, this section provides an essential foundation for understanding the opportunities and challenges that exist around current practice and the future promotion of Irish on campus.

Bhí dlúthcheangal idir meath na Gaeilge agus an ghallsmacht a thosaigh sa dara haois déag. Ghabh an próiseas sin, ar a dtugtar an t-aistriú teanga sa tsochtheangeolaíocht, leis an imeallú polaitiúil agus eacnamaíoch a rinneadh ar phobal na Gaeilge faoi riail Shasana. Cuireadh dlús mór leis sa naoú haois déag mar gheall ar chóras na scoileanna náisiúnta lán-Bhéarla a tugadh isteach in 1831, mar gheall ar an gcaoi ar fágadh pobail Ghaeilge beo bocht, mar gheall ar dhrochthionchar an Drochshaoil, go háirithe i gceantair ina raibh an Ghaeilge in úsáid mar phríomhtheanga, agus mar gheall ar an eisimirce ollmhór a tháinig ina dhiaidh. Ba le linn na tréimhse sin a rinneadh mionteanga den Ghaeilge in Éirinn.

The decline of the Irish language was closely connected to English colonial rule in Ireland, which began in the twelfth century. This process of decline, referred to in sociolinguistics as language shift, accompanied the political and economic marginalisation of the Irish-speaking population under colonial rule and was greatly accelerated in the nineteenth century through the introduction of a monolingual English-medium national school system in 1831, the relentless impoverishment of Irish-speaking communities, the devastating impact of the Great Famine, felt most acutely in Irish-speaking regions, and the large-scale emigration that followed. It was during this period that Irish became a minority language in Ireland.

# 1.1 Gearrchuntas ar stair na Gaeilge

Tá an Ghaeilge ar cheann de na sé theanga Cheilteacha atá fós beo. Tá dlúthghaol aici le Gaeilge na hAlban agus leis an Manainnis, agus gaol níos faide amach leis an mBreatnais, an Choirnis agus an Bhriotáinis. Is brainse de chuid na dteangacha Ind-Eorpacha iad na teangacha Ceilteacha, amhail an brainse Rómánsach agus an brainse Gearmánach a bhfuil an Béarla mar chuid de.

Tá neart fianaise stairiúla ann faoin nGaeilge in Éirinn, agus áirítear an traidisiún litríochta meánaoiseach ar cheann de na canónacha is saibhre dá bhfuil san Eoraip. Ba í an Ghaeilge príomhtheanga na hÉireann ar feadh na gcéadta bliain. Sa lá atá inniu ann, áfach, ní labhraítear mar theanga an phobail í ach i gceantair áirithe sa tír – san iarthar den chuid is mó – ceantair a dtugtar ‘an Ghaeltacht’ orthu.

Bhí dlúthcheangal idir meath na Gaeilge agus an ghallsmacht a thosaigh sa dara haois déag. Ghabh an próiseas sin, ar a dtugtar an t-aistriú teanga sa tsochtheangeolaíocht, leis an imeallú polaitiúil agus eacnamaíoch a rinneadh ar phobal na Gaeilge faoi riail Shasana. Cuireadh dlús mór leis sa naoú haois déag mar gheall ar chóras na scoileanna náisiúnta lán-Bhéarla a tugadh isteach in 1831, mar gheall ar an gcaoi ar fágadh pobail Ghaeilge beo bocht, mar gheall ar dhrochthionchar an Drochshaoil, go háirithe i gceantair ina raibh an Ghaeilge in úsáid mar phríomhtheanga, agus mar gheall ar an eisimirce ollmhór a tháinig ina dhiaidh. Ba le linn na tréimhse sin a rinneadh mionteanga den Ghaeilge in Éirinn. Déanann Doyle (2015) agus Ó Ceallaigh (2022: 18-21) tuilleadh plé ar stair an aistrithe teanga i gcomhthéacs na Gaeilge.

Spreag Athbheochan na Gaeilge spéis nua sa teanga ag deireadh an 20ú haois. Bhí an ghluaiseacht sin mar chuid den náisiúnachas cultúrtha a bhí forleathan san Eoraip an tráth sin. Is iomaí tír a rinne iarracht siombail féiniúlachta a dhéanamh den teanga agus den seanchas. Bhí Conradh na Gaeilge ar thús cadhnaíochta san Athbheochan; rinne an eagraíocht sin an teanga agus an cultúr Gaelach a cheangal leis an neamhspleáchas polaitiúil agus ba mhór an tionchar a d’imir sí ar pholasaithe an tSaorstáit a bunaíodh in 1922.

Ainmníodh an Ghaeilge ina Teanga Náisiúnta in Bunreacht Shaorstáit Éireann agus rinneadh teanga riachtanach den Ghaeilge sa Státseirbhís, riachtanas ar cuireadh deireadh leis in 1973.

Tá ceart dlíthiúil ag daoine in Éirinn chun seirbhísí poiblí Gaeilge, ceart a ndearnadh dlí de in Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla 2003. Is é an tAcht sin (agus an leagan leasaithe de a ritheadh in 2021), an phríomhreachtaíocht teanga a bhfuil OMN faoi réir acu. Tugtar níos mó eolais maidir leis an gcreat reachtúil reatha i gCuid 1.5.

# 1.1 A brief history of Irish

Irish is one of six living Celtic languages. It is closely related to Scottish Gaelic and Manx, and more distantly related to Welsh, Cornish and Breton. The Celtic languages form a branch of the Indo-European language family, of which the Romance languages and Germanic languages, including English, are also a part.

Irish is the oldest attested language in Ireland and has one of the richest medieval literary traditions in Europe. For hundreds of years Irish was the main language spoken in Ireland. However, it is now only spoken as a community language in specific areas, mostly in the West of Ireland. These areas are collectively known as the ‘Gaeltacht’.

The decline of the Irish language was closely connected to English colonial rule in Ireland, which began in the twelfth century. This process of decline, referred to in sociolinguistics as language shift, accompanied the political and economic marginalisation of the Irish-speaking population under colonial rule and was greatly accelerated in the nineteenth century through the introduction of a monolingual English-medium national school system in 1831, the relentless impoverishment of Irish-speaking communities, the devastating impact of the Great Famine, felt most acutely in Irish-speaking regions, and the large-scale emigration that followed. It was during this period that Irish became a minority language in Ireland. For further detail on the history of language shift in the Irish context, see Doyle (2015) and Ó Ceallaigh (2022: 18-21).

The end of the nineteenth century saw a renewed interest in the Irish language through the Gaelic Revival. This movement was part of a wider European wave of cultural nationalism in which many nations sought to reclaim language and folk traditions as symbols of identity. In Ireland, the revival was spearheaded by organisations such as Conradh na Gaeilge (the Gaelic League), an organisation that came to associate ‘Gaelic’ language and culture with political independence and strongly influenced the language policies of the Irish Free State established in 1922.

Irish was designated the national language in the Free State constitution. Proficiency in Irish was made a prerequisite for entrance in the Civil Service, a requirement that was maintained until 1973.

People in Ireland have a legal right to public services in Irish, a right enshrined in the Official Languages Act 2003. This Act (and the amended version passed in 2021) is the main language legislation under which Maynooth University operates. More information on the current legislative framework is provided in Section 1.5.

Tá stádas oifigiúil tugtha don Ghaeilge san Aontas Eorpach anois freisin. Rinneadh teanga oifigiúil de chuid an Aontais Eorpaigh den Ghaeilge in 2005 agus tugadh lánstádas di mar theanga oibre de chuid an Aontais in 2022.

I ndaonáireamh 2022 dúirt nach mór 40% de dhaonra na tíre go raibh cumas éigin acu sa Ghaeilge, méadú 6% ó bhí 2016 ann. Tá líon na gcainteoirí Gaeilge sa Ghaeltacht ag titim, áfach, agus laghdú cláraithe sa daonáireamh ó 69% in 2011 go 66% in 2022. Ina theannta sin, de réir thorthaí dhaonáireamh 2022, ní bhíonn ach 31% díobh siúd a bhfuil cónaí orthu sa Ghaeltacht ag úsáid na teanga go laethúil.

## I ndaonáireamh 2022 dúirt nach mór 40% de dhaonra na tíre go raibh cumas éigin acu sa Ghaeilge, méadú 6% ó bhí 2016 ann.



The Irish language has also been given official status in the European Union in recent years. Irish became an official language of the European Union in 2005 and was given full status as a working language of the Union in 2022.

In the 2022 census, almost 40% of the country's population said they had some ability in Irish, an increase of 6% since 2016. The number of Irish speakers within the Gaeltacht is falling, however, with a decrease registered in the census from 69% in 2011 to 66% in 2022. Furthermore, according to the results of the 2022 census, only 31% of those living in the Gaeltacht use the language on a daily basis.

**In the 2022 census, almost 40% of the country's population said they had some ability in Irish, an increase of 6% since 2016.**

# 1.2 Stair na Gaeilge in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad

Tá ról lárnach ag an nGaeilge i Maigh Nuad le fada an lá. Riantar sa chuid seo stair na hinstiúide siar go bunú Choláiste Phádraig, arbh é an chéad chliarscoil náisiúnta in Éirinn é agus a raibh páirt thábhachtach aige in Athbheochan na Gaeilge ag casadh an naoú haois déag, chomh fada le bunú Ollscoil na hÉireann, Má Nuad in 1997.

## 1.2.1 Coláiste na nÉireannach i bPáras

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Ar mhórthír na hEorpa seachas in Éirinn a thosaigh stair OMN agus a traidisiún fada scoláireachta Gaeilge.

Ba é an tAthair John Lee, as Port Láirge, a bhunaigh Coláiste na nÉireannach i bPáras – nó Collège des Irlandais – in 1578. Chuir an Coláiste áit ar fáil d'ábhair sagart na hÉireann chun go bhféadfaidís dul i mbun staidéir agus traenála agus dul le sagartacht thar sáile le linn tréimhse nach raibh cead amhlaidh a dhéanamh in Éirinn féin mar gheall ar na Péindlíthe.

Bhí Coláiste na nÉireannach i bPáras ina phríomhcholáiste i measc coláistí Éireannacha na hEorpa agus rinneadh ionad tábhachtach eaglasta, intleachtúil, cultúrtha de do dhiaspóra na hÉireann ar an Mór-Roinn.

Bhí ról lárnach ag an gColáiste maidir le traidisiúin na cléire Éireannaí a chaomhnú agus bhí sé ina chliarscoil thábhachtach do na glúnta sagart mór le rá Éireannach. Bhí ról ríthábhachtach aige freisin i gcaomhnú agus cur chun cinn na Gaeilge agus a cultúir foilsitheoireachta. Tá *Leabhar Mór Leacáin*, mar shampla, ar cheann de na mór-lámhscríbhinní Éireannacha. Scríobhadh an leabhar sa 15ú haois agus aistríodh go Coláiste na nÉireannach i bPáras é le linn Chogadh an Dá Rí chun go dtiocfadh sé slán. Cathair mhór foilsitheoireachta Gaeilge ba ea Páras freisin: foilsíodh *Focalóir Gaoidhilge-Sax Bhéarla* Sheáin Uí Bhriain ann in 1768 a bhí i measc na chéad fhoclóirí dá leithéid agus atá mar chuid de chnuasach an Choláiste go fóill. Léiríonn na samplaí sin a thábhachtaí atá an Coláiste mar chaomhnóir ar an traidisiún lámhscríbhinní agus mar áit mhór le haghaidh foilsitheoireacht scolártha na Gaeilge.

Ba iad údaráis réabhlóideacha na Fraince a dhún an Coláiste in 1792 le linn Réabhlóid na Fraince, údaráis a ghlac seilbh ar mhaoin na háite agus a chuir an ruaig ar na mic léinn. Fágadh easpaig na hÉireann gan fáil ar a bpríomhchliarscoil agus lorg siad cead ón rialtas coilíneach cliarscoil a thógáil in Éirinn. Tharla go raibh lucht an rialtais imníoch faoi scaipeadh smaointeoireacht réabhlóideach na Fraince agus, de bharr go raibh na Péindlíthe á maolú faoin am sin, bhí na húdaráis sásta cead a thabhairt chun go mbunófaí Coláiste Phádraig in 1795.

# 1.2 The history of Irish in Maynooth University

Irish has a long and well-established history in Maynooth. This section traces the history of the institution from the founding of St Patrick's College, Ireland's first national seminary and a leading institution in the Gaelic Revival of the late nineteenth century, through to the founding of the National University of Ireland, Maynooth in 1997.

## 1.2.1 The Irish College in Paris

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The history of Maynooth University and its long tradition of Irish language scholarship begins not in Ireland but on the European continent.

The Irish College in Paris – Coláiste na nÉireannach or Collège des Irlandais - was founded by Fr John Lee of Waterford in 1578 to provide Irish Catholic seminarians with a place to study and train for the priesthood abroad at a time when the Penal Laws in Ireland imposed restrictions on Catholic education.

The Irish College in Paris grew to become the foremost of a network of Irish Colleges across Europe, becoming a major ecclesiastical, intellectual and cultural hub for the Irish diaspora in Europe.

The College played a central role in preserving Irish clerical traditions and became an important centre of learning for generations of prominent Irish religious figures. It also played a pivotal role in safeguarding and advancing the Irish language and its book culture. During the Williamite War in Ireland, the early fifteenth-century *Great Book of Lecan*, one of the great medieval compendia of Irish learning, was brought to the College for safekeeping, ensuring its survival for future generations. Paris was also an important centre for the publication of works on Irish, including John O'Brien's *Irish-English Dictionary* of 1768, one of the first dictionaries of its kind, which is still held in the College's collection today. Together, these examples highlight the College's enduring significance as both a guardian of the manuscript tradition and a site of scholarly production in Irish.

During the French Revolution in 1792, the secular revolutionary authorities in France shut down the Irish College in Paris, seizing property and dispersing students. Irish bishops were suddenly left without access to its main centre for clerical training, and in response petitioned the British colonial administration for permission to build a seminary in Ireland. In response to growing concerns about revolutionary thought spreading from the Continent, and in the context of the gradual easing of the Penal Laws, the British authorities approved the establishment of St Patrick's College, which was inaugurated in 1795.

## 1.2.2 Coláiste Phádraig

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Ba é Coláiste Phádraig an chéad chliarscoil náisiúnta Chaitliceach in Éirinn. Cé gur ceapadh Ollamh le Gaeilge beagán blianta tar éis bhunú an Choláiste, is mar gheall ar an Athbheochanóir mór le rá Eoghan Ó Gramhnaigh (1863–1899) a tháinig clú agus cáil ar Choláiste Phádraig mar lárionad teagaisc don Ghaeilge ag deireadh an naóú haois déag.

Chreid Ó Gramhnaigh go láidir go raibh an-tábhacht ag baint leis an nGaeilge don ghluaiseacht chultúrtha náisiúnach a bhí ag neartú, gluaiseacht a raibh páirt aige féin inti.

Bhunaigh Ó Gramhnaigh Cumann Gaelach in 1886 agus é ina mhac léinn i gColáiste Phádraig. Cé nár mhair an cumann céanna ach beagán blianta, níl aon amhras ach gur réitigh sé an bealach le haghaidh Cuallacht Cholm Cille a bunaíodh in 1898. Tá rath agus bláth ar an gCuallacht ó shin, agus is í an cumann Gaelach is sine in Éirinn í. Bhunaigh baill na Cuallachta irisleabhar bliantúil, *Irisleabhar Mhá Nuad*, atá fós ar an bhfód faoi chúram Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge. Is é an t-irisleabhar is sine é atá fós i gcló i nGaeilge.

Ba scoláire den chéad scoth é Ó Gramhnaigh agus ceapadh ina Ollamh le Gaeilge é in 1891. Bhí sé ina eagarthóir ar *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge* a bhí ar cheann de na foilseacháin is mó cáil le linn na hAthbheochana. Cheap sé bunchúrsa Gaeilge freisin, sraith leabhrán dar teideal *Simple Lessons in Irish* a bhí ar na hiarrachtaí is luaithe dá cineál. Foilsíodh na ceachtanna sa *Weekly Freeman*, agus ansin mar shraith leabhar a úsáideadh mar théacsleabhair i gColáiste Phádraig.

Réitigh Ó Gramhnaigh an bealach chun go bhféadfaí institiúid a dhéanamh de OMN atá ar thús cadhnaíochta i bhfoghlaim na Gaeilge, agus tháinig go leor scoláirí mór le rá i gcomharbas air le linn an 20ú haois.

Mhair an traidisiún sin i ndeireadh an fichiú haois trí shaothar scoláirí ar nós Phádraig Uí Fhiannachta (1927–2016), a oirníodh i gColáiste Phádraig in 1953 agus a bhí ina Ollamh le Sean-Ghaeilge agus, ina dhiaidh sin, le Nua-Ghaeilge go dtí gur éirigh sé as in 1992. Bhí sé ina eagarthóir ar *Irisleabhar Mhá Nuad* ar feadh breis agus daichead bliain, d'fhoilsigh sé saothair a raibh an-tionchar acu, aistriúchán Gaeilge ar an mBíobla (1982) ina measc, agus bhunaigh sé an teach foilsitheoireachta acadúil Gaeilge An Sagart, atá á bhainistiú anois ag Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge.

Is iomaí leabhar, caibidil leabhair agus alt acadúil atá foilsithe ar stair na Gaeilge in OMN agus i gColáiste Phádraig, agus ar shaol agus saothar Eoghain Uí Ghramhnaigh ach go háirithe (Ní Mhaonaigh 2019, 2022, 2024, i measc foilseacháin eile).

## 1.2.2

### St Patrick's College

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St Patrick's College was Ireland's first national Catholic seminary. Although a Chair of Irish was nominated shortly after the founding of the College, it was the prominent revival figure Fr Eoghan Ó Gramhnaigh (Eugene O'Growney, 1863–1899) who was responsible for establishing St Patrick's College as a centre of Irish teaching in the late nineteenth century.

Ó Gramhnaigh was an outstanding advocate for the Irish language and was convinced of the importance of the language to the mounting cultural nationalist movement of which he was a part.

As a student at St Patrick's College Ó Gramhnaigh established a Gaelic Society in 1886. While this Society only lasted a short few years, there is no doubt but that it laid the foundation for

Cuallacht Cholm Cille (Society of Columba), which was founded in 1898. The Cuallacht has gone from strength to strength since and is the oldest Irish language student society in Ireland. Its members initiated an annual journal, now published by Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge. *Irisleabhar Mhá Nuad* is the longest running academic journal in the Irish language.

Ó Gramhnaigh continued to excel and was nominated Chair of Irish in 1891. During this tenure he was the editor of *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge*, one of the leading publications during the Gaelic Revival. He was also the founder of a series of Irish primers entitled *Simple Lessons in Irish*, one of the first of its kind. The lessons were first published in the *Weekly Freeman* and later as a series of books that were used as textbooks for Irish lessons in St Patrick's College.

Ó Gramhnaigh laid the foundations for St Patrick's College to become a leading institution in Irish-language education and paved the way for many more great scholars of Irish throughout the twentieth century.

This tradition was continued in the later twentieth century by figures such as Pádraig Ó Fiannachta (1927–2016), who was ordained at St Patrick's College in 1953 and served as Professor of Early Irish and later Modern Irish until his retirement in 1992. He edited *Irisleabhar Mhá Nuad* for over forty years, contributed influential scholarly publications including an Irish-language translation of the Bible (1982), and founded the Irish-language academic publisher An Sagart, now managed by the Department of Nua-Ghaeilge.

Several monographs, book chapters and academic articles have been published on the history of Irish in the college and particularly on the life and work of Eoghan Ó Gramhnaigh (Ní Mhaonaigh 2019, 2022, 2024, among other works).

# 1.3 Foghlaim agus teagasc na Gaeilge

Bunaíodh OMN mar chomhcholáiste de chuid Ollscoil Náisiúnta na hÉireann sa bhliain 1997. Tá OMN ina lóchrann i leith mhúineadh, thaighde agus thástáil na Gaeilge: maireann an traidisiún seanbhunaithe Gaeilge a tháinig chun cinn le linn ré luath Choláiste Phádraig go fóill.

Múintear an Ghaeilge agus déantar taighde sa Ghaeilge i ranna acadúla éagsúla in OMN. Múintear an Ghaeilge i Scoil an Léinn Cheiltigh, a dteann trí phríomhchuid trína scáth, is iad sin Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge, Roinn na Sean-Ghaeilge agus Lárionad na Gaeilge: Taighde, Teagasc agus Tástáil.

Ina theannta sin, múintear an Ghaeilge i Roinn Froebel don Bhun- agus Luath-Oideachas, mar chuid den Bhaitsiléir Oideachais (B.Oid) agus den Mháistir Gairmiúil le hOideachas (MGO).

## 1.3.1 Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge

Téann traidisiún na Gaeilge i Maigh Nuad siar go 1795 nuair a bunaíodh Ollúnacht na Gaeilge i gColáiste Phádraig. Maireann an traidisiún céanna i Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge, Ollscoil Mhá Nuad, go dtí an lá atá inniu ann.

Is féidir le mic léinn staidéar a dhéanamh ar an nGaeilge mar chuid den Bhaitsiléir Ealaíon (BA) agus mar chuid den Bhaitsiléir sa Dlí Sibhialta agus Teangacha (BDS). Is iomaí modúl a chuirtear ar fáil mar chuid den Bhaitsiléir Ealaíon, teanga na Gaeilge, an litríocht, an teangeolaíocht, an cultúr agus an oidhreacht, an béaloideas, an ceol, an Nua-Ghaeilge Mhoch, agus an scríbhneoireacht chruthaitheach ina measc. Is í an Ghaeilge teanga theagaisc na modúl uile i Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge.

Cuirtear cúrsa MA múinte sa Nua-Ghaeilge ar fáil i Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge. Sa chúrsa sin, déantar staidéar ar an nGaeilge agus ar mhodhanna taighde, agus bíonn deis ag na mic léinn speisialtóireacht a dhéanamh i réimsí éagsúla, mar shampla na meáin agus an chumarsáid chomhaimseartha nó an Nua-Ghaeilge Mhoch. Cuirtear clár dochtúireachta ar fáil i Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge freisin.

I measc réimsí taighde na mball foirne agus na n-iarchéimithe, tá teanga agus litríocht na Nua-Ghaeilge agus na Nua-Ghaeilge Moiche, chomh maith le réimsí léinn a bhaineann leo siúd. Is mórionad í an Roinn don scríbhneoireacht chruthaitheach agus cuireann sí maoiniú ar fáil, i dteannta le Comhairle Contae Chill Dara, do scríbhneoir cónaithe (féach Cuid 1.3.6).

Ina theannta sin, tá an teach foilsitheoireachta An Sagart á bhainistiú ag Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge. Ba é an tAthair Pádraig Ó Fiannachta a bhunaigh é sna

# 1.3 Learning and teaching Irish

MU was founded as a constituent college of the National University of Ireland in 1997 and has continued to be a leading light in Irish-language teaching, research and testing, continuing the long-standing tradition established under St Patrick's College.

Irish-language teaching and research at MU takes place in several departments. Irish is taught in the School of Celtic Studies, which comprises Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge (*the Department of Modern Irish*), the Department of Early Irish, and Lárionad na Gaeilge: Taighde, Teagasc agus Tástáil (*the Centre for Irish Language Research, Teaching and Testing*).

Irish is also taught in the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education, as part of the Bachelor of Education (BEd) and the Professional Master of Education (PME).

## 1.3.1 Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge

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Maynooth University's Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge (*Department of Modern Irish*) continues the long-held tradition of Irish-language education that began with the establishment of the Chair of Irish at St Patrick's College in 1795.

Irish is offered as part of the Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree programme and as part of the Bachelor of Civil Law (BCL) degree in Law and Languages. A wide range of modules are offered as part of the BA, including Irish language, literature, linguistics, culture and heritage, folklore, musical traditions, Early Modern Irish, and creative writing, among others. All modules in Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge are taught through the medium of Irish.

Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge offers a taught MA in Modern Irish. This course provides a core curriculum in Irish-language studies and research methods, while allowing students to specialise in diverse areas such as contemporary media and communication or Early Modern Irish. Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge also offers a doctoral programme.

The research areas of academic staff and postgraduate students in Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge include the language and literature of Modern and Early Modern Irish and associated fields. The department is also a leading centre for creative writing and hosts a writer in residence partly funded by Kildare County Council (see Section 1.3.6).

Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge also manages An Sagart, the publishing house founded by Fr Pádraig Ó Fiannachta in the 1960s. This is one of the mainstays of academic publishing in the Irish language which, alongside monographs,

1960idí. Tá An Sagart ina bhunchloch i saol na foilsitheoireachta acadúla Gaeilge agus tá dhá fhoilseachán bhliantúla faoina chúram, *Léachtaí Cholm Cille* agus *Irisleabhar Mhá Nuad*, i measc monagraf, féilscríbhinní agus eile.

Sraith léachtaí acadúla Gaeilge is ea *Léachtaí Cholm Cille* atá á reáchtáil ag Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge ar bhonn bliantúil ó bhí 1970 ann. Cuireann *Léachtaí Cholm Cille* fóram tábhachtach ar fáil do scoláirí a bhíonn ag labhairt ar théamaí a bhaineann le litríocht, teanga, stair nó cultúr na Gaeilge.

Tá tuilleadh eolais maidir le Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge ar fáil ar shuíomh idirlín na Roinne ag [www.maynoothuniversity.ie/nua-ghaeilge-modern-irish](http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/nua-ghaeilge-modern-irish).

### 1.3.2

## Roinn na Sean-Ghaeilge

Tá mórcháil – i bhfad agus i gcéin – ar Roinn na Sean-Ghaeilge, Ollscoil Mhá Nuad as an taighde agus an teagasc i réimsí na Sean-Ghaeilge agus na Meán-Ghaeilge, litríocht na luath-mheánaoise, na staire agus an Léinn Cheiltigh. I mBéarla a mhúintear cúrsaí Roinn na Sean-Ghaeilge.

Is féidir staidéar a dhéanamh ar an Léann Ceilteach Meánaoiseach mar ábhar sa Bhaitsiléir Ealaíon. Bíonn fáil ag mic léinn ar mhodúil i dteanga agus litríocht na Sean-Ghaeilge, i sibhialtacht na gCeilteach, i stair na hÉireann, san oidhreacht chultúrtha, sa phailéagrafaíocht agus sa Mheán-Bhreatnais, i measc ábhair eile.

Is iad na cúrsaí iarchéime a chuirtear ar fáil sa Luath-Ghaeilge in OMN ná an MA in Medieval Irish Studies, an Postgraduate Diploma in Medieval Irish agus an PhD in Medieval Irish. Tugtar deis sna céimeanna sin do mhic léinn cultúr agus stair na hÉireann sa Mheánaois a scrúdú, ó theacht na Críostaíochta go concas na Normannach. Cuirtear oiliúint ar mhic léinn chun cabhrú leo ardscoiléanna a fhorbairt maidir leis an tSean-Ghaeilge, pléann siad le téacsanna éagsúla, agus faigheann siad oiliúint ar mhodhanna taighde sna réimsí cuí.

Is iomaí réimse taighde a ndéantar staidéar air i Roinn na Sean-Ghaeilge, idir an teangeolaíocht stairiúil, an stair, an diagacht agus an litríocht, i measc ábhair eile.

I dteannta na bhfoilseachán acadúil, is minic a bhíonn baill foirne Roinn na Sean-Ghaeilge ag baint leas as meáin chruthaitheacha eile, podchraoltaí agus cláir faisnéise ina measc, chun a gcuid taighde a roinnt leis an bpobal. Sampla faoi leith is ea The Medieval Irish History Podcast leis an Dr Niamh Wycherly.

Tá tuilleadh eolais maidir le Roinn na Sean-Ghaeilge ar fáil ar shuíomh gréasáin na Roinne ag [www.maynoothuniversity.ie/early-irish-sean-ghaeilge](http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/early-irish-sean-ghaeilge).

Festschriften etc. is responsible for two longstanding annual publications *Léachtaí Cholm Cille* and *Irisleabhar Mhá Nuad*.

*Léachtaí Cholm Cille* is an annual Irish-language academic lecture series hosted by Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge since 1970. *Léachtaí Cholm Cille* provides a prestigious forum for scholarly exploration of a themes within the fields of Irish literature, language, history, and culture.

More information about Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge can be found on the department's website at [www.maynoothuniversity.ie/nua-ghaeilge-modern-irish](http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/nua-ghaeilge-modern-irish).

### 1.3.2

## Department of Early Irish

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The Department of Early Irish at Maynooth University is a world-renowned centre of research and teaching in the fields of Old and Middle Irish, early medieval literature, history, and Celtic studies. Courses in the Department of Early Irish are taught in English.

Medieval Celtic Studies is available as a subject in the Bachelor of Arts degree programme. Students have the opportunity to take modules in Old Irish language and literature, as well as Celtic civilisation, Irish history, cultural heritage, paleography, Middle Welsh and many more.

Postgraduate options in Medieval Irish at Maynooth include the MA in Medieval Irish Studies, the Postgraduate Diploma in Medieval Irish, and the PhD in Medieval Irish. These programmes offer students the opportunity to explore literature and history of early medieval Ireland, from the arrival of Christianity to the Norman invasion. Students develop advanced skills in the Old Irish language and engage with a wide range of texts, while also receiving training in the research methods appropriate to the field.

Research in the Department of Early Irish covers a broad range of topics in medieval Celtic studies, from historical linguistics to history, theology, and literature, among others.

In addition to academic publications, members of the Department of Early Irish also engage with other creative media including podcasts and television documentaries to disseminate their research to a wider public audience. The Medieval Irish History Podcast, hosted by Dr Niamh Wycherly is one notable example.

More information about the Department of Early Irish can be found on the department's website at: [www.maynoothuniversity.ie/early-irish-sean-ghaeilge](http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/early-irish-sean-ghaeilge).

### 1.3.3

## Lárionad na Gaeilge: Taighde, Teagasc & Tástáil

Sa bhliain 1971 a bunaíodh Ionad na dTeangacha in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad chun tacú le teagasc agus le foghlaim teangacha ar fud na hinstiúide. Tháinig cáil ar an Ionad sna 1990idí mar gheall ar an obair cheannródaíoch a bhí ar siúl ann ar an tástáil teanga agus ar fhorbairt acmhainní foghlama don Ghaeilge. Athsheoladh an tIonad in 2016 faoin ainm Lárionad na Gaeilge: Taighde, Teagasc agus Tástáil. Sainíonad atá sa Lárionad anois ina ndírítear ar an teangeolaíocht fheidhmeach i gcomhthéacs na Gaeilge. Tá dhá mhórfheidhm ag Lárionad na Gaeilge:

1. tacú le teagasc, foghlaim agus measúnú na Gaeilge i measc phobal uile OMN chun cabhrú leo an Ghaeilge a úsáid ina saol gairmiúil agus sóisialta, agus dá réir sin, tacú le cur i bhfeidhm polasaithe agus reachtaíocht náisiúnta teanga maidir le caomhnú agus cothú na Gaeilge;
2. an nuálaíocht agus an dea-chleachtas taighde-bhunaithe a chur chun cinn i dteagasc, i bhfoghlaim agus i measúnú na Gaeilge ar bhonn náisiúnta agus idirnáisiúnta.

Déantar achoimre thíos ar obair an Lárionaid sna trí mhór-réimse oibre atá aige; is iad sin, an teagasc, an tástáil agus an taighde.

Is é Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge (TEG) an togra is mó agus is tábhachtaí atá ag Lárionad na Gaeilge. Is é TEG an t-aon chóras a dhéanann tástáil agus teastasú gairmiúil neamhspleách ar an inniúlacht teanga sa Ghaeilge. Cuireann TEG sraith siollabas agus tástálacha teanga ar fáil atá ailínithe go ginearálta leis an bhFráma Tagartha Comónta Eorpach do Theangacha (FTCE), ag cúig leibhéal cumais ó A1 (Bonhleibhéal) go C1 (Ardleibhéal). Tá breis is 20,000 iarrthóir in Éirinn agus thar sáile tar éis tabhairt faoi scrúduithe TEG ó bunaíodh é in 2005. Baintear úsáid as an gcóras anois mar shlat tomhais bhailí iontaoifa don inniúlacht Ghaeilge i réimse comhthéacsanna acadúla agus gairmiúla. Tá tábhacht ar leith ag baint le TEG i gcomhthéacs cur i bhfeidhm polasaí agus stráitéisí náisiúnta, go háirithe, Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021, a bhfuil sé mar aidhm aige cur le líon na bhfostaithe san earnáil phoiblí atá inniúil sa Ghaeilge. Déantar tagairt shonrach do TEG sa *Plean Náisiúnta um Sheirbhísí Poiblí Gaeilge* (Rialtas na hÉireann 2024), áit a luaitear go “[m]beidh buntáistí faoi leith ag baint le cáilíochtaí TEG sa tréimhse amach romhainn” (2024: 30), agus gur gá “na struchtúir chúí a chur timpeall ceist na measúnuithe do na ról seo” (2024: 127). Moltar sa Phlean go “mbreathnófaí ar ról comhairleoireachta a thabhairt do Theastas Eorpach na Gaeilge (TEG) sa mhéid sin agus na caighdeáin teanga á socrú ” (2024: 127).

Tá cáil ar an Lárionad freisin mar cheannródaí i bhforbairt acmhainní oideachais do theagascóirí agus d’fhoghlaimoírí Gaeilge, go háirithe acmhainní atá bunaithe ar ábhar dílis (*authentic materials*). Tá sé ag obair i gcomhar leis an staisiún teilifíse TG4 ó bhí 1998 ann, chun acmhainní SnasTV (Vifax mar a bhí) a chur ar fáil. Ceachtanna idirghníomhacha ilmheán iad siúd atá bunaithe ar fheasacháin nuachta agus ar chlár eile de chuid TG4, an sobaldráma Ros na Rún agus an dráma Saol Ella ina measc. Ina theannta sin, tá réimse leathan acmhainní teagasc curtha ar fáil ag an Lárionad bunaithe ar shiollabais TEG ag leibhéal

### 1.3.3

## The Centre for Irish Language: Research, Teaching & Testing

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The Maynooth University Language Centre was founded in 1971 to support language teaching and learning across the institution. From the 1990s onwards, the Centre became best known for its pioneering work in Irish-language testing and educational resource development. It was relaunched in 2016 as Lárionad na Gaeilge: Taighde, Teagasc agus Tástáil (*the Centre for Irish Language Research, Teaching and Testing*), a specialist unit focusing on applied linguistics in the context of Irish. Lárionad na Gaeilge now serves a dual function, with two overarching aims:

1. to support the teaching, learning and assessment of Irish among all staff and students of MU and the wider community, in order to enable them to use Irish in both professional and social contexts, thereby supporting national policy and legislation for the maintenance and promotion of Irish;
2. to promote and advance excellence, innovation and evidence-based practice in the teaching, learning and assessment of Irish, on a national and international level.

The following sections briefly outline the work of the Lárionad in its three main areas of work; teaching, testing and research.

Lárionad na Gaeilge's flagship project is undoubtedly Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge (TEG), the first and only independent professional language testing and certification system available for Irish. It provides a suite of syllabuses and general language proficiency tests broadly aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), at five levels from A1 (Beginner) to C1 (Advanced). Since its establishment in 2005, TEG exams have been taken by over 20,000 candidates all over Ireland and abroad. The system is now used as an independent, valid and reliable benchmark for Irish language proficiency in a range of academic and professional contexts. Their use in professional contexts is becoming increasingly important in the implementation of national language policy and strategy, in particular the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021, which aims to increase the number of public sector employees who are proficient in Irish. Indeed, TEG is mentioned explicitly in the *National Plan for Irish Language Public Services* (Government of Ireland 2024) which stresses the need for "appropriate structures regarding the issue of assessments for these roles" (2024: 127) and states that "TEG qualifications will have particular advantages in the coming period" (2024: 30). It also recommends "that consideration be given to providing Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge (TEG) with an advisory role in that regard when setting the language standards" (2024: 127).

Lárionad na Gaeilge is also known as a pioneer in the development of educational resources for teachers and learners of Irish, particularly resources based on authentic materials. It has been collaborating with Irish television station, TG4, since 1998, to produce SnasTV (formerly known as Vifax) – a series of interactive multi-media Irish-language lessons based on TG4 news bulletins, and other TG4 programmes, including the soap opera *Ros na Rún* and the

éagsúla, chomh maith le hacmhainní atá dírithe ar an bhforbairt ghairmiúil do mhúinteoirí Gaeilge. Tá siad sin ar fad ar fáil anois, saor in aisce ar líne, ar mhol acmhainní an Lárionaid, [www.snas.ie](http://www.snas.ie).

Gné eile lárnach d'obair an Lárionaid is ea teagasc na Gaeilge. Cuireann an Lárionad roinnt cláir éagsúla ar fáil:

- Teagasc seirbhíse ar son ranna acadúla eile san Ollscoil, mar shampla, ceardlanna teanga mar chuid den Bhaitsiléir Ealaíon i Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge agus modúl 20 creidiúint mar chuid den bhonnteastas *Turn to Teaching* i Roinn an Oideachais Aosaigh agus Pobail;
- Bunchúrsaí Gaeilge le haghaidh mic léinn idirnáisiúnta;
- Ranganna oíche ar líne agus ar an gcampas, ar chostas íseal, le haghaidh mhic léinn OMN agus le haghaidh an phobail;
- Ranganna saor in aisce le haghaidh bhaill foirne uile na hOllscoile, chomh maith le himeachtaí Gaeilge ar nós ranganna ióga, siúlóidí dúlra, agus maidin sheachtainiúil chaife do bhaill foirne ar mian leo a gcuid Gaeilge a úsáid, beag beann ar an leibhéal cumais atá acu;
- Sainchúrsaí oiliúna ar líne sa Ghaeilge ghairmiúil, ina measc, an Teastas i Múineadh na Gaeilge, Diplóma Iarchéime agus M.A. san Aistriúchán agus san Eagarthóireacht, agus Dianchúrsa páirtaimseartha bliana i gCruinnscriobh na Gaeilge;
- Ranganna oíche ag cúig leibhéal éagsúla sa Centre Culturel Irlandais i bPáras.

Anuas ar an méid thuas, déanann foireann an Lárionaid taighde i réimsí éagsúla den teangeolaíocht fheidhmeach a bhaineann le foghlaim, teagasc, measúnú agus úsáid na Gaeilge. I measc na bpríomhréimsí spéise atá acu tá an tástáil agus an inniúlacht teanga (go háirithe i gcomhthéacs an FTCE), an fhorbairt churaclaim, an t-ilteangachas agus an teangeolaíocht chorpais. Mar chuid de chlár taighde feidhmeach Lárionad na Gaeilge a rinneadh an tionscadal áirithe seo.

### 1.3.4

## An Ghaeilge sa Centre Culturel Irlandais

Tá an ceangal stairiúil atá idir Coláiste na nÉireannach agus OMN á chothú arís le fiche bliain anuas. Ainneoin gur tháinig meath mór ar an gceangal a bhí ag an gColáiste le hÉirinn sa dara leath den 20ú haois, tar éis dianfheachtais faoi stiúir an Msgr. Breandán Ó Doibhlin (1931–2023), athosclaíodh an Coláiste in 2002 faoi ainm an Centre Culturel Irlandais. Scoláire agus sagart i nDeoise Dhoire ba ea Ó Doibhlin a bhí ina Ollamh le Nuatheangacha i gColáiste Phádraig. Sa lá atá inniú ann, is é an Centre Culturel Irlandais (CCI) príomhionad cultúrtha na hÉireann san Eoraip, agus tá sé ina lóchrann do na healaíona, don teanga agus don chultúr Gaelach i gcroílár chathair Pháras. Bíonn clár bríomhar cultúrtha ar siúl an bhliain ar fad sa Centre a mbíonn ealaín, ceol, drámaíocht agus léirithe eile cultúrtha mar chuid de. Cuirtear cónaitheachtaí ar siúl sa Centre d'ealaíontóirí Éireannacha le go mbíonn siad in ann a gcuid oibre a fhorbairt.

drama, Saol Ella. It has also developed a range of teaching materials based on TEG syllabuses at various levels, as well as professional development resources for Irish-language teachers. All of these resources are now available free of charge to the public via an online resource hub, [www.snas.ie](http://www.snas.ie).

Irish-language teaching constitutes another core aspect of Lárionad na Gaeilge's work. The Lárionad offers several distinct programmes, as follows:

- Service-teaching for other academic departments within the University, including language workshops as part of core modules on the BA in the Department of Modern Irish and a 20-credit module as part of the *Turn to Teaching* foundation certificate in the Department of Adult and Community Education;
- Ab initio Irish-language modules for international students;
- Low-cost evening classes, both online and in-person, for all MU students and for members of the public;
- Free Irish-language classes for all MU staff, and Irish-medium activities, such as yoga classes, nature walks and coffee mornings, for all staff who wish to use their Irish, regardless of their language competence;
- Online professional training programmes including a Certificate in Teaching Irish, a Postgraduate Diploma and M.A. in Translation and Editing, and a one-year part-time Intensive online course in written accuracy;
- Evening classes at five levels in the Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris.

Finally, the Lárionad conducts applied linguistic research focused on the learning, teaching, assessment, and use of Irish. Key areas include language testing and proficiency (especially in the context of the CEFR), curriculum development, plurilingualism and corpus linguistics. The research presented in this report was conducted as part of Lárionad na Gaeilge's applied research programme.

### 1.3.4

## Irish in the Centre Culturel Irlandais

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Maynooth University has continued to foster its historical link with the Irish College in Paris in recent decades. While the College's links with Ireland had greatly declined in the second half of the 20th century, a tireless campaign led by Msgr. Breandán Ó Doibhlin (Brendan Devlin, 1931–2023), an Irish-language scholar and priest of the Derry Diocese who held the Chair of Modern Languages at St Patrick's College, resulted in the College reopening in 2002 as the Centre Culturel Irlandais (CCI) - Ireland's cultural flagship in Europe, standing as a beacon of Irish culture, art and language in the heart of Paris. The Centre is host to a vibrant, year-round cultural programme of art, music, theatre and other forms of cultural expression. The Centre provides residencies for Irish artists, enabling them to reflect on, and dedicate time to, the development of their work.

Chuir Roinn na Gaeltachta scéim maoinithe nua ar bun in 2005 chun tacú le teagasc na Gaeilge in ollscoileanna thar lear, rud a thug deis do Lárionad na Gaeilge (Ionad na dTeangacha, mar a bhí ag an am) tógáil ar an gcaidreamh stairiúil atá ann idir an dá institiúid agus a bheith ag obair i gcomhar an CCI ar thogra atá dírithe ar theagasc agus cur chun cinn na Gaeilge i bPáras.

Tá an comhoibriú céanna ag dul ó neart go neart, agus rinneadh comóradh ar fhiche bliain a bhunaithe in 2025. Bíonn ranganna Gaeilge ar siúl sa CCI gach seachtain ag cúig léibhéal éagsúla ó Bhonnleibhéal (A1) go hArdleibhéal (C1). D'fhreastail nach mór 80 mac léinn ar na ranganna sin sa bhliain 2024-5, daoine de bhunadh na hÉireann, daoine eile a bhfuil ceangal acu le hÉirinn agus daoine eile nach bhfuil, Briotanaigh, Meiriceánaigh, Francaigh agus Eorpaigh eile ina measc.

Ionad scrúduithe oifigiúil do Theastas Eorpach na Gaeilge is ea an CCI agus bíonn scrúduithe ar siúl ann gach bliain ó leibhéal A1 go B2.

Bíonn Lárionad na Gaeilge ag obair i gcomhar leis an an Roinn Forbartha Tuaithe agus Pobail agus Gaeltachta, agus le foireann an CCI, chun an Ghaeilge a chur san áireamh i gclár cultúrtha an Centre leis an teanga a chur chun cinn i measc an phobail i gcoitinne i bPáras.

Cuireadh an Centre san áireamh agus taighde *Ár gCampas, Ár dTeanga* á dhéanamh mar gheall ar an dlúthchaidreamh atá ann idir Lárionad na Gaeilge agus an CCI. Rinneadh taighde eitneagrafach le teagascóirí agus le foghlaimeoirí Gaeilge sa CCI i mí Eanáir 2025; cuirtear torthaí an taighde sin i láthair i gCuid 2.9.3.

In 2005, a new funding scheme was launched by the Department of the Gaeltacht to support the teaching of Irish in universities overseas, presenting an opportunity for the Centre for Irish Language (then known as the Language Centre) to build on the historic relationship between Maynooth and the CCI, through a new collaborative initiative focused on the teaching and promotion of Irish in Paris.

This collaboration has continued to flourish, celebrating its twentieth anniversary in 2025. Irish classes are now taught at CCI weekly at five levels from total beginner (A1) to advanced (C1). In 2024-25, these classes were attended by almost 80 students, including members of the Irish diaspora, as well as those from the UK, US, France and other European countries, both with and without Irish connections.

The CCI is an official exam centre for Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge and exams at levels A1 to B2 are held there once a year.

Lárionad na Gaeilge, with the support of the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht, also works closely with CCI staff to integrate Irish into the Centre's cultural programme in order to promote the language among the wider community in Paris.

Due to the close connection between Maynooth University's Lárionad na Gaeilge and the CCI, the latter was included in the remit of the *Ár gCampas, Ár dTeanga* research project. Ethnographic research with teachers and learners of Irish were carried out in the CCI in January 2025; the findings of that research are outlined in Section 2.9.3.



Foirgneamh TSI  
TSI Building

# 1.4 Cur chun cinn na Gaeilge ar an gcampas

Tugtar achoimre sa chuid seo ar na hoifigí agus eagraíochtaí neamhacadúla a dtiteann cur chun cinn na Gaeilge faoina scáth in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad.

## 1.4.1 Oifig na Gaeilge

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Tá Oifig na Gaeilge lonnaithe in Oifig an Leas-Uachtaráin do Chúrsaí Acadúla agus an Chláraitheora. Tá dhá phiómhchúram ar Oifig na Gaeilge:

3. Cur chun cinn na Gaeilge i measc bhaill foirne agus mhic léinn na hOllscoile. Is iomaí rud atá i gceist leis an gcúram sin: imeachtaí Gaeilge agus dátheangacha a chomhordú, bainistíocht a dhéanamh ar an Scéim Chónaithe, tacú leis na ranganna Gaeilge don fhoireann, i measc cúraimí eile.
4. A chinntiú go mbíonn na dualgais reachtúla a bhaineann leis an nGaeilge á gcomhlíonadh ag an Ollscoil. Baineann an obair sin le baill foirne a chur ar an eolas maidir leis na dualgais sin, polasaí teanga a fhorbairt agus a chur i bhfeidhm san institiúid, agus aistriúcháin a chur ar fáil.

Bunaíodh ról an Oifigh Gaeilge mar phost páirtaimseartha sa chéad dul síos, agus rinneadh post lánaimseartha de in 2016. Is é an tOifigeach Gaeilge an t-aon bhall foirne atá ag obair in Oifig na Gaeilge faoi láthair.

## 1.4.2 Coiste na Gaeilge

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Comh-fhochoiste de chuid na Comhairle Acadúla agus an Údaráis Rialaithe is ea Coiste na Gaeilge. Bíonn an Coiste ag plé le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge san Ollscoil.

Bunaíodh Coiste na Gaeilge in 2005. Déanann sé maoirseacht ar na polasaithe atá i bhfeidhm chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar an gcampas. De réir théarmaí tagartha an Choiste, is iad na feidhmanna atá aige (Ollscoil Mhá Nuad 2024: 3):

1. úsáid na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn ar fud na hOllscoile;
2. tacú leis an Ollscoil ina cuid iarrachtaí an teanga a chur chun;
3. comhairle a chur ar an Ollscoil maidir lena straitéis i leith chur chun cinn na Gaeilge agus a Scéim Teanga agus
4. athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar dhul chun cinn na Gaeilge laistigh den Ollscoil, agus tuarascáil bhliantúil a chur ar fáil don Údarás Rialaithe agus don Chomhairle Acadúil.

# 1.4 Promoting Irish on Campus

This section outlines the non-academic offices and organisations that are responsible for the promotion of Irish in Maynooth University.

## 1.4.1 Oifig na Gaeilge (Irish Language Office)

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Oifig na Gaeilge is currently located within the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Registrar. Oifig na Gaeilge has two principal responsibilities:

3. The promotion of Irish among staff and students of the University. This involves coordinating Irish language and bilingual events, managing the Irish Language Accommodation Scheme, and supporting Irish language classes for staff, among other responsibilities.
4. Ensuring that the University fulfils its statutory duties vis-à-vis the Irish language. This work involves informing staff of these duties, producing and implementing local language policy, and translation.

The role of Irish Language Officer, initially established as a part-time role, was made a full-time role in 2016. The Irish Language Officer is currently the only member of staff in the Irish Language Office.

## 1.4.2 Coiste na Gaeilge (Irish Language Committee)

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Coiste na Gaeilge is a joint committee of the Governing Authority and Academic Council responsible for the advancement of Irish in the University.

Founded in 2005, Coiste na Gaeilge has oversight of the policies and procedures in place to promote the use of the Irish language on campus. According to the terms of reference of Coiste na Gaeilge, it performs the following functions (Maynooth University 2024: 5):

1. promote the use of the Irish language throughout the University;
2. support the University in its efforts to promote the language;
3. advise the University on its strategy for the promotion of the Irish language, and its Scéim Teanga and
4. review the progress of the language within the University, and provide an annual report to both the Governing Authority and Academic Council.

I measc bhaill an Choiste tá an Cathaoirleach, an tOifigeach Gaeilge (a bhíonn ina rúnaí), agus ionadaithe de chuid Scoil an Léinn Cheiltigh, na Comhairle Acadúla, an Údaráis Rialaithe agus Aontas na Mac Léinn.

### 1.4.3 Cuallacht Cholm Cille

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Cumann Gaelach na hOllscoile is ea Cuallacht Cholm Cille atá freagrach as cur chun cinn na Gaeilge i measc mhic léinn na hOllscoile. Tugadh aitheantas oifigiúil don Chuallacht in 1898 agus is é an Cumann Gaelach is sine sa tír é.

Tá Cuallacht Cholm Cille ar cheann de na cumainn is mó agus is rathúla in OMN sa lá atá inniu ann. Tá sé mar aidhm ag an gCuallacht an Ghaeilge a spreagadh trí imeachtaí taitneamhacha a eagrú, trí chomhoibriú le ranna, oifigí agus cumainn eile agus trí fheachtais spéisiúla a chur ar bun.

I measc na n-imeachtaí a eagraíonn an Chuallacht bíonn Tae agus Plé ar siúl go seachtainiúil; turas bliantúil chuig Oireachtas na Samhna; Céilí na Nollag a mbíonn an-tóir air gach bliain; an-chuid imeachtaí le linn Sheachtain na Gaeilge; agus Bál na Gaeilge ag deireadh na bliana acadúla. Bronnadh gradam de chuid Ghlór na nGael ar an gCuallacht in 2015, in 2017 agus in 2022 mar aitheantas ar an obair dheonach a dhéanann baill na Cuallachta chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn san Ollscoil.

In earrach 2025 chuir mic léinn na Cuallachta agus an Chumainn Drámaíochta an dráma Athbheochana ‘An Dochtúir’ ar an stáitse, dráma a scríobh Séamus Ó Beirn in 1904. D’éirigh go hiontach leis an dráma agus bhí na céadta sa lucht féachana le linn an dá oíche a raibh sé ar siúl.

### 1.4.4 Aontas na Mac Léinn, Ollscoil Mhá Nuad

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Tá alt i mBunreacht Aontas na Mac Léinn, Ollscoil Mhá Nuad (AMLMN), ina ngealltar ‘go gcuirfidh an tAontas an Ghaeilge chun cinn, agus go bhforbróidh sé í, i measc a mball agus tríd an Ollscoil san iomlán’ (MSU 2023: 7). Is faoi Oifigeach Gaeilge AMLMN go háirithe atá sé a chinntiú go bhfuiltear ag cloí leis an ngealltanas sin. Is é an ról atá ag an Oifigeach Gaeilge san Aontas ná ‘úsáid na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn san Aontas agus cultúr dátheangach a chothú san Ollscoil’ de réir Bhunreacht an Aontais (MSU 2023: 64).

Bíonn Oifigeach Gaeilge AMLMN ag obair go dlúth lena chomhoifigigh san Aontas, le hOifigeach Gaeilge na hOllscoile, agus le Cuallacht Cholm Cille, chomh maith le comhlachtaí náisiúnta amhail Conradh na Gaeilge agus Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn.

Ról páirtaimseartha is ea ról Oifigeach Gaeilge AMLMN. Ról lánaimseartha sabóideach atá sa ról céanna in Ollscoil na Gaillimhe agus i gColáiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath.

Coiste na Gaeilge includes the Chair, the Oifigeach Gaeilge, who acts as the Coiste's secretary, and representatives from the School of Celtic Studies, Academic Council, the Governing Authority, and the Students' Union.

### 1.4.3 Cuallacht Cholm Cille

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Cuallacht Cholm Cille is the student society responsible for the promotion of Irish amongst the student body. The Cuallacht was given official recognition by College authorities in 1898; it is the oldest Irish-language students society in the country.

Cuallacht Cholm Cille is one of the largest and most successful student societies in Maynooth University today. The Cuallacht aims to encourage the use of Irish by organising events, collaborating with other departments, offices and societies and by running campaigns.

Among the events organised by the Cuallacht each year are a weekly 'Tae agus Plé' (*tea and conversation*); an annual trip to Oireachtas na Samhna, the largest Irish-language event of the year; the Christmas Céilí, a staple of the Christmas calendar; several events during Seachtain na Gaeilge; and the end-of-year Bál na Gaeilge (Irish Ball). The Cuallacht received awards from the Irish language development organisation Glór na nGael in the years 2015, 2017 and 2022 in recognition of the voluntary work that it undertakes to promote Irish in the University.

In spring 2025 students from the Cuallacht and Maynooth University Drama Society put on a performance of Séamus Ó Beirn's 1904 play *An Dochtúir*. The play was a great success and was attended by hundreds of theatregoers over its two nights.

### 1.4.4 Maynooth Students' Union

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The constitution of Maynooth Students' Union (MSU) contains a commitment to 'promote and develop the Irish language among its members, and throughout the University' (MSU 2023: 7). The principal figure within the Students' Union responsible for upholding that commitment is the elected Oifigeach Gaeilge (Irish Language Officer). According to the Union's constitution, the role of the MSU Oifigeach Gaeilge is to 'promote the use of the Irish language within the Union and foster the development of a bilingual culture within the University' (MSU 2023: 64).

In order to achieve these goals the MSU Oifigeach Gaeilge works closely with their fellow Union officers, with the university's Oifigeach Gaeilge, and with Cuallacht Cholm Cille, as well as with national bodies like Conradh na Gaeilge and the Union of Students in Ireland.

The MSU Oifigeach Gaeilge is a part-time role, while in the University of Galway and Trinity College, Dublin, the Students' Union Oifigeach Gaeilge is a full-time sabbatical role.

### 1.4.5 Seomra na Gaeilge

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Is é Seomra na Gaeilge an t-aon *tearmann teanga* san Ollscoil, is é sin, áit ar an gcampas inar féidir le cainteoirí agus le foghlaimeoirí Gaeilge bualadh le chéile, ar bhonn neamhfhoirmiúil, chun an teanga a úsáid. Is í an Ghaeilge príomhtheanga an tseomra agus tá sé oscailte do mhic léinn agus do bhaill foirne. Baintear úsáid as an seomra, anois is arís, le haghaidh ranganna, cruinnithe agus imeachtaí. Aistríodh Seomra na Gaeilge, tar éis dó a bheith dúnta ar feadh tréimhse le linn na bliana acadúla 2024-5, go dtí seomra caidrimh na mac léinn i bhFoirgneamh na nEalaíon ar an gcampas Thuaidh agus athosclaíodh go hoifigiúil é ar an 11 Samhain 2025.

### 1.4.6 An Scéim Chónaithe

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Is éard atá sa Scéim Chónaithe ná lóistín (30 seomra aonair en suite) ar champas na hOllscoile do mhic léinn a bhfuil Gaeilge acu agus atá ag iarraidh an teanga a bheith acu mar ghnáthteanga an tsaoil agus iad lonnaithe ar an gcampas.

Is é an tOifigeach Gaeilge a bhíonn ag comhordú na Scéime Cónaithe. Cuireann iarrthóirí isteach ar an Scéim agus roghnaítear na cónaitheoirí rathúla tar éis dóibh dul faoi agallamh. Is ionann an costas atá ar lóistín na Scéime Cónaithe agus atá ar an lóistín eile ar an gcampas. Bítear ag súil le go nglacfaidh lucht na Scéime páirt ghníomhach i bpobal na Gaeilge ar an gcampas agus go mbeidh siad ag obair leis an Oifigeach Gaeilge agus le Cuallacht Cholm Cille chun imeachtaí cultúrtha a eagrú sa Scéim féin agus in áiteanna eile ar an gcampas.

### 1.4.7 An Scríbhneoir Cónaithe

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Comhthogra atá maoinithe ag OMN agus Seirbhís Leabharlainne agus Ealaíon Chomhairle Contae Chill Dara is ea scéim an Scríbhneora Chónaithe.

Forbraíodh an scéim nua seo chun deis a thabhairt do mhic léinn agus don phobal i gcoitinne teagmháil a dhéanamh le scríbhneoirí Gaeilge a bhfuil ardmheas orthu, agus páirt a ghlacadh i sraith ceardlann sa Scríbhneoireacht Chruthaitheach. Mar chuid den ról, déanann an Scríbhneoir Cónaithe meantóireacht ar scríbhneoirí a bhfuil saothair idir lámha acu agus ar scríbhneoirí nua agus glacann siad páirt in imeachtaí éagsúla ar an gcampas agus i bpáirt le Seirbhís Leabharlainne Chill Dara.

### 1.4.5 **Seomra na Gaeilge (Irish Language Room)**

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Seomra na Gaeilge (the Irish Language Room) serves as the only dedicated *breathing space* for Irish speakers and learners to meet and use the language in an informal setting on campus. Irish is the primary medium of communication in the room, which is open to both staff and students. In addition to its role as a social and cultural hub, the room is also occasionally used for classes, meetings, and events. After a period of closure during the academic year 2024-5, Seomra na Gaeilge was relocated to the student common room in the Arts Building on the North Campus and was officially reopened on 11 November 2025.

### 1.4.6 **An Scéim Chónaithe (Irish-Language Residential Scheme)**

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The Scéim Chónaithe (Irish Language Residency Scheme) consists of a block of 30 single ensuite rooms on campus dedicated to students who wish to live together and use Irish as their everyday spoken language.

The Scéim Chónaithe is coordinated by the Irish Language Officer. Residents apply to participate in the scheme and successful candidates are selected on the basis of an interview process. The rates associated with rooms in the Scéim Chónaithe are the same as other student accommodation on campus. Residents of the Scéim Chónaithe are expected to participate actively in the Irish-language community on-campus, working with the Oifigeach Gaeilge and Cuallacht Cholm Cille to organise cultural activities in the Scéim Chónaithe and across campus.

### 1.4.7 **Irish Language Writer in Residence**

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The Scríbhneoir Cónaithe (Irish Language Writer in Residence) is a position that is co-funded by Maynooth University and Kildare County Council Library and Arts Service.

The role of Scríbhneoir was developed to give students and the general public the opportunity to engage with esteemed Irish language writers, and also to provide an opportunity for Irish language writers to advance their own projects. As part of their role, the Writer in Residence teaches modules in creative writing, mentors aspiring writers, takes part in various events on campus, and engages with events through Kildare Library Service.

# 1.5 Cúrsaí reachtaíochta agus pleanála teanga

Leagtar amach sa rannóg seo an creat reachtúil a bhaineann leis an nGaeilge in Éirinn, mar aon leis na gealltanais áitiúla i leith chur chun cinn na Gaeilge mar atá leagtha amach i bPlean Straitéiseach OMN.

Mar chomhlacht poiblí in Éirinn, tá dualgais reachtúla ar OMN maidir le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge agus soláthar seirbhísí trí mheán na Gaeilge. Cuirtear in iúl go soiléir sa *Plean Náisiúnta um Sheirbhísí Poiblí Gaeilge 2024–2030* go bhfuil gealltanais náisiúnta ann i leith seirbhís poiblí atá lán-dátheangach (Rialtas na hÉireann 2024: 7).

Sainmhínítear sa chuid seo cad is brí leis an ngealltanais sin i gcomhthéacs institiúid tríú leibhéal, go háirithe i gcás OMN.

## 1.5.1 Reachtaíocht agus polasaithe náisiúnta

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Déantar achoimre sa chuid seo ar na hAchtanna Oireachtais agus ar na cáipéisí polasaí a bhaineann leis an gcreat reachtúil ina bhfuil OMN ag feidhmiú i leith na Gaeilge. Cuirtear sonraí na bpolasaithe a luaitear sa chuid seo ar fáil sa leabharliosta ag deireadh na tuarascála seo.

### 1.5.1.1 Acht na nOllscoileanna 1997

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De réir Alt 12 (e) d'Acht na nOllscoileanna 1997 tá ar spriocanna na n-ollscoileanna uile 'teangacha oifigiúla an Stáit a chur chun cinn, ag féachaint go speisialta do chaomhnú, do chur chun cinn agus d'úsáid na teanga Gaeilge agus do chaomhnú agus do chur chun cinn chultúir shainiúla na hÉireann'.

### 1.5.1.2 Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla 2003

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Dheimhnigh forálacha Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla 2003 go bhfuil cearta de réir dlí ag cainteoirí Gaeilge seirbhísí poiblí a úsáid trí mheán na Gaeilge. Ó achtaíodh an tAcht, tá sé de cheart ag daoine freagra a fháil i nGaeilge ar aon chomhfhreagrás Gaeilge a dhéantar le comhlacht poiblí. Lena chois sin, deimhnítear san Acht an ceart chun leagan dátheangach a fháil de cháipéisí faoi leith a fhoilsíonn comhlachtaí poiblí, lena n-áirítear tuarascálacha bliantúla, cuntais iniúchta agus ráitis straitéiseacha.

Ina theannta sin, cuireann an tAcht dualgas ar chomhlachtaí poiblí a chinntiú gur i nGaeilge nó go dátheangach atá aon eolas scríofa a thugtar don

# 1.5 Legislation and language planning

This section sets out the statutory framework around the Irish language in Ireland and the local commitments to the promotion of Irish set out in the MU Strategic Plan.

As a public body in Ireland, Maynooth University has obligations under national legislation with regard to the promotion of Irish and provision of services through the medium of Irish. It is made clear in the *National Plan for Irish Language Public Services 2024–2030* that there is a national commitment to achieving a fully bilingual public service (Government of Ireland 2024: 7).

This section defines what that commitment means in the context of a higher education institution, specifically in the case of Maynooth University.

## 1.5.1 National policy and legislation

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This section sets out and briefly describes the Acts of the Oireachtas and policy documents that outline the statutory framework in which MU is operating as regards the Irish language. Bibliographical details of the legislation and policy documents referenced in this section can be found in the list of references at the end of the report.

### 1.5.1.1 Universities Act 1997

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Section 12 (e) of the Universities Act 1997 provides that the objectives of all universities include ‘[promotion of] the official languages of the State, with special regard to the preservation, promotion and use of the Irish language and the preservation and promotion of the distinctive cultures of Ireland’.

### 1.5.1.2 Official Languages Act 2003

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The Official Languages Act 2003 (Government of Ireland 2003) enshrined in law the rights of Irish speakers to engage with public services through the medium of Irish. The Act entitles the public to receive a response in Irish to any correspondence made with a public body in Irish. It also provides an entitlement to bilingual access to certain documentation published by public bodies, including annual reports, audited accounts and strategic statements.

The Act further obliges public bodies to ensure that any information in writing which is issued to the general public or to a class of the general public is in Irish or bilingual. It established the office of the Irish Language Commissioner,

phobal nó do ghrúpa faoi leith den phobal. Ba de thoradh an Achta a bunaíodh Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga freisin, oifig a dhéanann maoirseacht ar chur i bhfeidhm an Achta. Ina theannta sin, leag an tAcht córas na Scéimeanna Teanga amach; is é sin an córas trína ndearna comhlachtaí poiblí monatóireacht ar na dualgais a bhí orthu faoin Acht agus lenar thuairiscigh siad an dul chun cinn a bhí déanta acu don Choimisinéir.

Cuirfear córas lárnaíthe 'caighdeán teanga' i bhfeidhm faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021 (féach Cuid 1.5.1.4) a thiocfaidh in áit na Scéimeanna Teanga. Leagfar amach sna caighdeán teanga cad iad na seirbhísí agus na cáipéisí is gá do chomhlachtaí a chur ar fáil trí Ghaeilge.

#### 1.5.1.3

#### **Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge 2010–2030**

Is í an *Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge 2010–2030* (Rialtas na hÉireann 2010) an phríomhcháipéis polasaí atá ag an Stát maidir leis an nGaeilge. Leagann sí fíis fhadtéarmach amach chun úsáid agus eolas na Gaeilge a mhéadú i ngach réimse den saol, lena n-áirítear an t-oideachas, an pobal, an teaghlach, an earnáil phoiblí agus na meáin.

Aithnítear naoi bpríomhréimse gnímh sa Straitéis. Is é an t-oideachas an chéad cheann agus an ceann is tábhachtaí acu. Tagraítear don earnáil tríú leibhéal sa cháipéis i gcomhthéacs an tiomantais a bheith ag cur leis an oideachas trí mheán na Gaeilge, go háirithe sa Ghaeltacht agus i réimse na hoiliúna tosaigh múinteoirí. Moltar sa Straitéis go bhforbófar cláir acadúla Ghaeilge agus go neartófar úsáid na teanga in earnáil an ardoideachais.

Tá gnéithe áirithe den Straitéis tugtha isteach ar bhonn dlíthiúil trí Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021.

#### 1.5.1.4

#### **Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021**

Ritheadh Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021 chun Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla 2003 a dhaingniú agus a leathnú. Baineann an tAcht leasaithe le húsáid na Gaeilge san earnáil phoiblí go príomha. In measc fhorálacha an Achta leasaithe, tá na cuspóirí seo a leanas:

- Go méadófar líon na seirbhísí Gaeilge a sholáthraíonn comhlachtaí poiblí;
- Go mbeidh 20% ar a laghad den fhoireann a earcófar chuig comhlachtaí poiblí inniúil sa Ghaeilge roimh dheireadh 2030;
- Go dtiocfaidh córas caighdeán teanga in ionad sheanchóras na scéimeanna teanga;
- Go gcinnteofar go bhfreagrófar gach comhfhreagras Gaeilge a dhéantar le comhlacht poiblí i nGaeilge;
- Go mbeidh ar chomhlachtaí poiblí a chinntiú gur i nGaeilge atá ar a laghad 20% dá gcuid fógraíochta bliantúla;
- Go gcuirfear gach foirm iarratais ar fáil i nGaeilge;
- Go gcinnteofar gur i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla, nó i nGaeilge amháin, atá lógo gach comhlachta poiblí.

the office that oversees the implementation of the Act. It also initiated the framework of Language Schemes, the method by which public bodies monitored the implementation of their duties under the Act and by which they reported on their progress to the Commissioner.

The Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021 (see Section 1.5.1.4) provides for the introduction of a centralised system of language standards which will outline the services and publications that will be required to be provided in the Irish language. This system will replace the system Language Schemes implemented by the 2003 Act.

### 1.5.1.3 **20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010–2030**

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The *20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010–2030* (Government of Ireland 2010) is the central policy document guiding the State’s approach to the Irish language. It sets out a long-term vision to increase the use and knowledge of Irish across all areas of life, including education, community, family, the public sector, and the media.

The Strategy identifies nine key areas of action. Education is the first and most significant of these areas. Higher education is referenced in this document in the context of expanding Irish-medium education provision through Irish, particularly in the Gaeltacht and in initial teacher education. The Strategy encourages the development of Irish-medium academic programmes and the strengthening of the language’s presence in the third-level sector.

Some elements of the Strategy have since been given legislative force through the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021.

### 1.5.1.4 **Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021**

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The Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021 was enacted to strengthen and extend the provisions of the Official Languages Act 2003, primarily to promote and facilitate the use of the Irish language in public services. Among the provisions of the amended Act are:

- An objective to increase the services provided by public sector bodies in Irish.
- An objective that by the end of 2030, 20% of new recruits in the public sector be proficient in Irish.
- A provision to end the language scheme system and replace it with a system of language standards.
- A provision to ensure that communications made with a public body on social media are answered in Irish.
- A provision requiring public bodies to ensure that at least 20% of their annual advertising is in Irish.
- A provision to ensure application forms are available in Irish.
- A provision to ensure that the logos of public bodies are in Irish or in Irish and English.

Is ionann na forálacha a rinneadh san Acht leasaithe agus dearbhú arís ar an bprionsabal go gcaithfidh gach comhlacht poiblí a bheith ag obair go gníomhach i dtreo na sprice atá leagtha amach in Acht 2003; is í sin seirbhís phoiblí lán-dáttheangach a bhaint amach.

Déanfar tagairtí eile d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla tríd síos an cháipéis seo, óir is ann atá polasaithe reachtúla teanga na hÉireann le fáil. Leagtar amach sa reachtaíocht sin na dualgais atá ar OMN maidir le húsáid agus cur chun cinn na Gaeilge, dualgais a chuimsítear i ról an Oifigigh Gaeilge, ar dlúthchuid de é comhlíonadh an Achta.

#### 1.5.1.5

#### ***An Plean Náisiúnta um Sheirbhísí Poiblí Gaeilge 2024–2030***

Is é atá sa *Plean Náisiúnta um Sheirbhísí Poiblí Gaeilge 2024–2030* 'treochlár do chomhlachtaí poiblí ó thaobh líon agus caighdeán na seirbhísí poiblí Gaeilge a chuireann siad ar fáil a mhéadú agus a fheabhsú ar bhonn córasach – agus an earnáil ag bogadh i dtreo seirbhís phoiblí iomlán dháttheangach' (Rialtas na hÉireann 2024: 6–7).

Tá ceithre Mhórhéama Straitéiseacha luaite leis an *bPlean Náisiúnta*. Baineann dhá cheann acu go sonrach le OMN; is iad sin 'Soláthar Seirbhísí Poiblí trí Ghaeilge' agus 'Oiliúint, Earcaíocht agus Inniúlacht Teanga'.

Baineann na príomhchuspóirí seo a leanas, a thiteann faoi Mhórhéama 2: Soláthar Seirbhísí Poiblí trí Ghaeilge, le OMN go sonrach (Rialtas na hÉireann 2014: 107–8):

- Go bhforordaítear trí na caighdeáin teanga go mbeidh aon seirbhís phoiblí a chuireann comhlacht poiblí ar fáil trí mheán na Gaeilge ar comhchéim ar a laghad leis an tseirbhís chéanna a chuirtear ar fáil trí mheán an Bhéarla.
- Go mbreathnófaí ar bhealaí chun cur le hinaitheantacht fostaithe de chuid comhlachtaí poiblí le Gaeilge don phobal agus dá chéile.
- Go mbreathnófaí ar choincheap na tairisceana gníomhaí<sup>[1]</sup> a neadú isteach chomh fada agus is féidir leis na seirbhísí sin a bheidh le forordú chun críche na gcaighdeán teanga.

Cuid mhaith de na Príomhchuspóirí a bhaineann le Mór-Théama Straitéiseach 4: Oiliúint, Earcaíocht agus Inniúlacht Teanga, baineann siad le OMN – na cuspóirí seo a leanas san áireamh (Rialtas na hÉireann 2024: 121–2):

- Go mbreathnófaí ar straitéisí a aithint chun inniúlacht Ghaeilge na foirne reatha a mhéadú.
- Go n-aithneofaí bealaí chun an fhoireann a spreagadh go réamhghníomhach chun cúrsaí caighdeánaithe Gaeilge a chur i gcrích.
- Go bhfiosrófaí bealaí chun úsáid na Gaeilge a spreagadh i gcomhlachtaí poiblí.

[1] Miníonn Conradh na Gaeilge an téarma 'tairiscint ghníomhach' mar seo: 'is cleachtas nó cur chuige é seo a úsáideann údarais phoiblí nó eagraíochtaí de chuid an stáit chun seirbhísí Gaeilge a ofráil ar dtús, sula ndéanann an cainteoir Gaeilge an tseirbhís a lorg. Baineann seo an fhreagracht den Ghaeilgeoir agus fágann sé an fhreagracht ar an tsoláthróir seirbhíse.' (2022: 5)

The provisions made in the amended Act represent a reassertion of the principal that all state bodies are to work actively towards the aim stated in the 2003 Act of a fully bilingual public service.

Further reference to the Official Languages Act will be made throughout the document as it represents the primary pieces of language legislation which enshrine the obligations on Maynooth University with regard to the use and promotion of Irish and which underpin the role of the Irish-Language Officer, a large part of whose role is ensuring compliance with the Act.

#### 1.5.1.5

#### ***The National Plan for Irish Language Public Services 2024–2030***

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*The National Plan for Irish Language Public Services 2024–2030* is a ‘roadmap for public bodies in terms of systematically increasing and improving the number and quality of Irish language public services that they provide as part of the move towards a fully bilingual public service.’ (Government of Ireland 2024: 6–7).

The National Plan encompasses four Major Strategic Themes, two of which are especially relevant to MU; namely, ‘Provision of Public Services through Irish’ and ‘Training, Recruitment and Language Competence’.

Under Major Strategic Theme 2: Provision of Public Services through Irish, the following Main Objectives are relevant to Maynooth University (Government of Ireland 2024: 107–8):

- That it is prescribed through the language standards that any public service provided by a public body through the medium of Irish is on par at least with the same service provided through the medium of English.
- That methods be examined of increasing the recognisability of employees of public bodies with Irish to the public and to each other.
- That the embedding of the concept of the active offer<sup>[1]</sup> be examined as far as possible when services are being prescribed for the purpose of the language standards.

Many of the Main Objectives under Major Strategic Theme 4: Training, Recruitment and Language Competence are relevant to MU, including the following (Government of Ireland 2024: 121–2):

- That the identification of strategies to increase the Irish language competence of existing staff be examined.
- That ways to proactively encourage the completion by staff of standardised Irish language courses be identified.
- That ways be investigated to encourage the use of Irish in public bodies.

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[1] The term ‘active offer’ is defined by Conradh na Gaeilge as ‘the practice of a public authority providing a service in Irish without the Irish speaker having to ask for it. This removes the responsibility of the Irish speaker having to ask for the service.’ (2022: 5)

- Go mbreathnófaí ar phróisis iarratais, agallaimh agus measúnaithe do chainteoirí Gaeilge a chaighdeánú.

Leagtar amach tiomantas soiléir sa Phlean Náisiúnta i dtaca le seirbhís phoiblí dhátheangach a fhorbairt. Beidh ról lárnach ag institiúidí ardoideachais i gcur i bhfeidhm na sprice sin trí sheirbhísí Gaeilge a sholáthar agus tacú leis an gcóras iomlán trí theagasc, tástáil agus taighde.

Tá ról faoi leith ag OMN i gcomhthéacs chur i gcrích na gcuspóirí náisiúnta sin. Tá na torthaí a leagtar amach sa tuarascáil seo ag teacht go díreach le cuid mhaith de na Príomhchuspóirí atá luaite sa Phlean Náisiúnta, agus léirítear iontu an deis atá ann don Ollscoil ról tábhachtach a ghlacadh sa réimse sin.

Tacóidh dhá Phlean Gníomhaíochta leis an bPlean Náisiúnta; foilsíodh an chéad cheann acu i mí Eanáir 2026. Tá impleachtaí do OMN ag cuid de na pointí gnímh atá sa chéad Phlean Gníomhaíochta, go háirithe na cinn faoi Mhór-Théamaí Straitéiseacha 2 agus 4, agus tá torthaí agus moltaí na tuarascála seo ag teacht go dlúth leo.

**Mar eagraíocht phoiblí in Éirinn, tá dualgais reachtúla ar OMN maidir le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge agus soláthar seirbhísí trí mheán na Gaeilge.**



- That the standardising of interview and assessment processes for Irish speakers be examined.

The National Plan outlines a clear commitment to the development of a bilingual public service. Universities will have a key role to play in delivering this goal, both in terms of providing services through Irish and in supporting the wider system through training, testing, and research.

MU occupies a distinctive position in meeting these national objectives. The findings presented in this report relate directly to several of the Main Objectives set out in the National Plan and underscore the University's potential to take a leading role in this regard.

The first of two Action Plans supporting the *National Plan for Irish Language Public Services* was published in January 2026. A number of actions mentioned in the first Action Plan are directly relevant to MU and closely reflect the findings and recommendations of *Ár gCampas, Ár dTeanga*, particularly under Major Strategic Themes 2 and 4.

**As a public body in Ireland, MU has obligations under national legislation with regard to the promotion of Irish and provision of services through the medium of Irish.**

Faoi Mhórthéama Straitéiseach 2 sa Phlean Gníomhaíochta, iarrtar ar chomhlachtaí poiblí a fhiosrú an bhfuil na hacmhainní inmheánacha acu chun seirbhísí Gaeilge a sholáthar agus chun ceisteanna freagrachta a shoiléiriú lena chinntiú go mbeidh an cur i bhfeidhm á stiúradh mar is ceart agus na hacmhainní cuí ann dó (Gníomh 2.1.2). Leagtar amach ann freisin gur cheart an ‘Tairiscint Ghníomhach’ a fhiosrú agus seirbhísí á leagan síos chun críche na gcaighdeán teanga (Gníomh 2.4). Tacaíonn na gníomhartha sin leis an mbéim atá sa tuarascáil seo ar an rialachas agus na hacmhainní a neartú agus ar chéimeanna praiticiúla a ghlacadh chun úsáid na Gaeilge a éascú i ngnáthsheirbhísí na hOllscoile.

Faoi Mhórthéama Straitéiseach 4, déantar tagairt dhíreach sa Phlean Gníomhaíochta don tábhacht a bhaineann le hacmhainn a fhorbairt ar bhealach inmharthana, pointe a luaitear sa tuarascáil seo freisin. Cuirtear dualgas sa Phlean Gníomhaíochta ar chomhlachtaí poiblí straitéis a fhorbairt chun cur leis an gcumas Gaeilge atá ag an bhfoireann cheana, agus chun úsáid agus foghlaim na Gaeilge san ionad oibre a chothú (Gníomhartha 4.1 agus 4.1.3). Leagtar céimeanna amach ann freisin chun cur leis na deiseanna Gaeilge atá ann ag an tríú leibhéal (Gníomh 4.3) agus a chinntiú go mbeidh dóthain soláthair ann ar bhonn náisiúnta chun measúnú a dhéanamh ar chumas Gaeilge na n-iarrthóirí ar phoist amach anseo, ar bhealach atá ailínithe leis an FTCE, de réir mar a mhéadaíonn an t-éileamh faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Gníomh 4.3.7).

Ó thaobh earnáil an ardoideachais de, tá gealltanais sa Phlean Gníomhaíochta bealaí a fhiosrú chun an Ghaeilge a fhorbairt agus a neartú mar theanga champais in institiúidí tríú leibhéal (Gníomh 4.3.14). Tagann na gníomhartha sin le príomhtheachtaireacht na tuarascála seo: ní leor an dea-thoil amháin chun dul chun cinn a bhaint amach i réimse na planála teanga. Chun fíorathrú a chur i gcrích, teastaíonn struchtúir agus freagrachtaí soiléire, infheistíocht leanúnach i bhforbairt foirne, agus timpeallacht champais ina bhfuil an Ghaeilge le feiceáil agus le cloisteáil, chun a chinntiú gur gnáthchuid de shaol laethúil na hOllscoile í an Ghaeilge feasta.

## 1.5.2

### Gealltanais áitiúla

Déantar achoimre sa chuid seo ar na polasaithe áitiúla Gaeilge atá i bhfeidhm in OMN.

#### 1.5.2.1

#### ***Plean Straitéiseach Ollscoil Mhá Nuad 2023-2028***

Is éard a leagtar amach in *Plean Straitéiseach Ollscoil Mhá Nuad* ná tosaíochtaí agus treo straitéiseach na hOllscoile do na blianta atá amach romhainn. Déanann an Plean ceiliúradh ar oidhreacht acadúil na hOllscoile agus ar an mbealach is fearr chun glacadh leis na dúshláin agus leis na deiseanna atá i ndán don institiúid.

Ar na Príomháisitheoirí atá sa Phlean Straitéiseach, tugtar tús áite do ‘Daoine agus Cultúr’ agus is faoin réimse sin a luaitear na gealltanais a bhaineann leis an nGaeilge. Is é seo a leanas an sliocht iomlán a bhaineann leis an teanga:

Under Major Strategic Theme 2, the Action Plan requires public bodies to assess their internal capacity to deliver Irish-language services and to put clear accountability in place so that implementation is properly led and resourced (Action 2.1.2). It also states that the ‘Active Offer’ should be considered when services are being defined for the purpose of the language standards (Action 2.4). These actions directly support this report’s focus on strengthening governance and resourcing and adopting practical approaches that make Irish easier to use in everyday university services.

Under Major Strategic Theme 4, the Action Plan makes reference directly to question of building sustainable capacity, a concern shared in this report. The Action Plan commits public bodies to examining strategies to increase Irish-language competence among existing staff and to promote Irish use and learning in the workplace (Actions 4.1 and 4.1.3). It also lays out steps to expanding Irish-medium opportunities in higher education (Action 4.3) and strengthening the national capacity for CEFR-aligned assessment in response to rising demand under the Official Languages Act (Action 4.3.7).

From the perspective of the higher education sector, the Action Plan includes a commitment to explore ways to develop and strengthen Irish as a campus language in third-level institutions (Action 4.3.14). These actions align with the central message of this report: goodwill alone is not enough to achieve progress in language planning. To deliver real change, clear structures and responsibilities, sustained investment in staff development, and a campus environment in which Irish is seen and heard are required, to ensure that Irish becomes a normal part of everyday university life.

## 1.5.2

### Local commitments

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This section outlines the local Irish language policies in effect at Maynooth University.

#### 1.5.2.1

##### ***Maynooth University Strategic Plan 2023–2028***

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The *Maynooth University Strategic Plan* sets out the University’s priorities and direction for the coming years, celebrating its academic heritage and outlining how it intends to respond to future challenges and opportunities.

The first of the ‘Key Enablers’ outlined in the Strategic Plan is ‘People and Culture’, which includes the commitments on the Irish language. The relevant passage is as follows:

*Leanfaimid le cultúir éagsúla na hÉireann agus le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge mar chuid lárnach agus saibhrithe de bheatha ár gcampais a chothú, agus le tacaíocht a sholáthar dóibh. Táimid tiomanta don Ghaeilge a leabú ar fud ár gcampais fhisiciúil agus dhigitigh, do bharr feabhais a chur ar a hinfheictheacht agus chun deiseanna a mhéadú dá húsáid inár gcuid oibre agus i mbeatha an champais.* (Ollscoil Mhá Nuad 2023)

Cuireadh maoiniú ar fáil don togra seo ó Chiste Straitéiseach Ollscoil Mhá Nuad agus ó Lárionad na Gaeilge le sonraí bonnlíne a bhailiú ar an inniúlacht, ar dhearcthaí agus ar úsáid na Gaeilge i measc phobal na hOllscoile agus le fianaise a chur ar fáil chun go gcuirfí straitéis OMN i bhfeidhm ar bhonn dírithe, ionchuimsitheach agus ar bhealach atá bunaithe ar riachtanais phobal na hOllscoile i leith na Gaeilge.

#### 1.5.2.2

#### **Polasaí Comhionannais agus Éagsúlachta Ollscoil Mhá Nuad**

Luaitear an Ghaeilge i bPolasaí Comhionannais agus Éagsúlachta na hOllscoile (Ollscoil Mhá Nuad 2018: 6):

*Geallann an Ollscoil tacú le héagsúlacht teangacha agus cultúir agus iad a chur chun cinn le haird faoi leith ar chaomhnú, cur chun cinn agus úsáid na Gaeilge, agus ar stádas na Gaeilge mar chéad teanga oifigiúil agus an Bhéarla mar dhara teanga oifigiúil an Stáit a aithint.*

Pléitear an bhaint atá ag clár comhionannais, éagsúlachta agus ionchuimsitheachta na hOllscoile le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge ar an gcampas i gCuid 2.7.

*We will continue to embrace and support the diverse cultures of Ireland and the promotion of the Irish language as an integral and enriching part of our campus life. We are committed to embedding the Irish language across our physical and digital campus, enhancing its visibility and increasing opportunities for its use in our work and campus life.* (Maynooth University 2023)

This project was jointly funded by the Maynooth University Strategic Fund and Lárionad na Gaeilge to gather baseline data on Irish language competence, use and attitudes among the University community in order to provide an evidence base for the implementation of MU strategy in relation to Irish in a way that is needs-based, targeted and inclusive.

#### 1.5.2.2

#### Maynooth University Equality and Diversity Policy

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Irish is explicitly mentioned in the University's Equality and Diversity Policy (Maynooth University 2018: 6):

*The University will commit to support and promote diversity of languages and cultures with special regard to the preservation, promotion and use of the Irish language, and also recognising the status of the Irish language as the first official language and the English language as a second official language of the State.*

The relationship between the University's equality, diversity and inclusion programme and the promotion of Irish on campus is explored in further detail in Section 2.7.

# An Staid Reatha

## Current Status



Cuirtear torthaí an taighde allamuigh i láthair sa dara cuid seo den tuarascáil. Taighde modhanna measctha a bhí i gceist leis an ngné sin den taighde. Rinneadh suirbhéanna mórsála agus rinneadh anailís ar shonraí agallamh agus grúpaí fócais eitneagrafacha. Ba é ba sprioc leis an taighde sin léargas cuimsitheach a fháil ar an gcaidreamh atá ag baill foirne agus ag mic léinn OMN leis an nGaeilge. Is é sin le rá: an inniúlacht fhéintuairiscithe atá acu sa Ghaeilge; na nósanna úsáide Gaeilge atá acu i réimsí éagsúla de shaol na hOllscoile, agus na dearcthaí atá acu i leith na teanga. Is éard a chuirtear i láthair anseo, de réir fianaise chainníochtúil agus cháilíochtúil, cuntas caolchúiseach ar an taithí atá ag pobal na hOllscoile ar an nGaeilge ar an gcampas, cuntas ina ngrinntear láidreachtaí agus dúshláin, agus na dearcthaí atá ag grúpaí éagsúla i measc phobal na hOllscoile.

Déantar tagairt le linn na tuarascála seo do shleachta agallaimh chun príomhthéamaí an taighde a thaispeáint agus chun guth na rannpháirtithe a chur i láthair ina bhfocail féin. Tá na sleachta go léir gan ainm agus sainaitnítear gach sliocht le cód gearr a léiríonn an grúpa rannpháirtithe: seasann FP don fhoireann phroifisiúnta, FA don fhoireann acadúil, GFML do ghrúpa fócais na mac léinn, ML do mhic léinn aonair, TS do theagmhálaithe seachtracha, CCI do rannpháirtithe an Centre Culturel Irlandais, agus SCCI do fhreagróirí shuirbhé an CCI. Úsáidtear na cóid sin chun comhthéacs a thabhairt agus chun nach n-aithnífar na rannpháirtithe.

This second part of the report presents the findings of the field-based component of the project. This strand of the research was designed as a mixed-methods investigation, combining large-scale survey data with qualitative analysis of ethnographic interview and focus group data. The aim was to develop a comprehensive picture of Maynooth University staff and students' relationship with the Irish language: their self-reported levels of proficiency, their patterns of use across different domains of University life, and their attitudes towards the language. By combining quantitative and qualitative evidence, this section provides a nuanced account of how Maynooth University's staff and students currently experience Irish on campus, highlighting areas of strength, identifying challenges, and capturing the perspectives of diverse groups within the University community.

Interview excerpts are referenced throughout this report to illustrate the key research themes and to reflect participants' own words. All quotations have been anonymised, and each excerpt is identified using a short code that indicates the participant group: PS denotes professional staff, AS academic staff, SFG student focus group participants, S individual student respondents, EC external contacts, CCI Centre Culturel Irlandais participants, and CCIS Centre Culturel Irlandais survey respondents. These codes are used to provide context while also protecting participants' identities.

I gcás daoine áirithe, d'fhág an taithí ar scoil go bhfuil imní nó olc orthu i leith na teanga, rud a d'fhéadfadh teacht chun cinn arís má bhraitheann siad go mbíonn dualgas orthu an teanga a úsáid. Bíonn an drochthaithí sin ina constaic fiú má bhíonn suim ag daoine feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge. Tá siad ann freisin a raibh taithí mhaith acu ar an nGaeilge ar scoil agus dáimh acu léi dá réir.

Tugann an difear sin le fios gur cheart, le linn an phróisis pleanála teanga, tús áite a thabhairt do dheiseanna úsáide agus foghlama Gaeilge atá tacúil agus roghnach, iarracht a dhéanamh timpeallacht a chothú nach bhfuil aon bhrú inti, agus a aithint go bhfuil stair agus scéal difriúil ag gach ball foirne agus mac léinn.

For some, the legacy of schooling is a residue of resentment or anxiety, which can be reactivated by any sense of obligation and may inhibit willingness to participate, even where there is genuine interest in improving proficiency. For others, positive experiences learning Irish in school have built confidence and positive associations with the language. This divergence points to a practical implication for language planning on campus: efforts to promote Irish should prioritise supportive, choice-based opportunities that reduce performance pressure and explicitly acknowledge the varied histories staff and students bring with them.

## 2.1 Dearcthaí

Déantar iniúchadh sa chuid seo ar na dearcthaí éagsúla atá ag baill foirne agus mic léinn na hOllscoile i leith na Gaeilge agus a cur chun cinn ar an gcampas. Tosaítear leis na dearcthaí dearfacha a cuireadh in iúl le linn an taighde; ina dhiaidh sin pléitear na húdair inní a luadh.

### 2.1.1 Bá agus dea-thoil

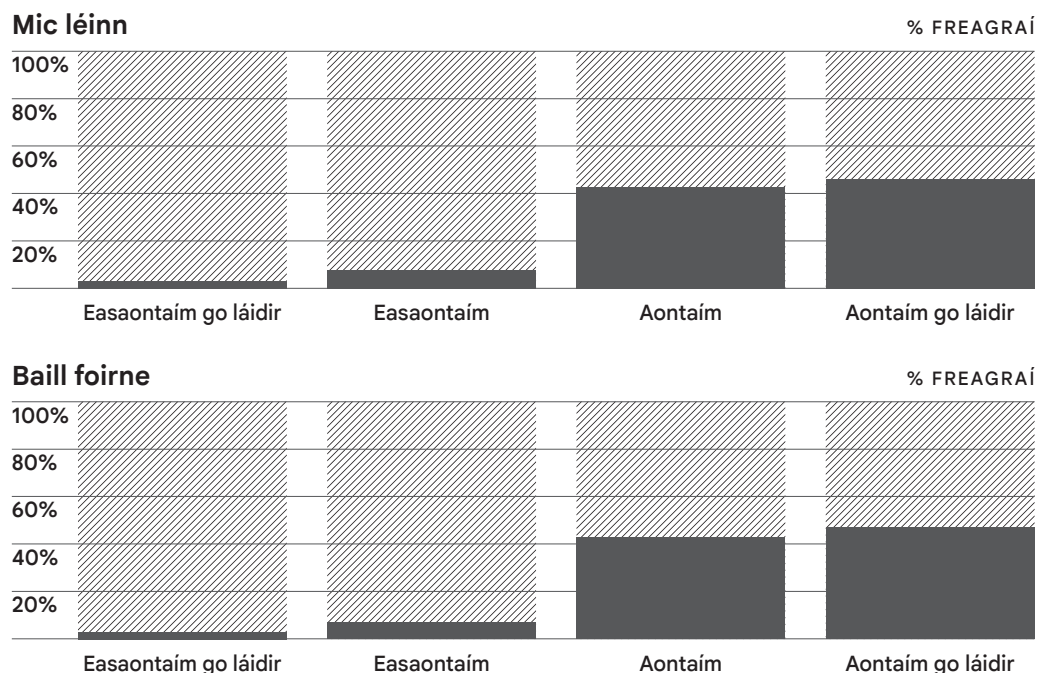
Léargas: Tá an-bhá ag na freagróirí mic léinn agus baill foirne leis an nGaeilge.

Ar cheann de na príomhthorthaí a d'éascair as an tionscadal tá an léargas go bhfuil go leor dea-thola i measc phobal na hOllscoile i leith na Gaeilge – ina measc siúd a bhfuil an teanga ar a dtoil acu agus iad siúd nach bhfuil.

#### 2.1.1.1 Luach na Gaeilge

As freagróirí na suirbhéanna, roghnaigh 90% den fhoireann agus 91% de na mic léinn “Aontaím” nó “Aontaím go láidir” maidir leis an ráiteas “Cuireann an Ghaeilge le saibhreas na hOllscoile”.

Léaráid 1: “Cuireann an Ghaeilge le saibhreas na hOllscoile.”



# 2.1 Attitudes

This section explores staff and student attitudes towards the Irish language and its promotion on campus. It begins with positive attitudes and moves on to the concerns that were voiced during the course of the research.

## 2.1.1 Support and goodwill

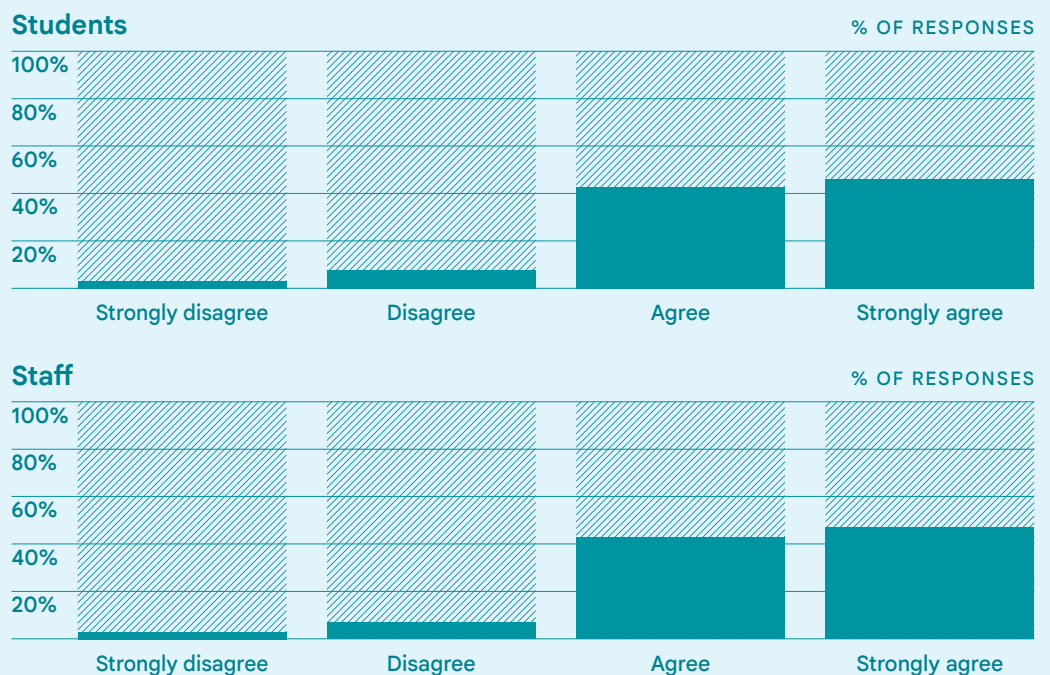
*Insight: Goodwill towards Irish is very high amongst staff and student respondents.*

One of the main findings of the research was that there is a great deal of goodwill towards Irish amongst staff and students, both Irish-speaking and non-Irish-speaking.

### 2.1.1.1 The value of Irish

90% of staff respondents and 91% of student respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Irish adds value to the University”.

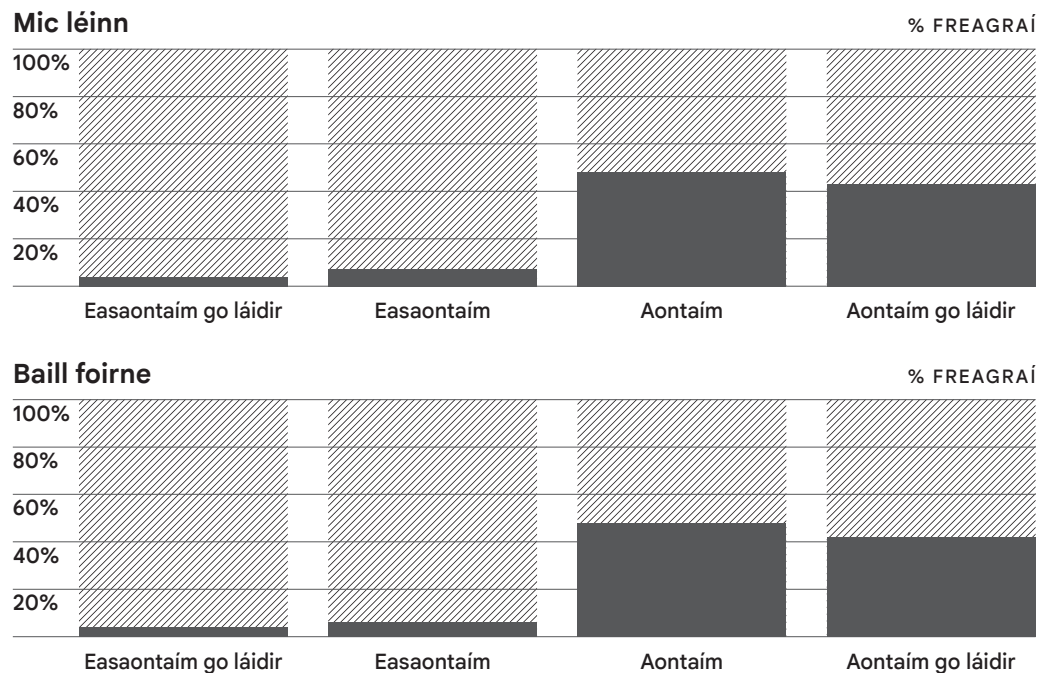
Figure 1: “Irish adds value to the University.”



### 2.1.1.2 Cur chun cinn na Gaeilge

Roghnaigh 90% de na freagróirí, idir fhoireann agus mhic léinn, “Aontaím” nó “Aontaím go láidir” leis an ráiteas “Ba chóir an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar an gcampas”.

Léaráid 2: “Ba cheart an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar an gcampas.”



### 2.1.1.3 Borradh faoin nGaeilge

Léargas: Tá borradh nua faoin spéis atá ag daoine sa Ghaeilge.

De réir shonraí na n-agallamh tá braistint i measc na mball foirne agus na mac léinn go bhfuil borradh nua faoin spéis atá sa teanga agus faoin éileamh atá uirthi. Dúirt ball foirne amháin:

*Sílim go bhfuil athrú meoin ann [...] Go cinnte an dearcadh a bhí forleathan, daoine aois agamsa agus níos sine a raibh an-drochmheas acu ar an Ghaeilge. Sílim go bhfuil sé sin uilig athraithe.* <sup>(FA1)</sup>

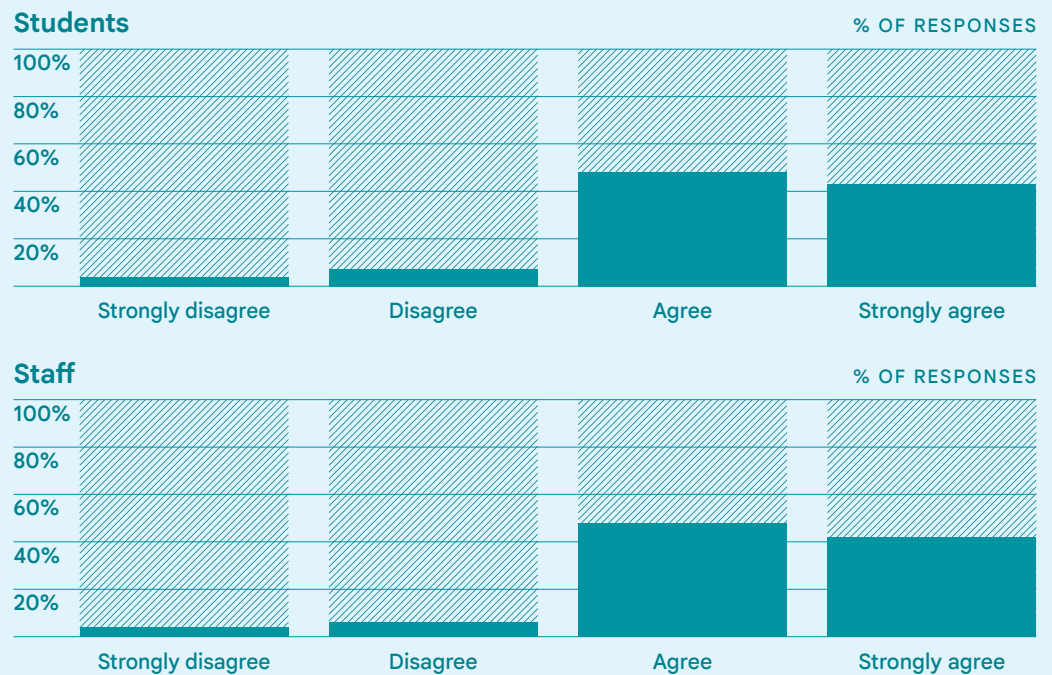
Luaigh roinnt rannpháirtithe an triúr rapála Feirsteach, Kneecap, atá ar thús cadhnaíochta sa bhorradh nua sin, go háirithe i measc daoine óga:

*You know, [Irish] wasn't cool... Then Kneecap made it cool... That love that they had for the language, and the pride.* <sup>(FGML1)</sup>

### 2.1.1.2 The promotion of Irish

When asked to what extent they agreed that “Irish should be promoted on campus”, 90% of staff and student respondents responded “Agree” or “Strongly agree”.

Figure 2: “Irish should be promoted on campus.”



### 2.1.1.3 A resurgence of Irish

**Insight:** *Irish is currently enjoying a period of renewed interest.*

The interview data suggests a sentiment among both staff and students that Irish is currently enjoying a resurgence in interest and popularity. One member of staff remarked:

*I think that attitudes are changing [...] certainly the attitude that was widespread (amongst) people my age and older who took a poor view of Irish... I think that's all changed.*

(AS1, author's translation)

A number of participants referenced the Belfast-based rap trio Kneecap as spearheading a new wave of interest in Irish, particularly among younger people:

*You know, [Irish] wasn't cool... Then Kneecap made it cool... That love that they had for the language, and the pride.* (SFG1)

## 2.1.2 Ábhair imní

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Ó am go ham, chuir baill foirne (agus roinnt bheag mac léinn) in iúl go raibh imní orthu maidir leis an nGaeilge. Rinneadh cur síos ar an nGaeilge, uaireanta, mar chúis imní, go háirithe i measc na mball foirne; rinne roinnt ball foirne cáineadh ar an eispéireas a bhí acu agus an Ghaeilge á múineadh dóibh ar scoil; agus bhí mionlach beag de na baill foirne agus de na mic léinn i gcoinne chur chun cinn na Gaeilge ar an gcampas. Sa mhéid a leanas déantar achoimre ar na cúiseanna imní a chuir siad in iúl sna suirbhéanna, agus leagtar roinnt céimeanna amach a d'fhéadfaí a thógáil chun an imní sin a mhaolú, bunaithe ar a gcuid moltaí féin.

### 2.1.2.1 **Faitíos roimh an nGaeilge**

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Léargas: *Bíonn eagla ar dhaoine iarracht a dhéanamh an Ghaeilge a úsáid agus luaitear an focal "intimidating" le cur síos uirthi.*

Téad amháin a bhí sna sonraí agallaimh, go háirithe i measc na mball foirne, go rabhthas buartha an Ghaeilge a úsáid ar eagla botún a dhéanamh, nó gur measadh gur ghá Gaeilge fhoirfe a bheith ag duine chun í a úsáid. Mar a dúirt ball foirne amháin:

*Sometimes people are reluctant to [use Irish] because they're embarrassed by their [...] lack of proficiency. The word that always comes up when you talk about the Irish language is intimidation [...] there has been a tendency for fluent speakers to correct people and then that knocks people's confidence. Whatever approach we're taking it should be something that's fun.* <sup>(FP1)</sup>

I measc na moltaí atá leagtha amach i gCaibidil 3, tugtar le fios go bhfuil gá le himeachtaí rialta, neamhfhoirmiúla ina mbeidh deis ag baill foirne a gcuid Gaeilge a úsáid i dtimpeallacht shuaimhneach gan aon bhrú a bheith orthu.

## 2.1.2

### Concerns

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Occasionally, staff (and less frequently students) expressed worries and/or concerns related to the Irish language. Specifically, Irish was sometimes described as intimidating, especially by members of staff; the teaching of Irish in schools was the subject of criticism especially amongst Irish members of staff; and a small minority of staff and students were opposed to the promotion of Irish on campus. In what follows, these concerns are outlined and some steps are proposed that could be taken to mitigate these respondents' concerns based on their own proposals.

#### 2.1.2.1

##### *"Irish is intimidating."*

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**Insight:** *People are sometimes afraid to try to use Irish and the language is described as "intimidating".*

A theme in the interview data, especially amongst staff, was a worry of using Irish for fear of making mistakes or a feeling that in order to use Irish, one has to be perfect. One member of staff remarked that:

*Sometimes people are reluctant to [use Irish] because they're embarrassed by their [...] lack of proficiency. The word that always comes up when you talk about the Irish language is intimidation [...] there has been a tendency for fluent speakers to correct people and then that knocks people's confidence [...] whatever approach we're taking it should be something that's fun.* <sup>(PS1)</sup>

Among the recommendations laid out in Chapter 3 is the need for regular, informal events where staff can use their Irish in a relaxed, low-pressure setting.

## 2.1.2.2

## Dearcthaí i leith mhúineadh na Gaeilge ar scoil

Léargas: *An drocheispéireas a bhí ag daoine le foghlaim na Gaeilge ar scoil, bíonn tionchar leanúnach aige ar dhearcthaí na rannpháirtithe, go háirithe i measc baill foirne.*

Luaigh ball foirne amháin go raibh imní orthu go mb'fhéidir go mbeadh orthu plé leis an nGaeilge go gníomhach. Dúirt siad:

*You are left with a smouldering bitterness about how [Irish] was taught to you in school. So now I suppose [...] it gets your hackles up if you're forced to do it again.* (FP2)

Dúirt an duine céanna gur mhaith leo níos mó Gaeilge a bheith acu, ach é a bheith ar a gcomhairle féin:

*I would like to be able to speak more Irish [...] but I don't like being forced to do it.* (FP2)

Luaigh rannpháirtí amháin an t-eispéireas a bhí acu agus a bpáistí ag foghlaim na Gaeilge ar scoil agus an tionchar a bhí ag an eispéireas céanna ar a gcuid tuairimí maidir le múineadh na teanga:

*I have two children myself now who are learning Irish. So I'm doing a lot more Irish now with them through homework and it hasn't improved too much how it's taught in schools. But the teachers are probably a little bit more relaxed. I mean a little bit more fun than in my time.* (FP1)

I gcás roinnt rannpháirtithe, tá an taithí a bhí acu ar fhoghlaim na Gaeilge ar scoil fós ceangailte le himní agus leis an mbrú a bhaineann le bheith "ceart".

*The language makes me nervous to an extent because I guess that's how it always was in school, [...] trying to be perfect.* (FP3)

Bhí roinnt baill foirne, iad siúd a bhfuil Gaeilge líofa acu go háirithe, an-mholtach faoin dóigh ar mhúineadh an Ghaeilge dóibh ar scoil:

*Bhí beirt mhúinteoirí ansin a raibh an-suim acu sa Ghaeilge, agus bhíodar san agamsa... is bhí caighdeán an teagaisc an-ard chomh maith go ginearálta.* (FP4)

## 2.1.2.2

**Attitudes towards the teaching of Irish in school**

*Insight: Negative experiences of Irish language learning during schooling continue to shape attitudes, particularly among members of staff.*

One member of staff expressed concern that they might be required to actively engage with Irish, remarking that:

*You are left with a smouldering bitterness about how [Irish] was taught to you in school. So now I suppose [...] it gets your hackles up if you're forced to do it again.* (PS2)

The same member of staff expressed a desire to improve their Irish, but on their own terms. They said:

*I would like to be able to speak more Irish [...] but I don't like being forced to do it.* (PS2)

One participant reflected on encountering Irish again through their children's schooling, and on how this experience has shaped their views on how the language is taught:

*I have two children myself now who are learning Irish. So I'm doing a lot more Irish now with them through homework and it hasn't improved too much how it's taught in schools. But the teachers are probably a little bit more relaxed. I mean a little bit more fun than in my time.* (PS1)

For some participants, memories of learning Irish at school continue to be associated with anxiety and pressure to "get it right":

*The language makes me nervous to an extent because I guess that's how it always was in school, [...] trying to be perfect.* (PS3)

Some staff, particularly Irish-speaking staff, were very complimentary of the way Irish was taught to them in school:

*I had two teachers who were very interested in Irish... and the quality of the teaching was very high in general.* (PS4, author's translation)

Tugann na cuntais éagsúla sin le fios go mbíonn an-tionchar ag an taithí scoile ar an dearcadh atá ag duine i leith na Gaeilge. I gcás daoine áirithe, d'fhág an taithí sin go bhfuil imní nó olc orthu i leith na teanga, rud a d'fhéadfadh teacht chun cinn arís má bhraitheann siad go mbíonn dualgas orthu an teanga a úsáid. Bíonn an drochthaithí sin ina constaic fiú má bhíonn suim ag an duine feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge. Tá siad ann freisin a raibh taithí mhaith acu ar an nGaeilge ar scoil agus dáimh acu léi dá réir. Tugann an difear sin le fios gur cheart, le linn an phróisis pleanála teanga, tús áite a thabhairt do dheiseanna úsáide agus foghlama Gaeilge atá tacúil agus roghnach, iarracht a dhéanamh timpeallacht a chothú nach bhfuil aon bhrú inti, agus a aithint go bhfuil stair agus scéal difriúil ag gach ball foirne agus mac léinn.

### 2.1.2.3

#### **Dearcthaí cáinteacha**

Léiríonn torthaí na suirbhéanna go bhfuil an-tacaíocht in OMN don Ghaeilge. D'easaontaigh mionlach de na freagróirí gur cóir an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn agus go gcuireann an Ghaeilge le saibhreas na hOllscoile, áfach. 204 mac léinn (7.6% de na freagróirí) agus 45 ball foirne (6.9% de na freagróirí) a bhí i gceist leis an ngrúpa sin. Cé nach dearcthaí iad sin atá ag mórán freagróirí, tugann siad léargas tábhachtach ar na dúshláin atá roimh chur chun cinn na Gaeilge in OMN. Is féidir trí théama ghinearálta a aithint sna dearcthaí sin; is é sin, ceisteanna faoi úsáideacht na Gaeilge, bacanna ar an bhfoghlaim agus ceisteanna ama agus spáis.

#### **Úsáideacht**

Ba théama coitianta i dtráchtanna an ghrúpa mac léinn é an t-amhras a bhí orthu faoi thairbhe na Gaeilge i saol na linne seo. Cheap cuid acu nach raibh aon ghá leis an nGaeilge mar gheall ar leitheadúlacht an Bhéarla i saol na hÉireann nó éadairbhe na Gaeilge i gcomhthéacs gairmeacha.

Amhras ní ba phragmataí a léirigh baill foirne go minic. D'aontaigh cuid acu le tograí réasúnta beag, ar nós comharthaí dátheangacha, an cúpla focal a úsáid i gcruinnithe, agus ranganna a chur ar fáil ar bhonn roghnach. Dúirt siad, áfach, nár cheart go mbeadh an Ghaeilge in iomaíocht le tosaíochtaí eile na hinstiúide. Ghlac siad le tacaíocht shiombalach ach cheap siad gurbh fhearr infheistíocht a dhéanamh i dtograí eile. Chun dul i ngleic leis an amhras sin, d'fhéadfaí an tairbhe a bhaineann leis an nGaeilge ó thaobh cúrsaí gairme, cothú pobail agus tábhacht na teanga d'fhéiniúlacht instiúideach OMN a chur in iúl don fhoireann. I gCaibidil 3, Cuid 16.1 moltar úsáid níos fearr a bhaint as na seisiúin fáilte chun an teachtaireacht sin a chur chun tosaigh.

#### **Na bacanna atá ar fhoghlaim na Gaeilge**

Téama coitianta ina measc siúd a léirigh amhras faoi chur chun cinn na Gaeilge ná na bacanna éagsúla a tháinig idir iad féin agus foghlaim na teanga. Dúirt roinnt rannpháirtithe go raibh Gaeilge éigeantach na scoile dúshlánach acu, go háirithe nuair a measadh an cur chuige teagaisc a bheith mí-oiriúnach nó nár tugadh go leor tacaíochta dóibh. Luaigh mic léinn áirithe go raibh an-tionchar ag a ndisléicse agus ag sainriachtanais eile foghlama ar an taithí a bhí acu ar an nGaeilge. I gcásanna áirithe, tugadh díolúine do na mic léinn sin, agus ina measc

Taken together, these accounts suggest that attitudes to Irish among staff can be shaped by earlier pedagogical experiences. For some, the legacy of schooling is a residue of resentment or anxiety, which can be reactivated by any sense of obligation and may inhibit willingness to participate, even where there is genuine interest in improving proficiency. For others, positive experiences learning Irish in school have built confidence and positive associations with the language. This divergence points to a practical implication for language planning on campus: efforts to promote Irish should prioritise supportive, choice-based opportunities that reduce performance pressure and explicitly acknowledge the varied histories staff and students bring with them.

### 2.1.2.3

#### **Critical perspectives**

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Although the survey results indicate overwhelming support for Irish, a small minority of respondents expressed disagreement with both the promotion of Irish on campus and the view that the language adds value to the University. This group comprised 204 student respondents (7.6% of the student sample) and 45 staff respondents (6.9% of the staff sample). Their views, while limited in number, nonetheless offer important insights into challenges facing the promotion of Irish in MU. These views can be grouped under three general themes; namely, questions of utility, barriers to learning Irish, and issues relating to time and space.

##### **Utility**

A recurring theme in the comments of the student group was scepticism about the utility of Irish in contemporary life. For some, the language was perceived as unnecessary given the dominance in Irish society of English, or seen as irrelevant in a professional context.

Among staff, reservations often took a more pragmatic tone. Some were open to modest initiatives such as bilingual signage, short greetings at meetings, or optional classes, but argued that investment in Irish should not compete with other institutional priorities. In this view, symbolic support was acceptable, but resources could be better directed elsewhere. Addressing these concerns may require clearer communication of the practical and professional benefits that Irish can bring, highlighting how the language can contribute to employability, community-building initiatives, and how Irish forms an important part of MU's institutional identity. Recommendation 10 outlined in Chapter 3, Section 16.1 suggests the enhanced usage of orientation sessions to communicate such messages.

##### **Barriers to learning Irish**

A recurring theme amongst those who expressed scepticism about the promotion of Irish was the range of barriers experienced when learning the language. Several respondents described finding compulsory Irish in school challenging, particularly where teaching approaches did not feel accessible or sufficiently supportive. Some students also noted that dyslexia and other additional educational needs shaped their experience of Irish and, in some

siúd bhí cuid arbh fhearr leo coinneáil orthu leis an nGaeilge. Cuireann na cuntais sin i gcuimhne dúinn an tábhacht a bhaineann le riachtanais éagsúla foghlama a aithint, agus le cinntiú go mbíonn rannpháirtíocht sa Ghaeilge inrochtana, go gcuirtear an tacaíocht chuí ar fáil di, agus go gcuirtear chun cinn í ar bhealach nach gcuireann leis an bhfrustrachas a bhí ar dhaoine léi roimhe seo.

I bhfreagra amháin, cuireadh taithí achrannach ar an nGaeilge i gcomhthéacs na discléicse a bhí ar an bhfreagróir, duine a fuair díolúine ón nGaeilge san Ardteistiméireacht:

*I have had very bad experiences with the language as I am dyslexic and only obtained an exemption for my Leaving Certificate. The promotion of the language (to those who have no interest in it) displeases me. I would much rather enjoy other aspects of my culture (such as dance and songs) than a useless language which is unnecessarily pushed onto those who have no interest in it.* (Freagra i suirbhé na mac léinn)

### Ceisteanna ama agus spáis

Chuir roinnt rannpháirtithe in iúl go mbíonn imní ag baint le cúrsaí ama agus spáis i gcomhthéacs fhoghlaim agus úsáid na Gaeilge. Dar leis na mic léinn, bíonn brú orthu plé lena gcuid staidéir, leis an obair agus le ceangail shóisialta nach bhfágann an t-am acu tabhairt faoi fhoghlaim na Gaeilge. Luaigh mic léinn áirithe go bhfuil srianta i gceist leis an gcampas féin. Dúirt siad nach bhfuil go leor áiseanna ann agus nár cheart tús áite a thabhairt d'infheistíocht a dhéanamh sa Ghaeilge nuair nach bhfuil na hacmhainní fisiciúla cuí san Ollscoil. Dúirt roinnt ball foirne an rud céanna faoin ualach oibre atá orthu: pléadh le tograí Gaeilge mar ualach breise agus sceideal an-ghnóthach acu cheana.

Is féidir na hábhair imní atá leagtha amach anseo a mhaolú trí *thearmainn teanga* thiomnaithe bhuana a bhunú don Ghaeilge ar an gcampas; trí dheiseanna úsáide Gaeilge a leabú i ngnáthshaol an champais, agus trí am cúitimh a thabhairt do bhaill foirne le freastal ar ranganna Gaeilge; féach na moltaí i gCuid 3.1

### Achoimre

Cé gur mionlach beag de na freagróirí a chuir na tuairimí thuasluaite in iúl, léirítear iontu a éagsúla agus a chasta is atá na dearcthaí atá ann i leith na Gaeilge i measc fhoireann agus mhic léinn MU. Ní mar a chéile gach dearcadh diúltach, is amhlaidh atá réimse tuairimí le haithint idir an diúltú scunscan don Ghaeilge, an cur chuige pragmatach cúramach ina taobh agus an t-éileamh ar mhúnla tacúil seachas éigeantach. Éilíonn na dearcthaí sin taighde breise foirmiúil; d'fhéadfaí, dá réir sin, dul i ngleic leis an amhras atá ar dhaoine áirithe agus a fhiosrú conas is féidir an Ghaeilge a dhéanamh níos inrochtana, níos ionchuimsithí agus níos ábhartha do phobal na hOllscoile ar fad.

cases, resulted in an exemption from the subject, including for some who would have preferred to continue studying it. These accounts underline the importance of recognising diverse learning needs and ensuring that the promotion of Irish is accessible, appropriately supported, and framed in ways that avoid reinforcing earlier frustration.

One respondent, for example, linked their experience of dyslexia with a difficult relationship to Irish at school and described obtaining an exemption for the Leaving Certificate:

*I have had very bad experiences with the language as I am dyslexic and only obtained an exemption for my Leaving Certificate. The promotion of the language (to those who have no interest in it) displeases me. I would much rather enjoy other aspects of my culture (such as dance and songs) than a useless language which is unnecessarily pushed onto those who have no interest in it.* (Student survey response)

### Time and space

Finally, a number of participants expressed concerns about time and space in the context of learning and using Irish. Students emphasised competing pressures, such as study, work, or social commitments, which left little scope for additional Irish-language learning. Some pointed to physical constraints on campus, including limited facilities, suggesting that investment in Irish should not come at the expense of already scarce physical resources. Among staff, similar arguments were made in relation to workload: Irish initiatives were sometimes seen as an extra burden in already stretched schedules.

The concerns outlined here can be mitigated by establishing dedicated, permanent *breathing spaces* for Irish on campus, embedding low-burden opportunities into existing routines, and enabling staff to attend Irish classes through in return for time in lieu; see the recommendations in Section 3.1

### Summary

The perspectives summarised here, while voiced by a small minority of respondents, underscore that a complex range of attitudes is held towards Irish across the MU staff and student body. Negative or sceptical positions are not monolithic: they range from the wholesale rejection of Irish to pragmatic caution, to calls for a more supportive rather than compulsory approach. These views warrant further engagement in the form of formal research; such engagement would help to address concerns and explore how Irish can be made more accessible, inclusive, and relevant to all members of the University community.

## 2.2 Cumas

Cuireadh roinnt ceisteanna sna suirbhéanna maidir le cumas Gaeilge na bhfreagróirí. Iarradh ar na mic léinn agus ar na baill foirne a gcuid Gaeilge a mheas de réir na gceithre phríomhscil teanga – labhairt, léamh, scríobh agus cluastuiscint. Déantar tuairisciú sa chuid seo ar thorthaí na gceisteanna sin.

Iarradh ar fhreagróirí na suirbhéanna féinmheasúnú a dhéanamh ar a gcuid cumais féin sa Ghaeilge agus úsáid á baint as bandaí simplithe bunaithe ar an bhFráma Tagartha Comónta Eorpach nó FTCE (Comhairle na hEorpa 2001, 2020). Ba iad na catagóirí a úsáideadh ná:

- **A1–A2:** Cumas an-teoranta cumarsáide. Cúpla focal/frása.
- **B1:** Bunchumas cumarsáide i gcomhthéacsanna a bhfuil taithí agam orthu.
- **B2:** Cumas maith cumarsáide, i réimse leathan comhthéacsanna, cé go ndéanaim roinnt botún go fóill.
- **C1+:** Ardchumas cumarsáide. Ardchaighdeán líofachta agus cruinnis.

Meastar go bhfuil leibhéal B2 nó níos airde ag teastáil chun a bheith in ann an Ghaeilge a úsáid go proifisiúnta, mar shampla san earnáil phoiblí. Tugtar faoi deara go bhfuil an leibhéal cumais sách ard i measc na mball foirne agus i measc na mac léinn agus go bhfuil cumas féinmheasta níos airde i measc na mac léinn ná mar atá i measc na mball foirne. Pléitear na srianta a bhaineann leis an bhféintuairisciú mar uirlis mheasúnaithe i gcuid na Modheolaíochta i Réamhrá na tuarascála, agus sa Chonclúid i gCuid 3.2.

### 2.2.1 Cumas Gaeilge i measc na mball foirne

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Tugtar achoimre sa chuid seo ar chumas Gaeilge na mball foirne, ar an éagsúlacht chumais atá ann idir na ranna difriúla, agus cé chomh minic a chuirtear an cumas céanna i bhfeidhm.

#### 2.2.1.1 Cumas féintuairiscithe

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Luaigh leathchuid de na freagróirí ar baill foirne iad go bhfuil leibhéal Gaeilge labhartha acu atá ag B1 nó níos airde. Bhí leibhéal B2 nó níos airde ag beagnach 20% de na baill foirne, figiúr arb ionann é agus 10% de bhaill foirne uile na hOllscoile. Ní raibh aon Ghaeilge labhartha ag 14% de na baill foirne, agus ní raibh scríobh na teanga ag 21% acu. Ar an gcuid is mó de, ba iad na scileanna ba threise ná an léamh agus an chluastuiscint seachas an scríobh ná an labhairt.

## 2.2 Proficiency

The surveys contained questions about proficiency in Irish. The questions asked staff and student respondents to rate their ability in Irish according to the four main language skills – speaking, reading, writing and aural comprehension. This section reports the results of those questions.

Respondents were asked to self-assess their Irish language ability using simplified bands based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or CEFR (Council of Europe 2001, 2020). The categories used were:

- **A1–A2:** Very limited communicative ability. A few words or phrases.
- **B1:** Basic communicative ability in routine or familiar contexts.
- **B2:** Good communicative ability in a wide range of contexts, despite some mistakes.
- **C1+:** Advanced communicative ability, with a high level of fluency and accuracy.

Proficiency at B2 or higher is generally considered the threshold for professional use of Irish, including in public service contexts. Based on this self-assessment, proficiency appears to be high among both staff and students, and that overall, student respondents self-reported as more proficient than staff respondents. The limitations of self-assessment as a methodological tool are discussed in the Methodology section in the Introduction of the report, and in the Conclusion in Section 3.2.

### 2.2.1 Staff proficiency in Irish

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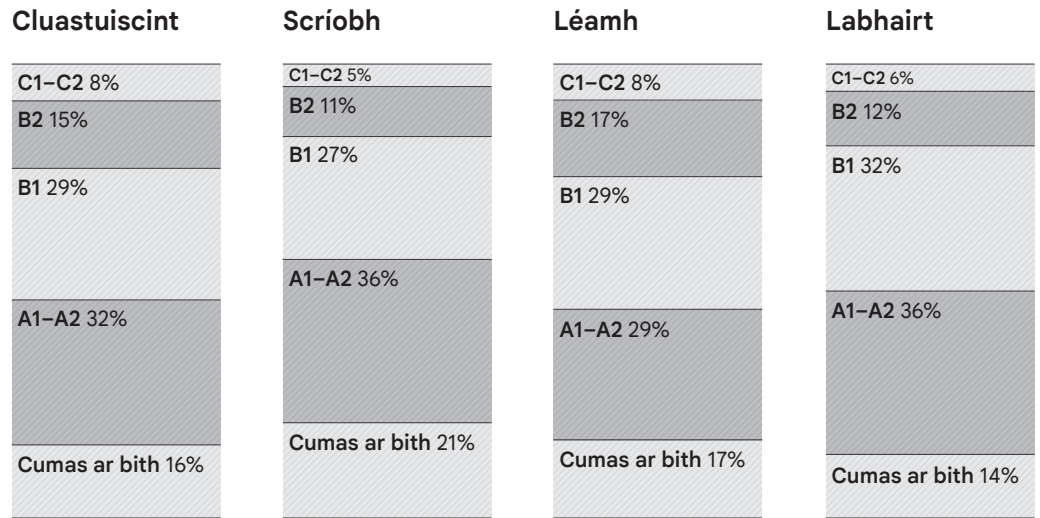
This section presents an overview of staff proficiency in Irish, variation across departments, and the extent to which that proficiency is used in practice.

#### 2.2.1.1 Self-reported proficiency

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Half of staff respondents reported a spoken Irish level of B1 or higher, with almost 20% reaching B2 or higher, a figure representing 10% of the entire staff population. 14% of staff reported no spoken Irish at all, rising to 21% for written Irish. Skills were generally stronger in reading and listening than in writing or speaking.

### Léaráid 3: Cumas Gaeilge féinmheasúnaithe na mball foirne



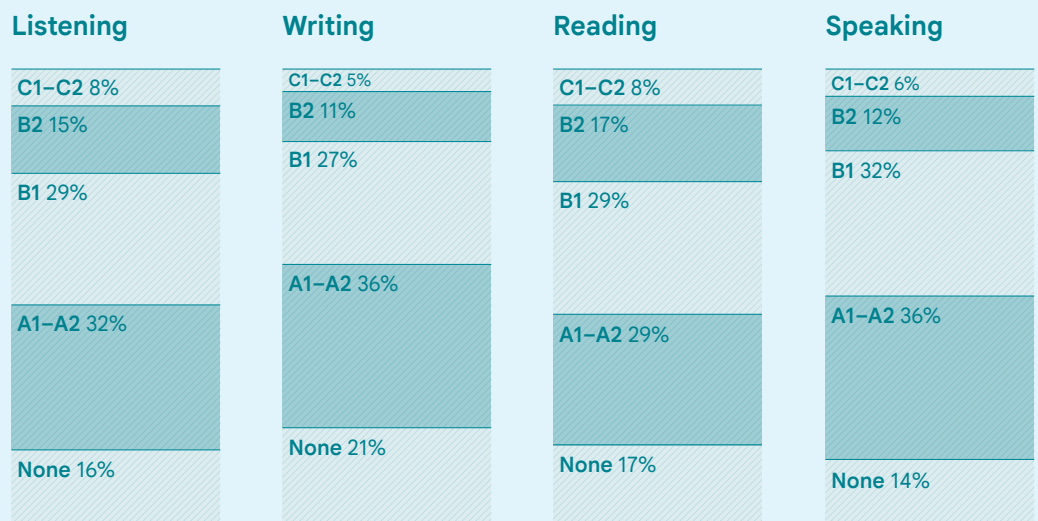
#### 2.2.1.2

#### Dáileadh an chumais de réir na roinne

Bhí éagsúlacht ann ó roinn go roinn maidir le cumas labhartha na Gaeilge. Ba i Roinn na Ceimice (50%) agus i Roinn Froebel don Bhun- agus don Luath-Oideachas (47%) a bhí an sciar ab airde de bhaill foirne a dúirt go raibh Gaeilge labhartha acu ag leibhéal B2 nó os a chionn. Bhí sciar suntasach ann freisin i Roinn na Staire (44%), i Roinn an Oideachais (41%) agus i Roinn an Bhéarla (40%). Tuairiscíodh leibhéal ní b'íse, ach atá fós suntasach, san Oifig Iontrála agus Earcaíochta Mac Léinn (25%), i nDlí agus Coireolaíocht (24%), agus sa Leabharlann (18%).

Tábla 1: Dáileadh an chumais i measc na foirne de réir na roinne

| Roinn  | Líon na bhfreagróirí | B2+ sa Ghaeilge labhartha |
|--|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Ceimic                                       | 8                    | 4 (50%)                   |
| Froebel                                      | 15                   | 7 (47%)                   |
| Stair  | 9                    | 4 (44%)                   |
| Oideachas                                    | 29                   | 12 (41%)                  |
| Béarla                                       | 10                   | 4 (40%)                   |
| An Oifig Iontrála agus Earcaíochta Mac Léinn | 20                   | 5 (25%)                   |
| Dlí agus Coireolaíocht                       | 34                   | 8 (24%)                   |
| Leabharlann                                  | 38                   | 7 (18%)                   |

**Figure 3: Self-reported staff proficiency**

### 2.2.1.2

### Distribution of proficiency by department

Spoken Irish proficiency varied by department. The highest shares of staff who reported B2-level (or higher) spoken Irish were in Chemistry (50%) and Froebel (47%). Substantial shares were also reported in History (44%), Education (41%) and English (40%). Lower, but still notable, levels were reported in the Admissions and Student Recruitment Office (25%), Law and Criminology (24%), and the Library (18%).

**Table 1: Distribution of staff proficiency by department**

| Department                                | Total respondents | B2+ in spoken Irish |
|---|-------------------|---------------------|
| Chemistry                                 | 8                 | 4 (50%)             |
| Froebel                                   | 15                | 7 (47%)             |
| History                                   | 9                 | 4 (44%)             |
| Education                                 | 29                | 12 (41%)            |
| English                                   | 10                | 4 (40%)             |
| Admissions and Student Recruitment Office | 20                | 5 (25%)             |
| Law and Criminology                       | 34                | 8 (24%)             |
| Library                                   | 38                | 7 (18%)             |

### 2.2.1.3 Cumas faoi cheilt i measc na foirne

Ainneoin go bhfuil leibhéal cumais sách láidir ann i measc phobal na hOllscoile, thuairiscigh cuid mhór den fhoireann a raibh ardchumas iontu sa Ghaeilge nach n-úsáideann siad í ina gcuid oibre. An leathchuid acu siúd a bhfuil leibhéal B2 nó níos airde acu i labhairt na Gaeilge, dúirt siad nach n-úsáideann siad an teanga in am ar bith san obair, nó go n-úsáideann siad í níos lú ná uair amháin in aghaidh na míosa.

I Roinn na Ceimice, cuir i gcás, dúirt an ceathrar a raibh ardchumas iontu go léir nach n-úsáideann siad Gaeilge riamh san obair. Bhí an scéal mar an gcéanna i Roinn an Dlí, an Bhéarla agus sa Leabharlann. Leagtar amach sa tábla seo a leanas na ranna agus oifigí ina raibh an cóimheas ab airde d'fhoireann a bhfuil ardchumas Gaeilge iontu ach nach n-úsáideann an Ghaeilge san obair riamh:

Tábla 2: Cumas faoi cheilt i measc na foirne

| Roinn                  | Freagróirí sa roinn a bhfuil B2+ acu sa Ghaeilge labhartha | Líon acu siúd nach n-úsáideann an Ghaeilge riamh san obair |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Ceimic                 | 4  | 4 (100%)   |
| Dlí agus Coireolaíocht | 7  | 3 (42.9%)  |
| Leabharlann            | 7  | 2 (28.6%)  |
| Béarla                 | 4  | 2 (50%)  |

Ba mhaith le mórchuid na mball foirne a d'fhreagair an suirbhé níos mó deiseanna a bheith acu chun an Ghaeilge a úsáid ar champas na hOllscoile (72%). Tagann an figiúr sin le torthaí na mac léinn agus tugann sé le fios go bhfuil an-suim i measc na mball foirne go gcuirfí leis na deiseanna atá ann an Ghaeilge a úsáid.

## 2.2.2 Cumas Gaeilge i measc na mac léinn

Déantar achoimre sa chuid seo ar an gcumas Gaeilge féinmheasta a thuairiscigh na mic léinn, léirítear an éagsúlacht atá ann idir na scileanna teanga, agus pléitear an bhearna atá ann idir cumas sa Ghaeilge agus úsáid na Gaeilge ar an gcampas.

### 2.2.2.1 Cumas féintuairiscithe

Chuir 65% de na freagróirí ar mic léinn iad leibhéal B1 nó níos airde ar a gcuid Gaeilge labhartha. 30% de na freagróirí ar mic léinn iad, chuir siad leibhéal B2 nó níos airde ar a gcuid Gaeilge labhartha. Ní dúirt ach 12% acu nach raibh aon Ghaeilge labhartha acu. Bhí ardchumas ag na freagróirí sna scileanna teanga eile freisin: dúirt 38% acu go raibh leibhéal B2 nó níos airde acu i léamh na Gaeilge; 26% i scríobh na Gaeilge agus 27% sa chluastuiscint.

### 2.2.1.3 Untapped staff proficiency

Despite these relatively strong proficiency levels, a large portion of staff with high ability reported not using Irish in their work. Half of those staff respondents who reported having level B2 or higher in spoken Irish said they used the language at work either less than once a month or never.

In Chemistry, for example, all four proficient respondents reported never using Irish at work. Similar trends appeared in Law, English, and the Library. This table outlines the departments and offices with the highest proportion of proficient Irish respondents never using Irish at work:

Table 2: Untapped staff proficiency

| Department          | Department respondents with B2+ in Irish | Number of proficient staff who never use Irish in work |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Chemistry           | 4  | 4 (100%)   |
| Law and Criminology | 7  | 3 (42.9%)  |
| Library             | 7  | 2 (28.6%)  |
| English             | 4  | 2 (50%)  |

A large majority of staff expressed interest in having more opportunities to use Irish on campus (72%). This aligns with student responses and suggests significant interest among staff in increased opportunities to use Irish.

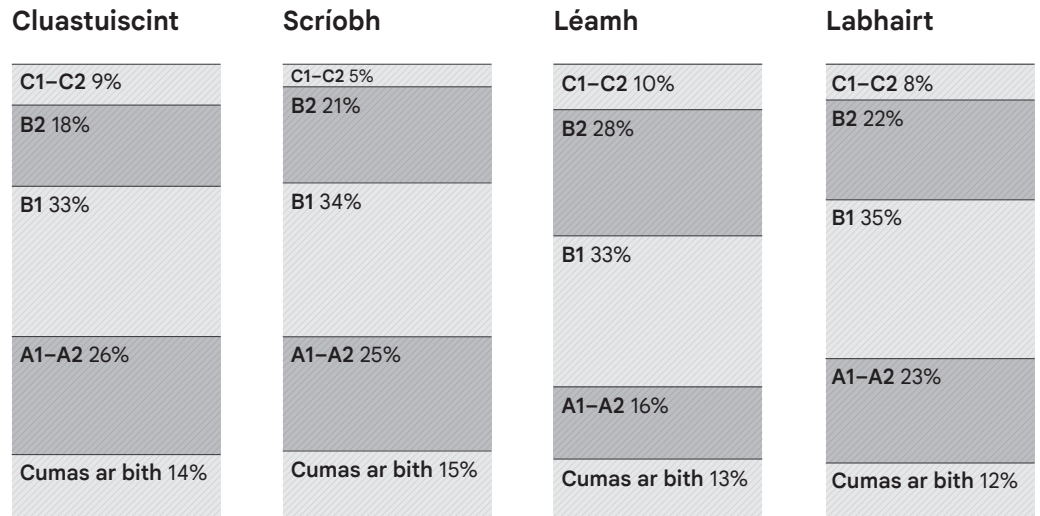
## 2.2.2 Student proficiency in Irish

This section outlines student self-reported Irish language proficiency, highlights variation across the four language skills, and explores the gap between competence and usage on campus.

### 2.2.2.1 Self-reported proficiency

Among student respondents, 65% described their spoken Irish as level B1 or above. 30% of student respondents described their spoken Irish as level B2 or higher. Just 12% reported having no spoken Irish at all. Proficiency was also strong across other skills: 38% professed B2 or higher in reading, 26% in writing, and 27% in listening.

#### Léaráid 4: Cumas Gaeilge féinmheasúnaithe na mac léinn



#### 2.2.2.2

#### Cumas faoi cheilt i measc na mac léinn

Ainneoin go bhfuil leibhéal cumais ard i measc na mac léinn, is minic nach n-úsáideann na daoine is cumasaí an Ghaeilge ar an gcampas. Thuairiscigh an chuid ba mhó (57%) acu siúd a bhfuil leibhéal B2 sa Ghaeilge labhartha acu nach n-úsáideann siad an teanga ar an gcampas riamh, nó níos lú ná uair amháin in aghaidh na míosa. Tá an-suim i measc na mac léinn sa Ghaeilge, áfach. D'aontaigh 73% de na mic léinn ar fad gur mhaith leo níos mó deiseanna a bheith acu chun an teanga a úsáid, rud a thugann le fios go bhfuil cumas agus suim i measc na mac léinn nach bhfuil leas bainte as fós.

#### Léaráid 5: “Ba mhór agam níos mó deiseanna Gaeilge a úsáid ar an gcampas.”

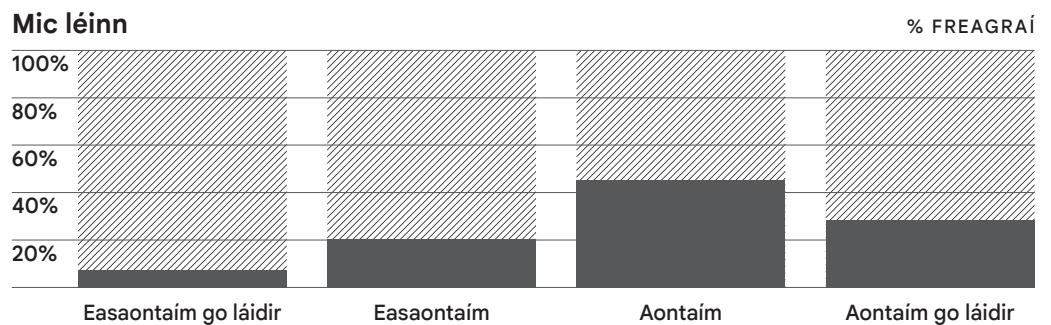
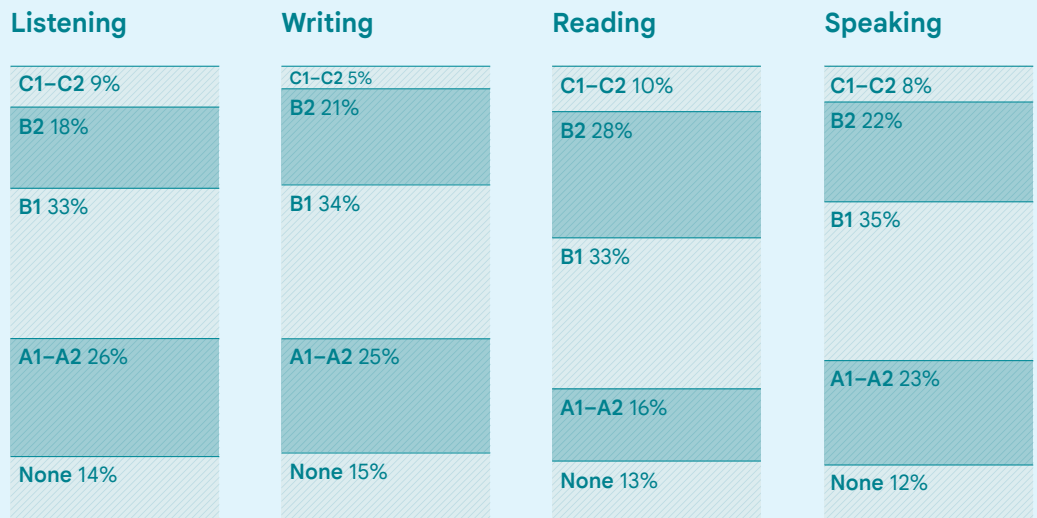


Figure 4: Self-reported student proficiency

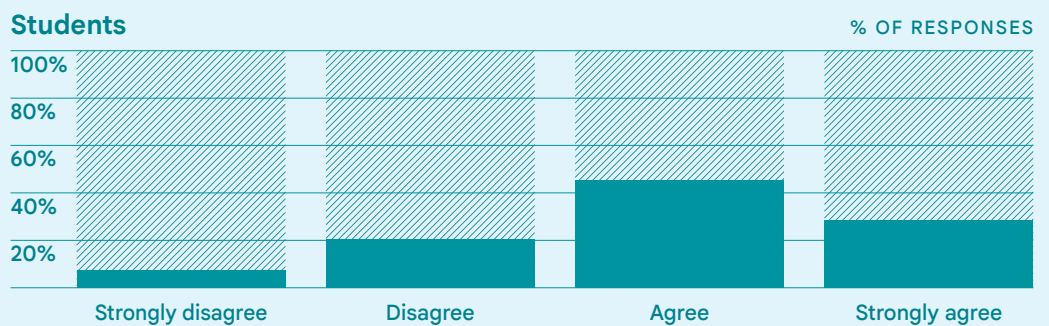


2.2.2.2

Untapped student potential

Despite high proficiency levels among students, Irish often remains unused even by proficient speakers. A majority (57%) of students with B2-level Irish or higher reported using it on campus less than once a month or never. However, interest in using Irish is substantial: 73% of all student respondents agreed they would like more opportunities to use the language. This suggests significant untapped potential for fostering an active Irish-speaking student community.

Figure 5: “I would like to have more opportunities to use Irish on campus.”





72%

2.2.1.3 Ba mhaith le mórchuid na mball foirne a d'fhreagair an suirbhé níos mó deiseanna a bheith acu chun an Ghaeilge a úsáid ar champas na hOllscoile (72%).



72%

2.2.1.3 A large majority of staff expressed interest in having more opportunities to use Irish on campus (72%).

## 2.3 Foghlaim na Gaeilge

Mar atá leagtha amach i gCuid 1.3, cuirtear cúrsaí Gaeilge ar fáil in OMN do bhaill foirne, do mhic léinn agus don phobal i gcoitinne ag leibhéil éagsúla cumais.

Cuireadh ceisteanna sna suirbhéanna maidir le foghlaim na Gaeilge. Fiafraíodh de mhic léinn agus baill foirne na hOllscoile an raibh siad ag foghlaim na Gaeilge ag an bpointe sin; cén chaoi; an mbeadh suim acu rang a dhéanamh agus cén cineál; agus, i gcás na mac léinn, an mbeadh suim acu modúl a dhéanamh i nGaeilge taobh amuigh de Scoil an Léinn Cheiltigh.

Déantar tuairisciú sa chuid seo ar thorthaí na gceisteanna sin agus ar shonraí ó agallaimh a bhain le foghlaim na Gaeilge. Déantar iniúchadh freisin ar an éileamh atá ann ar mhodúil nua a bheith ar fáil trí mheán na Gaeilge, agus an bhféadfaí a leithéid a sholáthar. Baineann Cuid 2.3.1 le foghlaim na Gaeilge i measc na mball foirne, agus baineann Cuid 2.3.2 leis na mic léinn.

### 2.3.1 Baill foirne agus foghlaim na Gaeilge

#### 2.3.1.1 Baill foirne atá ag foghlaim na Gaeilge faoi láthair

**Léargas:** *D'fhreagair 41% de na baill foirne go bhfuil siad ag déanamh iarracht feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge.*

As na 651 ball foirne a chomhlánaigh an suirbhé, dúirt go leor acu go bhfuil siad ag baint úsáid as bealaí éagsúla chun feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge. Ba í an fhoghlaim fhéintreoiraithe an bealach foghlama ba choitianta. Dúirt beagnach 30% de na baill foirne go bhfuil Duolingo agus ardáin eile á n-úsáid acu. Tá baill foirne ag freastal ar ranganna Gaeilge seach-churaclaim san ollscoil (67 duine) nó taobh amuigh den ollscoil (19 duine).

Rinne líon níos lú de na freagróirí a thuairisciú go mbíonn siad ag foghlaim na Gaeilge trí chomhrá (ochtar), trí a bheith ag éisteacht leis na meáin Ghaeilge (ochtar) nó trí na meáin shóisialta. Luaigh cúpla duine bealaí foghlama eile: a bheith ag cabhrú lena bpáistí lena n-obair bhaile (ceathrar), a bheith ag léamh (beirt) nó ag déanamh ióga trí mheán na Gaeilge (duine amháin).

#### 2.3.1.2 Baill foirne ar mhaith leo an Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim

**Léargas:** *Ba mhaith le 85% de na baill foirne a d'fhreagair an suirbhé feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge.*

Cuireadh ceist ar na baill foirne a raibh suim acu cúrsa Gaeilge a dhéanamh (68%; n=443/651 freagra bailí) cén cineál cúrsa ab fhéarr a d'fheilfeadh dóibh. Roghnaigh siad bealaí solúbtha foghlama a d'fheilfeadh don

## 2.3 Learning Irish

As outlined in Section 1.3, Irish language courses are offered in Maynooth University to staff, students and the public at a range of levels of proficiency.

The surveys included a number of questions about learning Irish. Staff and student respondents were asked whether they were currently learning Irish, and if so, by what means; whether they would be interested in taking an Irish course, and if so what kind; and, in the case of students, whether they would be interested in taking a module in Irish outside the School of Celtic Studies.

This section reports the results from these questions. It is supplemented by data from interviews with staff and students who were asked questions about learning Irish. The demand and feasibility of offering new modules through the medium of Irish is also investigated. Section 2.3.1 focusses on staff learning Irish and Section 2.3.2 on students.

### 2.3.1 Staff and Irish language learning

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#### 2.3.1.1 Staff currently learning Irish

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**Insight:** *41% of staff respondents answered that they are trying to improve their Irish.*

Among the 651 staff respondents, many reported engaging in multiple methods to improve their Irish. The most common approach was self-directed learning, with 181 staff (almost 30%) using platforms like Duolingo or independent study. Others attended extracurricular Irish classes at Maynooth University (67) or elsewhere (19).

A smaller number reported learning through conversation practice (8), listening to Irish-language media (8), or engaging with Irish content on social media (5) and television (5). A handful mentioned supporting children's homework (4), reading (2), or participating in events or activities through Irish, such as yoga (1).

#### 2.3.1.2 Staff who would like to learn Irish

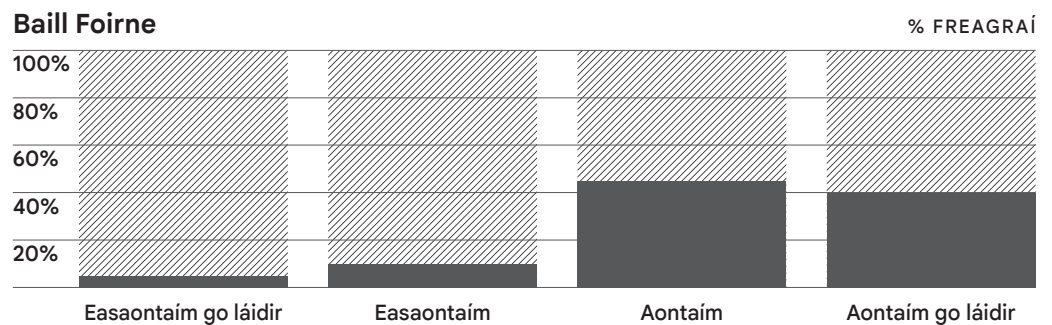
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**Insight:** *85% of staff respondents would like to improve their Irish.*

When staff were asked about Irish-language learning, around two thirds (68%; n=443/651 valid responses) said they would be interested in taking a course to improve their Irish. Among those interested, preferences pointed strongly towards flexible, accessible formats: the most popular option was

lá oibre: ba é an rogha ba mhó éileamh ranganna ag am lóin nó tar éis na hoibre (83%; n=369/443). Ina theannta sin, léirigh go leor acu suim i gcúrsa creidiúnaithe (60%; n=265/443), i gcúrsa Gaeltachta (54%; n=241/443) agus i ndianchúrsa, mar shampla cúrsa deireadh seachtaine, seachtaine nó coicise (53%; n=236/443). Bhí spéis ag beagnach leath acu freisin i sainchúrsa a bheadh bainteach lena gcuid oibre (48%; n=214/443). Tríd is tríd, tugann na torthaí sin le fios go mbeadh an t-éileamh ba láidre ar roghanna atá áisiúil agus inrochtana, agus ar chúrsaí ina bhfuil deiseanna soiléire dul chun cinn.

### Léaráid 6: “Ba mhaith liom feabhas a chur ar mo chuid Gaeilge.”

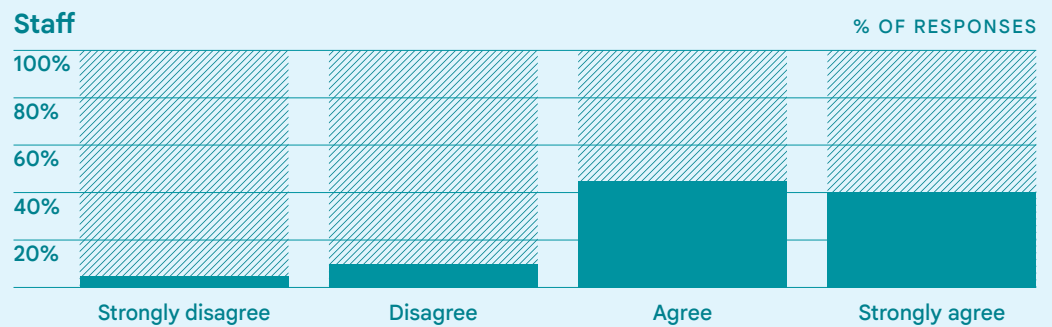


Tábla 3: An modh foghlama ab fhearr le baill foirne a bhfuil suim acu tabhairt faoi chúrsa Gaeilge

| Modh foghlama   | % na mball foirne |
|---|-------------------|
| Suim i ranganna ag am lóin nó tar éis na hoibre                       | 83%               |
| Suim i gcúrsa creidiúnaithe (a bhfuil cáilíocht ag baint leis)        | 60%               |
| Suim i gcúrsa Gaeltachta  | 54%               |
| Suim i ndianchúrsa (cúrsa deireadh seachtaine, seachtaine nó coicise) | 53%               |
| Suim i sainchúrsa a bheadh bainteach lena réimse oibre                | 48%               |

lunchtime or after-work provision (83%; n=369/443). There was also substantial interest in accredited courses (60%; n=265/443), Gaeltacht courses (54%; n=241/443), and intensive formats such as weekend, week-long or fortnight courses (53%; n=236/443), while almost half expressed interest in specialised courses related to their work (48%; n=214/443). Overall, this pattern suggests that demand is broad, and that uptake is likely to be strongest where provision fits around the working day and offers clear routes for progression.

**Figure 6: “I would like to improve my Irish.”**



**Table 3: Preferred learning method among staff interested in taking an Irish course**

| Learning method  | % of staff respondents |
|--|------------------------|
| Interested in lunchtime or after-work classes                            | 83%                    |
| Interested in an accredited course (with qualification)                  | 60%                    |
| Interested in a Gaeltacht course   | 54%                    |
| Interested in an intensive course (weekend, week-long or fortnight-long) | 53%                    |
| Interested in a specialised course related to field of work              | 48%                    |

## 2.3.1.3

## Na bacanna ar fhoghlaim na Gaeilge – baill foirne

Ba é an bac ba mhó a luaigh na baill foirne i gcomhthéacs fhoghlaim na Gaeilge ná easpa ama. Chuir roinnt mhaith ball foirne in iúl go raibh siad faoi bhrú leis an méid oibre a bhí acu cheana, brú a fhágann nach mbíonn siad in ann tabhairt faoi aon rud nua, foghlaim na Gaeilge san áireamh. Luaigh duine amháin:

*I did a few staff classes, but I never followed up [...] simply because I've so little time. That's one of the big problems, I mean, it's just so busy.* (FA2)

Agus dúirt duine eile:

*I work full time with young family... I don't have capacity to take [Irish classes] on, but I think it's great that [they're] offered.* (FP6)

Luadh go minic go raibh amchlár na ranganna Gaeilge atá ar fáil faoi láthair ina bhac praiticiúil. Is minic a bhíonn na seisiúin ar siúl le linn gnáthuaireanta oibre, nó ag amanna a thagann salach ar an ualach oibre atá ann cheana agus ar fhreagrachtaí pearsanta. Sna hagallaimh, dúirt na baill foirne gur fadhb sceidealaithe seachas easpa suime a bhí ag cur bac orthu. Mhol siad gur ghá am a chur i leataobh agus cúrsaí a chur ar siúl ag amanna réadúla chun níos mó ball foirne a spreagadh chun tabhairt faoi ranganna Gaeilge. Léirítear sa dá shliocht seo a leanas an dearcadh sin go soiléir:

*A lot of people ... would do the Irish language classes, but their schedule makes it quite difficult to do if you're busy because they're at lunchtime or online [...] If there was a commitment to giving people like a block of two hours or something were they could do [them], that [would be] a realistic assessment of what it takes for someone to do something like that.* (FP5)

*You see, the real problem is even with the training offered within the University, I don't have time to go on training courses. It's all during term time and any of the Irish stuff like the yoga and everything is during term time.* (FP7)

## 2.3.1.3

**Barriers to learning Irish – staff**

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The most frequently cited obstacle to learning Irish as mentioned by staff was a lack of time. Many staff members reported being overstretched with existing workloads, leaving little capacity to take on additional commitments like Irish classes. One commented that:

*I did a few staff classes, but I never followed up [...] simply because I've so little time. That that's one of the big problems, I mean, it's just so busy.* (AS2)

While another noted that:

*I work full time with young family... I don't have capacity to take [Irish classes] on, but I think it's great that [they're] offered.* (PS6)

The timing of the Irish classes currently available was frequently described as a practical barrier. Sessions often take place during core working hours, or at times that clash with existing workloads and personal responsibilities. In interviews, staff framed this less as a lack of interest and more as a question of scheduling, suggesting that meaningful participation would require protected time and course formats that better reflect the realities of the working day. The following two comments typify this view:

*A lot of people ... would do the Irish language classes, but their schedule makes it quite difficult to do if you're busy because they're at lunchtime or online [...] If there was a commitment to giving people like a block of two hours or something were they could do [them], that [would be] a realistic assessment of what it takes for someone to do something like that.* (PS5)

*You see, the real problem is even with the training offered within the University, I don't have time to go on training courses. It's all during term time and any of the Irish stuff like the yoga and everything is during term time.* (PS7)

Tugann na staitisticí agus ráitis sin le fios nach easpa spreagtha an deacracht is mó atá ag bunús na foirne, ach bacanna praiticiúla. Léirigh an fhoireann go soiléir go mbeadh siad sásta tabhairt faoin nGaeilge ach deiseanna a bheith ar fáil a d'fheilfeadh dá gcuid oibre. Ba iad an t-am cúitimh agus solúbthacht i sceideal na ranganna ba thábhachtaí acu chun go nglacfaidís páirt ar bhonn leanúnach.

I dteannta na srianta sceidil sin, thug na baill foirne le fios nach gcuirtear mórán dreasachtaí ar fáil chun tabhairt faoin nGaeilge. Bhraith daoine áirithe nach dtugtar dóthain aitheantais fhoirmiúil d'fhoghlaimoirí Gaeilge, agus mheas siad go nglacfadh níos mó daoine páirt dá mbeadh baint níos soiléire ann idir na cúrsaí agus an fhorbairt ghairmiúil, nó dá gcuirfí am cúitimh ar fáil chun tabhairt faoi chúrsa Gaeilge mar a luaitear thuas.

Luaigh líon beag daoine gur bac eile í an mhuinín. Cheangail na daoine sin an easpa muiníne leis an drochthaithe a bhí acu roimhe seo agus iad ag foghlaim na teanga, nó le heaspa deiseanna úsáide a bheith acu le blianta beaga anuas. Is é is tábhachtaí do na baill foirne áirithe sin ná am a bheith acu chun tabhairt faoi ranganna, cinnte, ach ina theannta sin go mbeadh na ranganna céanna tacúil, praiticiúil, agus nach mbeadh brú ag baint leo.



Taken together, these statistics and comments suggest that the challenge for most staff is not motivation but feasibility. Staff expressed a clear willingness to engage with Irish when opportunities are structured around workload patterns, with time in lieu and flexible scheduling emerging as key conditions for sustained participation.

Alongside scheduling constraints, staff also pointed to a lack of institutional incentives. Some felt there was limited formal recognition or reward for learning Irish, and suggested that participation would be higher if courses were more clearly tied to professional development, or practical supports such as the aforementioned time off in lieu.

A smaller number of interviewees highlighted confidence as a barrier. Low confidence in Irish was often linked to negative past experiences of learning the language, or simply to having had little opportunity to use it in recent years. For these staff, the issue was not only finding time, but accessing learning in a way that felt supportive, low-pressure, and achievable.

## 2.3.2

## Mic léinn agus foghlaim na Gaeilge

### 2.3.2.1

### Suim na mac léinn i bhfoghlaim na Gaeilge

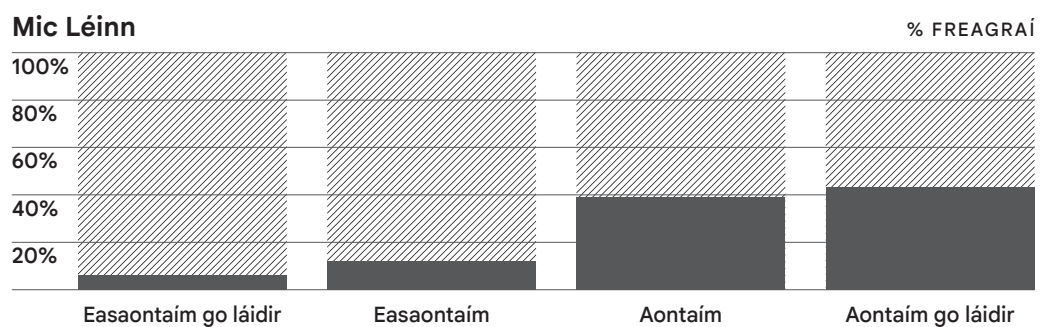
**Léargas:** *Ba mhaith le 82% de na mic léinn a d'fhreagair an suirbhé feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge.*

I measc na mac léinn a raibh suim acu tabhairt faoi chúrsa Gaeilge, ba iad na roghanna ba choitianta ranganna ag am lóin nó um thráthnóna, agus cúrsaí creidiúnaithe. Bhí éileamh suntasach freisin ar roghanna a bheadh ceangailte lena réimsí staidéir. Bhí suim mhór acu i gcúrsaí Gaeltachta chomh maith, agus cé gur léiríodh rud beag ní ba lú spéise i ndianchúrsaí, bhí formhór na mac léinn fós i bhfách leo.

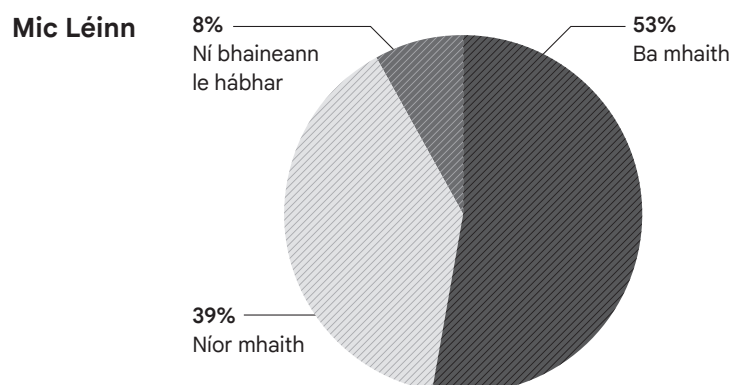
Dúirt beagán os cionn leath (53%; n=1426/2678) na mac léinn a d'fhreagair an suirbhé go mbeadh suim acu cúrsa Gaeilge a dhéanamh. Chuir na daoine sin suim mhór i roghanna solúbtha agus inrochtana: ba iad na roghanna ba mhó éileamh ranganna ag am lóin nó sa tráthnóna (78%; n=1114/1426) agus cúrsa creidiúnaithe lena mbainfeadh cáilíocht fhoirmiúil (76%; n=1085/1426).

Bhí suim mhór acu i roghanna foghlama a bheadh bainteach lena réimse staidéir féin (69%; n=984/1426) agus roghanna tumoideachais sa Ghaeltacht (63%; 898/1426). Bhí spéis beagán níos ísle ag na mic léinn i ndianchúrsaí deireadh seachtaine nó samhraidh, ach fós féin bhí suim ag níos mó ná leath na mac léinn sin sna roghanna sin (55%; n=785/1426).

#### Léaráid 7: “Ba mhaith liom feabhas a chur ar mo chuid Gaeilge.”



#### Léaráid 8: “Ar mhaith leat tabhairt faoi chúrsa le feabhas a chur ar do chuid Gaeilge?”



## 2.3.2 Students and Irish language learning

### 2.3.2.1 Student interest in learning Irish

**Insight: 82% of student respondents would like to improve their Irish.**

Student respondents showed the strongest preference for lunchtime or evening classes and accredited courses, alongside substantial demand for options linked to their fields of study. Interest was also high in Gaeltacht courses, while intensive formats attracted comparatively lower, though still majority, support.

Just over half of student respondents (53%; n=1426/2678) said they would be interested in taking an Irish course. Among those interested, preferences pointed strongly towards flexible, accessible formats: the most popular option was lunchtime or evening lessons (78%; n=1114/1426), closely followed by an accredited course leading to a formal qualification (76%; n=1085/1426).

There was also substantial interest in more tailored or immersive approaches, including specialist courses linked to students' fields of study (69%; n=984/1426) and Gaeltacht courses (63%; n=898/1426). Interest was somewhat lower for intensive formats such as weekend or summer courses, though a majority still expressed support (55%; n=785/1426).

Figure 7: "I would like to improve my Irish."

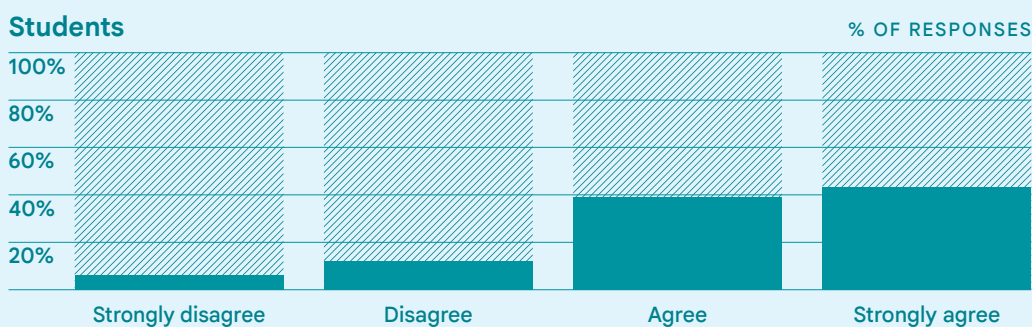
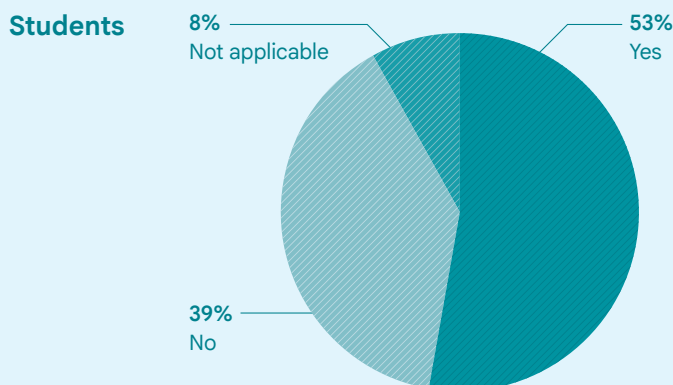


Figure 8: "Would you be interested in taking a course to improve your Irish?"



**Tábla 4: An modh foghlama ab fhearr le mic léinn a bhfuil suim acu tabhairt faoi chúrsa Gaeilge**

| Modh foghlama   | % na mac léinn a d'fhreagair an suirbhé |
|---|---|
| Suim i ranganna ag am lóin nó um thráthnóna                         | 78%                                     |
| Suim i gcúrsa creidiúnaithe (le cáilíocht)                          | 76%                                     |
| Suim i gcúrsa speisialaithe a bheadh bainteach lena réimse staidéir | 69%                                     |
| Suim i gcúrsa Gaeltachta  | 63%                                     |
| Suim i ndianchúrsa (cúrsa deireadh seachtaine nó cúrsa samhraidh)   | 55%                                     |

#### 2.3.2.2 Mic léinn atá ag foghlaim na Gaeilge

Thuairiscigh 56% de na mic léinn a d'fhreagair an suirbhé (1,501 as 2,678) go bhfuil siad ag déanamh iarracht ghníomhach feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge. I measc na mac léinn atá ag foghlaim Gaeilge faoi láthair, is é an féinstaidéar an cur chuige is coitianta, agus dúirt 1,234 duine (46.1%) go bhfuil siad ag úsáid leithéidí Duolingo, leabhar, nó cineálacha eile foghlaim neamhspleách. Tá líon níos lú ag foghlaim na Gaeilge mar chuid de chéim ollscoile (285; 10.6%). Tá daoine eile ag freastal ar ranganna seach-churaclaim, in OMN (98; 3.7%) nó in áit eile (84; 3.1%).

I measc na modhanna eile nár luadh chomh minic sin bhí Gaeilge a labhairt le muintir nó le cairde agus éisteacht le hábhar as Gaeilge ar nós: ceol, raidió nó podchraoltaí. Léiríonn na patrúin sin go bhfuil claonadh láidir i measc na mac léinn i dtreo roghanna foghlama solúbtha agus féinstiúrtha. Ba cheart iad a thuiscint i gcomhthéacs an bhrú ama agus na ndeacrachtaí sceidealaithe a phléitear sa chéad chuid eile.

#### 2.3.2.3 Na bacanna atá ar fhoghlaim na Gaeilge – mic léinn

Tugann tuairimí na mac léinn le fios go bhfuil an-tionchar ag líon beag cúinsí praiticiúla agus ag taithí na mac léinn maidir le cé acu atá an Ghaeilge indéanta agus inrochtana dar leo agus cé acu is fiú nó nach fiú tosaíocht a dhéanamh di.

##### **Srianta ama agus dualgais in iomaíocht lena chéile**

Ba é an bac ba mhinice a luaigh na mic léinn nach mbíonn am ann don Ghaeilge agus a n-amchlár lán cheana. Luaigh mic léinn an brú a bhaineann le hobair chúrsa, obair pháirtaimseartha agus dualgais phearsanta i measc na rudaí a chuireann bac orthu tabhairt faoi aon fhoghlaim bhreise. Mar a dúirt freagróir amháin:

*STEM students can be busy so it's harder for us to find time to learn Irish.* (Suirbhé na mac léinn)

**Table 4: Preferred learning methods among students interested in an Irish course**

| Learning method  | % of student respondents |
|--|--------------------------|
| Interested in lunchtime or evening lessons                   | 78%                      |
| Interested in an accredited course (with qualification)      | 76%                      |
| Interested in a specialised course related to field of study | 69%                      |
| Interested in a Gaeltacht course                             | 63%                      |
| Interested in an intensive course (weekend or summer)        | 55%                      |

### 2.3.2.2

#### Students who are learning Irish

56% of student respondents (1,501 of 2,678) reported that they are actively trying to improve their Irish. Among students currently learning Irish, the most common approach is self-study, with 1,234 respondents (46.1%) using methods such as Duolingo, books, or other forms of independent learning. A smaller number are learning Irish through formal education as part of a university degree (285; 10.6%), while others attend extracurricular classes, either at Maynooth University (98; 3.7%) or elsewhere (84; 3.1%).

Less frequently mentioned methods include speaking Irish with family or friends and listening to Irish audio content like music, radio, or podcasts. These patterns highlight a strong tendency towards flexible, self-directed learning options among students, and should be understood in the context of the time and scheduling pressures outlined in the next section.

### 2.3.2.3

#### Barriers to learning Irish – students

Student comments point to a small number of recurring practical and experiential factors that shape whether Irish feels doable, accessible, and worth prioritising.

##### Time and competing demands

The most frequently cited issue was simply fitting Irish into an already full timetable. Students described coursework pressures, part-time work, and personal commitments as limiting their capacity to take on additional learning. As one respondent noted:

*STEM students can be busy so it's harder for us to find time to learn Irish.* (Student survey)

Thug mic léinn áirithe le fios gur fusa an Ghaeilge a fhágáil i leataobh mura bhfuil sí ina modúl creidiúnaithe, go háirithe nuair a thagann spriocdhátaí eile chun cinn. Tarlaíonn an rud céanna sna ranganna seach-churaclaim don fhoireann ina dteipeann ar an tinreamh, uaireanta, de réir mar a théann an téarma teagaisc ar aghaidh.

### **Easpa taithí**

Dúirt cuid mhór mac léinn go raibh deacrachtaí acu agus iad ag iarraidh an Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim mar gheall air nach raibh mórán taithí acu ar an teanga, nó toisc go raibh drocheispéireas acu léi ar scoil, rudaí a chuireann isteach ar a muinín agus a fhágann go mbíonn faitíos orthu tabhairt fúithi arís. Mar a dúirt mac léinn amháin:

*Irish was ruined for me by the secondary school way of teaching... I possess only a primary level understanding of the language.*

(Suirbhé na mac léinn)

### **Deiseanna chun an Ghaeilge a úsáid gan bhrú**

Chuir roinnt mac léinn béim ar an tábhacht a bhaineann leis an bhfoghlaim teanga a bheith sóisialta. Luaigh mic léinn áirithe go mbíonn drogall orthu Gaeilge a labhairt de dheasca imní faoi bhotúin a dhéanamh nó toisc nach bhfuil aithne acu ar dhaoine eile le Gaeilge le cleachtadh leo. Léiríonn na tuairimí sin an luach a bhaineann leis an *tearmann teanga* inar féidir an teanga a úsáid go neamhfhoirmiúil; mar a dúirt mac léinn amháin:

*[I] would love to see more Irish in use and to take the fear out of it for people.* (Suirbhé na mac léinn)

### **Dreasachtaí agus aitheantas**

Mhol mic léinn áirithe gur cheart go mbeadh creidiúnú nó dreasachtaí ag baint le cúrsaí Gaeilge. Ba é a mhol mac léinn amháin “Make basic Irish a compulsory course across departments.” Is cosúil go dtiteann an Ghaeilge síos ord tosaíochtaí roinnt mac léinn nuair nach dtugtar aitheantas curaclaim d’fhoghlaim na Gaeilge.

### **Daoine a chur ar an eolas faoin soláthar reatha**

An-chuid de na hacmhainní agus áiseanna foghlama a éilíodh i suirbhé na mac léinn, tá siad á gcur ar fáil cheana féin ag Lárionad na Gaeilge – ranganna Gaeilge le haghaidh tosaitheoirí ina measc. Baineann an cheist sin le cén bealach is fearr le heolas a scaipeadh faoi ranganna agus deiseanna eile ina measc siúd is mó a mbeadh spéis acu iontu. Tugtar moltaí faoin scaipeadh eolais a fheabhsú i gCuid 3.1.3 den tuarascáil.

Others implied that when Irish is not a credit-bearing module, it is easier to drop when deadlines accumulate. The same phenomenon is sometimes attested in extracurricular staff classes as attendance declines as the teaching term progresses.

#### **Lack of experience**

A second theme related to previous exposure. Some students reported that they were approaching Irish with little experience, while others associated it with negative school experiences, which undermined confidence and made re-engagement feel daunting. One student commented:

*Irish was ruined for me by the secondary school way of teaching... I possess only a primary level understanding of the language.*

(Student survey)

#### **Opportunities to use Irish without pressure**

Students also highlighted the social side of language learning. A number of comments suggested that reluctance to speak Irish often stems from fear of making mistakes or from having no peer group to practise with. These concerns point to the value *breathing spaces* where Irish can be used informally; as one student commented,

*[I] would love to see more Irish in use and to take the fear out of it for people.* (Student survey)

#### **Incentives and recognition**

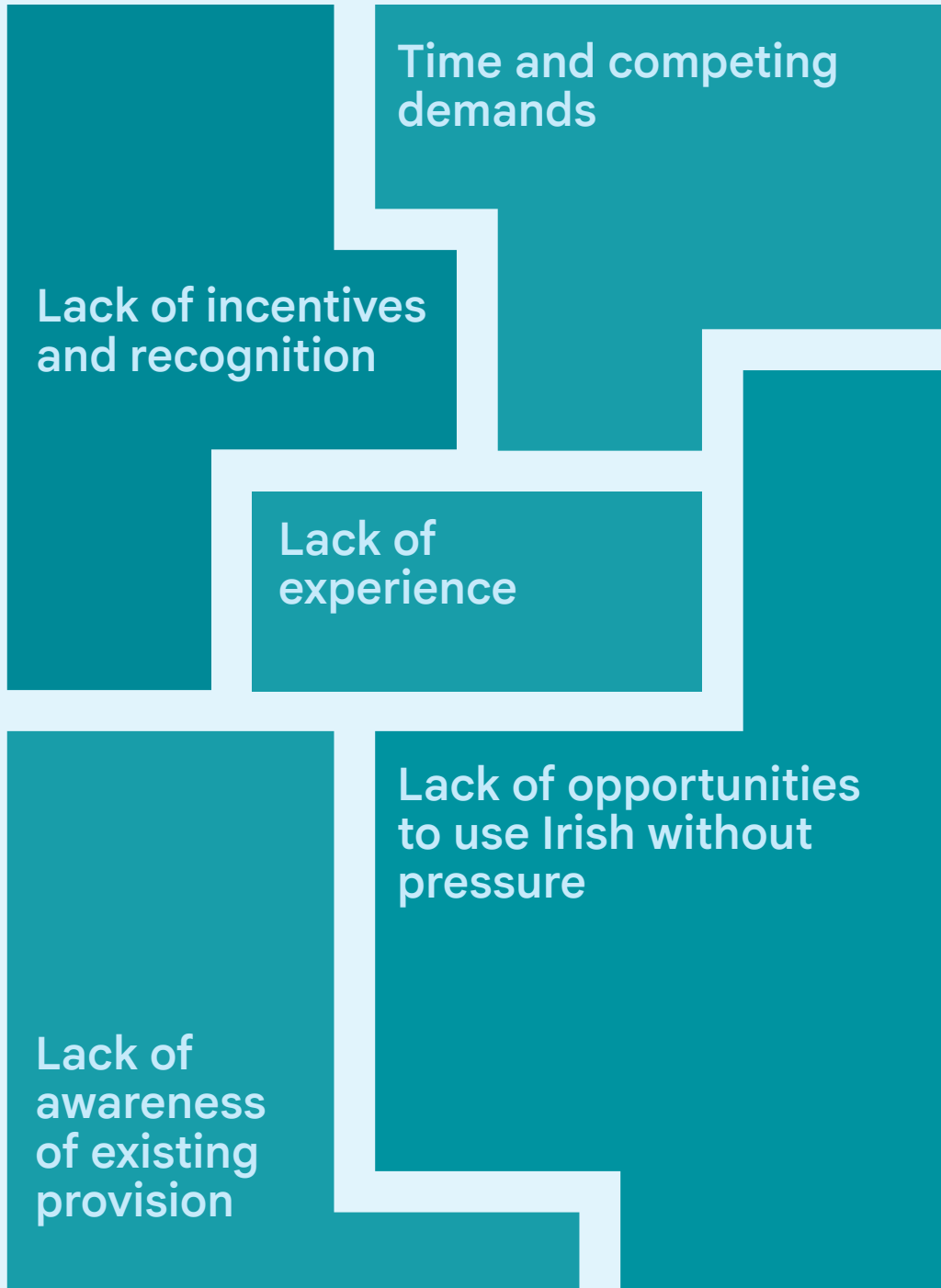
Some respondents argued that Irish courses should carry accreditation or be supported by clearer incentives. One student suggested: "Make basic Irish a compulsory course across departments." This indicates that, for some students, Irish may slip down the list of priorities where it is not recognised within the curriculum.

#### **Raising awareness of existing provision**

It is also worth noting that many of the resources and learning supports requested in the student survey, including free beginner classes, are already provided by Lárionad na Gaeilge. This points to a related issue: how best to publicise existing classes and opportunities so that they reach those who would benefit most. Recommendations on improving information sharing are addressed in Section 3.1.3 of the report.



2.3.2.3 Na bacanna atá ar fhoghlaim na Gaeilge (Mic Léinn)



2.3.2.3 Barriers to learning Irish (Students)

## 2.3.2.4

## Modúil trí mheán na Gaeilge

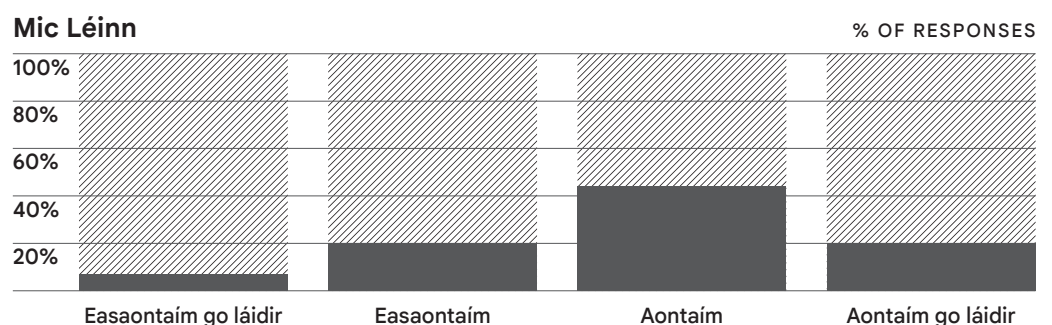
Aithníonn na mic léinn go bhfuil buntáiste ag baint leis an nGaeilge sa saol proifisiúnta: d’aontaigh 65% de na mic léinn go gcuirfeadh an teanga feabhas ar a ndeiseanna gairme. Ag an am céanna, tá suim nach beag acu i modúil a dhéanamh trí mheán na Gaeilge taobh amuigh de Scoil an Léinn Cheiltigh (22%; n=578). Díol spéise an t-ardráta spéise a léiríodh sa deis sin i Scoil an Dlí, i Scoil an Ghnó, agus i Ranna na Staire agus an Oideachais.

Is fiú a lua freisin go bhfuil líon suntasach freagróirí i Scoil an Ghnó ar cuireadh oideachas lán-Ghaeilge orthu agus a dúirt go bhfuil an Ghaeilge ar a dtoil acu, ach a deir nach mbaineann siad úsáid ar bith as an nGaeilge ar an gcampas. Tugann sé sin le fios go bhféadfaí níos mó deiseanna a chruthú chun an Ghaeilge a úsáid ar an gcampas, go háirithe trí mhodúil a chur ar fáil trí mheán na Gaeilge ionas go mbeadh an teanga mar chuid de ghnáthshaoil staidéir na mac léinn sin.

Níl ach líon teoranta modúl ar fáil trí mheán na Gaeilge in institiúidí ardoideachais in Éirinn. De réir *Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge 2010–2030*, “caithfidh caighdeán ard a bheith ag baint le hoideachas tríú leibhéal trí mheán na Gaeilge agus caithfear é a sholáthar ar bhealach straitéiseach agus comhordaithe,” agus ba cheart “srian a chur le dúbailt soláthair go dtí suíomh amháin nó dhá shuíomh ar a mhéid” (Rialtas na hÉireann 2010: 29). Is léir an buntáiste, mar sin, a d’fhéadfadh a bheith ag OMN dá gcuirfí modúil i réimsí den ghnó, dlí nó stair ar fáil inti trí mheán na Gaeilge. Léríonn an spéis a bhí ag na mic léinn ina leithéid de chúrsa gurb iomaí deis atá ann an soláthar a fhorbairt sna réimsí sin.

Is suntasach na deiseanna atá ann freisin modúil trí mheán na Gaeilge a fhorbairt i réimsí a bhaineann le sláinte ó tharla gur osclaíodh Scoil Altranais Ollscoil Mhá Nuad in 2025. Is í Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte (FSS) an fostóir is mó san earnáil phoiblí in Éirinn, agus luaitear sa *Plean Náisiúnta um Sheirbhísí Poiblí Ghaeilge 2024–2030* go leanfaidh an FSS uirthi ag obair, ar leibhéal sinsearach, chun teacht ar bhealaí nuálacha chun líon agus caighdeán na seirbhísí Gaeilge a mhéadú agus a fheabhsú (Rialtas na hÉireann 2024: 35). Mar sin, is ionann an Scoil Altranais nua agus deis straitéiseach le go mbeidh an t-oideachas trí mheán na Gaeilge ag teacht le riachtanais na seirbhíse poiblí.

## Léaráid 9: “Is buntáiste í an Ghaeilge i gcomhthéacs deiseanna gairme.”



2.3.2.4 Irish-medium modules

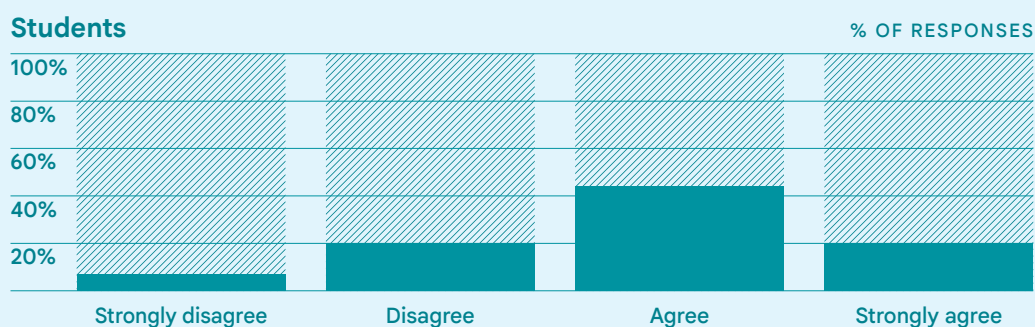
There is broad recognition among students that Irish can support their careers: 65% of student respondents indicated that the language would enhance professional opportunities. At the same time, there is substantial interest in taking modules through the medium of Irish outside the School of Celtic Studies (22%; n=578), with particularly strong demand reported in the Schools of Law and Business and in the Departments of History and Education.

It is also notable that a substantial number of respondents in the School of Business attended Irish-medium education and consider themselves proficient speakers of Irish, yet report never using Irish on campus. This points to an opportunity to create meaningful Irish-language domains for use, particularly through curriculum-based provision to those proficient students.

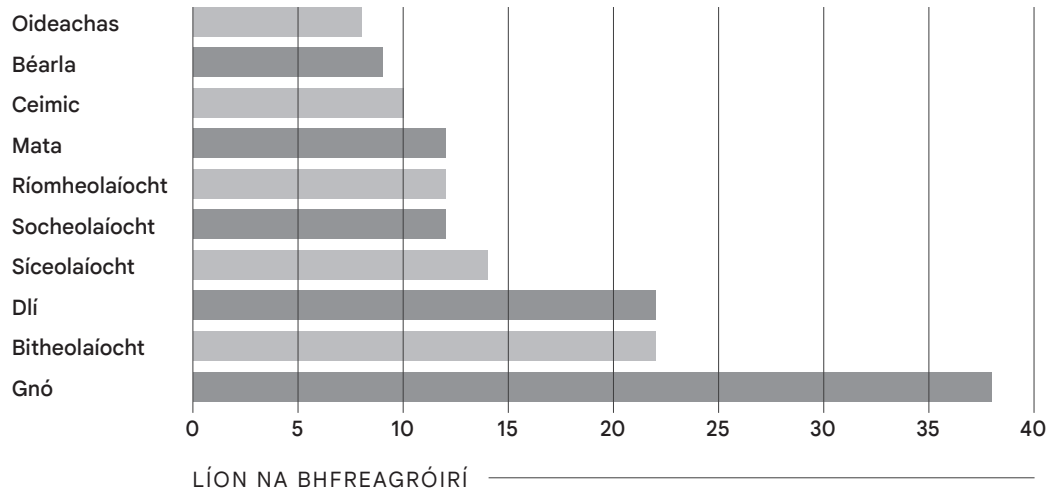
At present, the availability of Irish-medium modules across Irish higher education remains limited. The *20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010–2030* notes that third-level provision through Irish should be “of high quality and delivered in a strategic and coordinated way” and should focus on developing specialised provision in individual institutions, with duplication restricted to one or two locations (Government of Ireland 2010: 29). In this context, the development of Irish-medium modules in unique areas of Business, Law or History could give MU a distinctive advantage. Given the level of student interest at Maynooth University, there is clear scope to develop targeted provision in these areas.

There is also significant potential to expand Irish-medium provision in health-related disciplines, particularly in light of the opening of Maynooth University’s School of Nursing in 2025. The Health Service Executive (HSE) is the largest employer in the Irish public sector, and the *National Plan for Irish Language Public Services 2024–2030* notes that the HSE will continue to engage at senior level to identify innovative ways to increase both the number and quality of services available through Irish (Government of Ireland 2024: 35). The new School of Nursing therefore presents a strategic opportunity to align Irish-medium training with the needs of the public service.

Figure 9: “Learning Irish is beneficial for career opportunities.”



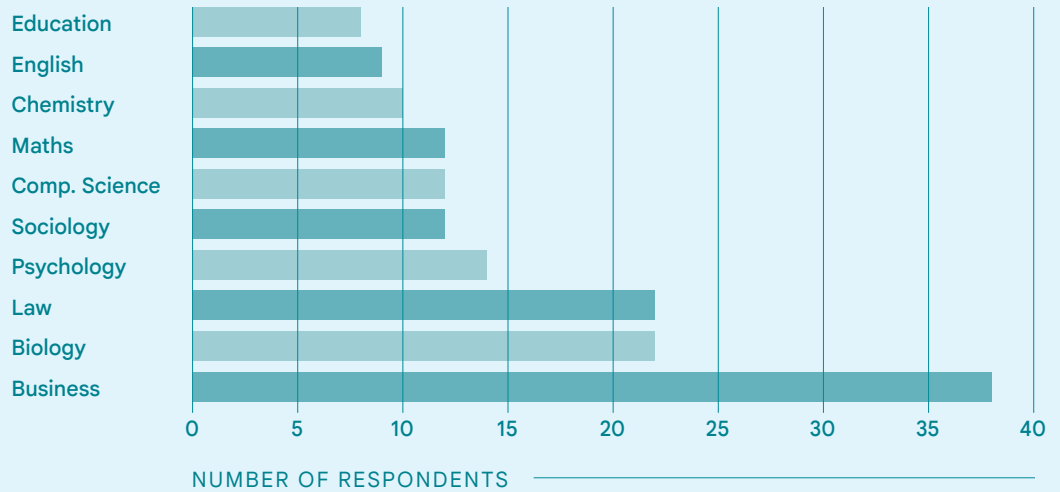
### Léaráid 10: Iardhaltaí Gaelscoileanna nach n-úsáideann an Ghaeilge riamh ar an gcampas



Tá Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (Coláiste Náisiúnta na Breatnaise) ar thús cadhnaíochta maidir le hoideachas trí mheán mionteanga a chur chun cinn ag an tríú leibhéal. Is eagraíocht náisiúnta é an Coleg a oibríonn i gcomhar le hollscoileanna na Breataine Bige chun teagasc trí mheán na Breatnaise a phleanáil agus a fhorbairt, i ranna teanga agus i réimsí eile nach iad. Tacaíonn an Coleg le forbairt modúl agus clár nua; cuireann sé maoiniú ar fáil chun go gcuirfí leis an oideachas Breatnaise; agus cuireann sé scoláireachtaí ar fáil. Cur chuige comhordaithe trasinstitiúideach atá ag an Coleg, cur chuige a d'fhéadfaí a leanúint i gcomhthéacs Ollscoil na hÉireann. Déantar tuilleadh plé ar an gceist sin i gCuid 3.1.2.

**Ba mhaith le 82% de na mic léinn a d'fhreagair an suirbhé feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge, agus thuairiscigh 56% de na mic léinn a d'fheagair an suirbhé go bhfuil siad ag déanamh iarracht ghníomhach feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge.**

**Figure 10: Student respondents who attended Irish-medium schools but never use Irish on campus.**



Finally, the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (National Welsh College) in Wales offers a useful model for supporting minority-language provision at third level. The Coleg is a national body that works across Welsh universities to plan and grow Welsh-medium teaching beyond language departments, supporting the development of new modules and programmes, funding Welsh-medium academic capacity, and providing shared resources and student supports such as scholarships. Its coordinated, cross-institutional approach may be particularly relevant in the Irish context, including within the National University of Ireland framework, and is discussed further in Section 3.1.2.

**82% of student respondents would like to improve their Irish, and 56% of student respondents reported that they are actively trying to improve their Irish.**

## 2.4 Seirbhísí Gaeilge

I gCuid 1.5.1 den tuarascáil seo leagadh amach na dualgais atá ar OMN mar institiúid phoiblí faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla agus an ardaidhm atá sa reachtaíocht sin go mbeidh an earnáil phoiblí dátheangach amach anseo. Déantar achoimre sa chuid seo ar an éileamh atá ar sheirbhísí Gaeilge do mhic léinn agus do bhaill foirne. Fiosraítear an mbeadh sé d'acmhainn ag an Ollscoil a leithéid de sheirbhísí a chur ar fáil cheana féin; agus cad a bheadh ag teastáil chun an t-éileamh a shásamh.

### 2.4.1 Seirbhísí do mhic léinn

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*Léargas: Tá éileamh suntasach i measc na mac léinn a d'fhreagair an suirbhé ar sheirbhísí ollscoile Gaeilge (n=1342, 50%).*

Dúirt 95% de na freagróirí a tógadh sa Ghaeltacht go mbainfidís úsáid as seirbhísí do mhic léinn trí mheán na Gaeilge (n = 36 / 38). Dúirt 71.6% de na freagróirí a raibh Gaeilge labhartha acu ag leibhéal B2 nó níos airde go mbainfidís úsáid as seirbhísí mac léinn trí mheán na Gaeilge (n = 571/789).

### 2.4.2 Seirbhísí do bhaill foirne

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*Léargas: Tá éileamh measartha i measc na mball foirne a d'fhreagair an suirbhé ar sheirbhísí foirne Gaeilge (n=184, 28% de na freagróirí; thart ar 13% de na baill foirne uile).*

Níos mó ná 50% de na baill foirne ar tógadh sa Ghaeltacht iad, bhainfidís úsáid as seirbhísí ollscoile i nGaeilge (n=7/13; 53.8%). Dúirt 60.7% de na baill foirne a bhfuil leibhéal B2 acu sa Ghaeilge labhartha, nó níos airde, go mbainfidís úsáid as seirbhísí ollscoile i nGaeilge. Is dócha, mar sin, go dtiocfaidh méadú ar an éileamh ar sheirbhísí Gaeilge do bhaill foirne de réir mar a mhéadóidh líon na mball foirne a bhfuil an Ghaeilge ar a dtoil acu de réir na riachtanas reachtúil.

### 2.4.3 An fhorbairt ghairmiúil

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Tá ról tábhachtach ag an bhforbairt ghairmiúil i leathnú sholáthar na seirbhísí Gaeilge ar champas. Déantar achoimre sa chuid seo ar an spéis a léirigh na baill foirne maidir le feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge agus an teanga a úsáid ina ról féin san ollscoil; an mbeidís in ann an teanga a úsáid ina ról cheana; na bacanna atá rompu agus cén tacaíocht atá ag teastáil uathu.

## 2.4 Irish-medium services

Section 1.5.1 of this report outlined the obligations on MU as a public body under the Official Languages Act and the aspirations to a fully bilingual public sector enshrined in that legislation. This section outlines the demand for Irish-medium student and staff services; the current capacity for providing these services; and steps that can be taken in order to satisfy the demand.

### 2.4.1 Student services

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*Insight: There is a substantial demand among student survey respondents for Irish-medium student services (n=1342, 50%).*

95% of student respondents who grew up in the Gaeltacht said that they would make use of Irish-medium student services (n=36/38). 71.6% of student respondents with level B2 or above in spoken Irish said that they would make use of Irish-medium student services (n=571/789).

### 2.4.2 Staff services

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*Insight: There is a moderate demand for Irish-medium staff services among staff survey respondents (n=184; 28% of respondents; approximately 13% of the total staff population).*

Over 50% of staff raised in the Gaeltacht would make use of university services in Irish (n=7/13; 53.8%). 60.7% (74/122) of staff respondents with B2 level spoken Irish or higher said that they would make use of university services in Irish. The demand for staff services through Irish is therefore likely to increase as the number of staff who are proficient in Irish increases according to statutory requirements.

### 2.4.3 Professional development

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Professional development plays a key role in expanding Irish-medium service capacity on campus. This section outlines the interest that staff reported in improving and using their Irish in their role; their current ability to do so; the barriers they face; and the kinds of support that could enable wider use.

*“Bhainfinn úsáid as seirbhísí trí mheán na Gaeilge do mhic léinn san Ollscoil, dá mbeidís ar fáil.”*

---

D’aontaigh

**50%**

de na mic léinn

*“I would use Irish-medium student services in the University, if available.”*

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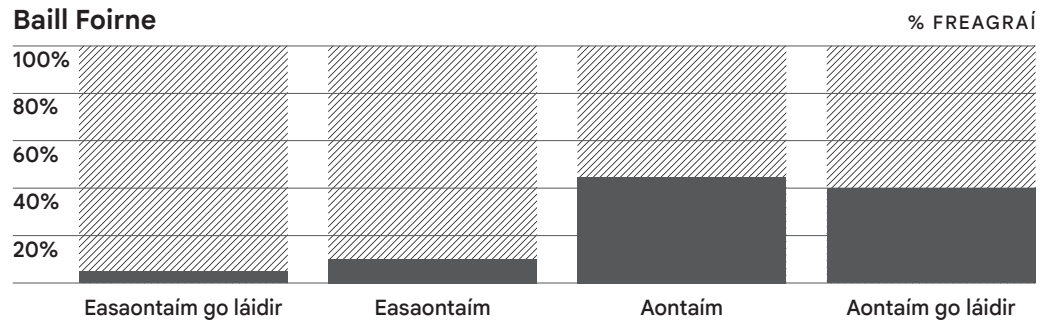
50%

of student respondents agreed

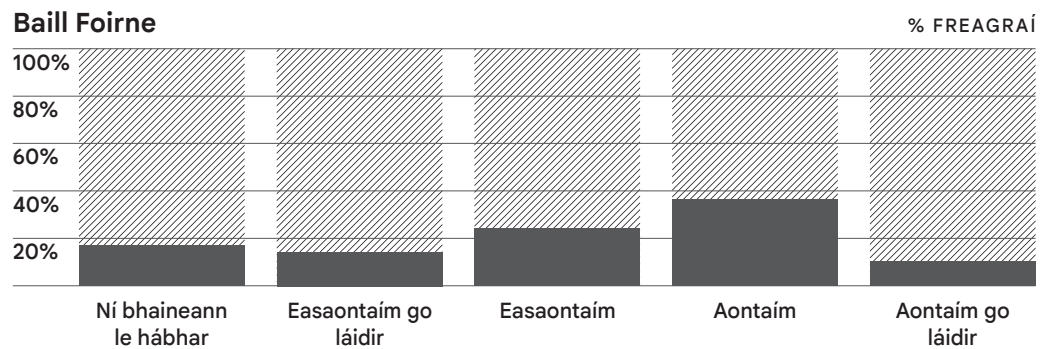
### 2.4.3.1 Úsáid na Gaeilge san áit oibre

Léargas: *Bheadh suim ag 85% de na freagróirí feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge agus bheadh suim ag 45% acu an Ghaeilge a úsáid ina ról.*

Léaráid 11: *“Ba mhaith liom feabhas a chur ar mo chuid Gaeilge.”*



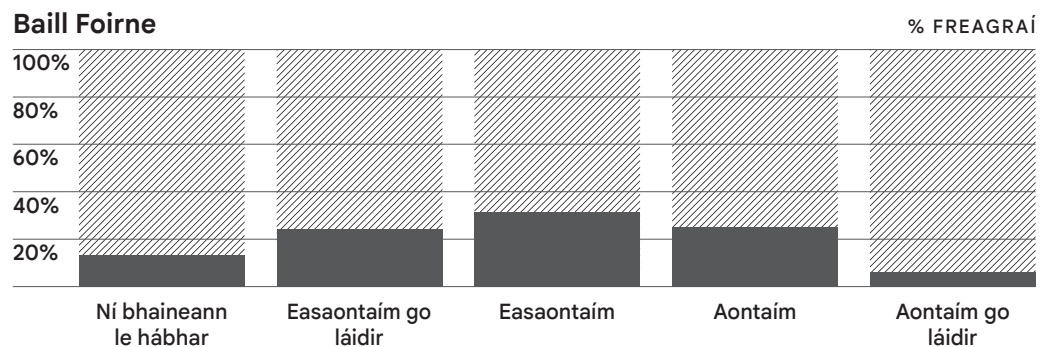
Léaráid 12: *“Bheadh spéis agam Gaeilge a úsáid i mo ról.”*



### 2.4.3.2 Cumas reatha na foirne maidir le seirbhísí a chur ar fáil trí mheán na Gaeilge

Ainneoin go bhfuil an-suim ag na freagróirí an Ghaeilge a úsáid ina gcuid oibre féin, braitheann an-chuid acu nach bhfuil na scileanna cearta acu go fóill. D’aontaigh 31% de na freagróirí go bhféadfaidís an teanga a úsáid ina ról cheana, ach d’esaontaigh 68% acu nó cheap siad nár bhain an cheist le hábhar.

Léaráid 13: *“D’fhéadfainn cuid de mo ról a dhéanamh trí mheán na Gaeilge.”*



### 2.4.3.1 Using Irish in the workplace

Insight: 85% of staff respondents would like to improve their Irish, and 45% of staff respondents would be interested in using Irish in their role.

Figure 11: “I would like to improve my Irish.”

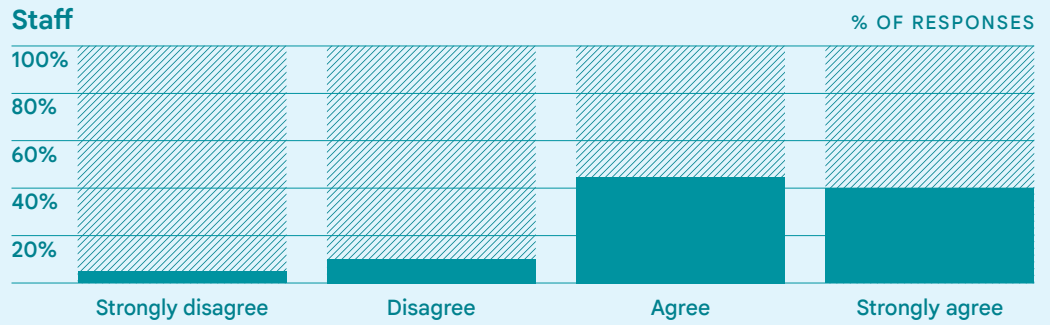
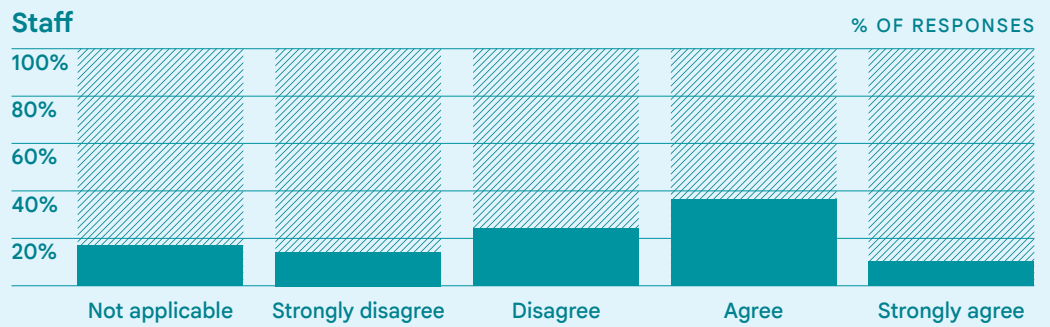


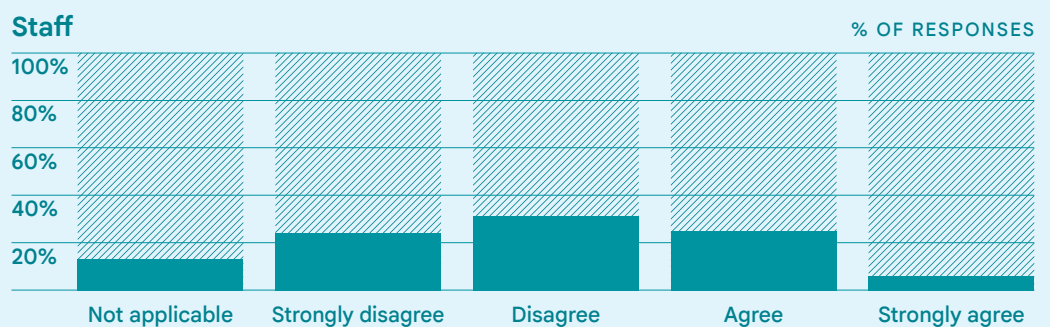
Figure 12: “I would be interested in using Irish in my role.”



### 2.4.3.2 Current capacity to provide Irish-medium services

Despite the great interest in using Irish in work, many staff respondents feel that they currently lack the skills necessary to do so. 31% of staff agreed that they would be able to use Irish in their role, while 68% disagreed or thought the question irrelevant.

Figure 13: “I would be able to perform some of my role through the medium of Irish.”



### 2.4.3.3 Na deiseanna atá ann cheana

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Léargas: 16.6% (n=87/523) de na baill foirne nach n-úsáideann an Ghaeilge ina ról féin:

1. ba mhaith leo an teanga a úsáid ina ról féin agus
2. bheidís in ann aige cheana

### 2.4.3.4 Na bacanna ar úsáid na Gaeilge san obair

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Fiú ina measc siúd a bhfuil spéis acu an Ghaeilge a úsáid ina ról, bíonn bacanna rompu í a thabhairt isteach ina gcuid oibre. Is féidir na bacanna sin a rangú mar seo a leanas:

1. Srianata ama agus an t-ualach oibre
2. Muinín agus cumas
3. Eagla roimh obair gan aitheantas

#### Srianata ama agus an t-ualach oibre

Mar a luadh i gCuid 2.3, ina bpléitear foghlaim na Gaeilge, srianata ama agus an t-ualach oibre an dá chonstaic ba mhinice a luaigh baill foirne maidir le húsáid na teanga a mhéadú ina ról reatha, rud a fhágann nach mbíonn an t-am acu an Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim ar bhonn deonach.

#### Muinín agus cumas

Dúirt líon suntasach ball foirne gur mhaith leo Gaeilge a úsáid ach nach mbíonn an mhuinín acu. Baineann sé sin le heagla a bheith orthu roimh bhotúin a dhéanamh i suíomh gairmiúil, le heaspa teagmhála a bheith acu leis an teanga, nó le heaspa cumais teanga.

19% de na baill foirne ar mhaith leo an Ghaeilge a úsáid ina bpost, d'éasaontaigh siad leis an ráiteas “d'fhéadfainn cuid de mo ról a dhéanamh trí mheán na Gaeilge.” Is léir go bhfuil bearna ann idir an mhian atá ag na baill foirne an Ghaeilge a úsáid ina ról agus an cumas atá acu sa teanga. Is éard atá ag teastáil, mar sin, ná bealaí chun an mhuinín a chothú, mar shampla, spásanna comhrá neamhfhoirmiúla, agus traenáil atá dírithe ar an láthair oibre.

#### Eagla roimh obair gan aitheantas

Léargas: Tá imní ar bhaill foirne tabhairt faoin nGaeilge a úsáid ina ról féin gan an tacaíocht / t-aitheantas cuí a bheith ann d'obair bhreise.

Léirítear an imní sin sna ráitis seo a leanas a dúirt baill foirne sna hagallaimh:

*Sin rud amháin a bheadh le déanamh – aitheantas ceart a thabhairt do dhaoine agus grádú á dhéanamh ar phoist. Aitheantas ceart a thabhairt do dhaoine a gcuid oibre a dhéanamh go dátheangach nuair atá ualaigh oibre á socrú.* (FP8)

### 2.4.3.3 Immediate opportunities

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**Insight:** 16.6% (n=87/523) of staff respondents who do not already use Irish in their role:

1. would like to use the language in their role and
2. are already able to do so

### 2.4.3.4 Barriers to the use of Irish at work

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Even among those who are interested in using Irish in their role, several barriers prevent staff from integrating Irish into their daily work. This section categorises these barriers into:

1. Time and workload constraints
2. Confidence and competence
3. Fear of unrecognised work

#### **Time and workload constraints**

As in Section 2.3 on the learning of Irish, the most frequently cited barrier preventing staff from integrating more Irish into their current role was that their existing workload leaves little or no capacity to engage in voluntary professional development endeavours involving Irish.

#### **Confidence and competence**

A significant number of staff said they would like to use Irish but don't feel confident doing so. This often stems from a fear of making mistakes in professional settings, a lack of regular exposure to the language, or a simple lack of competence in Irish.

19% of staff respondents who would like to use Irish in their role disagreed that they would be able to perform some of their role through the medium of Irish. The gap between aspiration and perceived competence points to a need for confidence-building measures such as low-stakes conversational spaces, and workplace-specific training.

#### **Fear of unrecognised work**

**Insight:** *Staff are concerned about using Irish in their role without sufficient supports / acknowledgement of additional work.*

That concern is typified by the following quotations from members of staff:

*That's one thing that could be done – give proper recognition to people when jobs are being graded. Give proper recognition to people doing their job bilingually when the workload is being calculated.* (PS8, author's translation)

*Déanann [na baill foirne] ranganna ar bhonn deonach, ní fhaigheann siad aon aitheantas, ní fhaigheann siad aon am saor in lieu, ní aithníonn acmhainní daonna ná Ceann na Roinne, ná aon duine, an iarracht atá á déanamh acu feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge.* <sup>(FP4)</sup>

*What could you be doing [to acknowledge that extra work]? Reallocate work, but that's very hard to do [...] And I don't know where you would reallocate that work to.* <sup>(PS3)</sup>

*[We should] look at translation services in a different way rather than just relying on the goodwill of the School of Celtic Studies [or at least] acknowledging that they're doing that work.* <sup>(PS6)</sup>

Leagann na hábhair inní sin béim ar an ngá atá le:

- Cur síos ceart a dhéanamh ar phoist, an Ghaeilge a chur san áireamh nuair a theastaíonn, agus grádú cuí a bheith ag baint leo
- Aitheantas a thabhairt don Ghaeilge mar scil (m.sh. i gcomhthéacs na n-arduithe céime nó na Forbartha Gairmiúla Leanúnaí)
- A chinntiú nach mbeifear ag brath ar dhea-thoil cainteoirí Gaeilge amháin

Féach Cuid 3.1.2 ina dtugtar liosta cuimsitheach de mholtaí a bhaineann le ceist an aitheantais agus na n-acmhainní.

#### 2.4.3.5

#### **Am cúitimh**

*Léargas: Is iad am cúitimh nó am a fháil saor ón obair chun tabhairt faoi ranganna Gaeilge na roghanna ab fhearr leis na baill foirne a chomhlánaigh an suirbhé.*

Léirigh 60% de na freagróirí spéis i ranganna Gaeilge a dhéanamh ach iad am cúitimh a fháil. Luaigh ball foirne proifisiúnta amháin ábhar inní atá acusan:

*If we start running [Irish classes] during work hours, people are going to do them during work hours [because] people are interested in*

*[Staff members] take classes on a voluntary basis, they receive no recognition, no time off in lieu, and neither Human Resources nor the Head of Department, nor anyone else, acknowledges the effort they are making to improve their Irish.* (PS4, author's translation)

*What could you be doing [to acknowledge that extra work]? Reallocate work, but that's very hard to do [...] And I don't know where you would reallocate that work to.* (PS3)

*[We should] look at translation services in a different way rather than just relying on the goodwill of the School of Celtic Studies [or at least] acknowledging that they're doing that work.* (PS6)

These concerns highlight the need for:

- Clear job descriptions that include Irish where appropriate, and appropriate grading
- Recognition of Irish proficiency as a skill (e.g. for promotions or Continuous Professional Development)
- Avoidance of informal reliance on the goodwill of Irish speakers alone

See Section 3.1.2 for a comprehensive list of recommendations that relate to the issue of recognition and resourcing.

#### 2.4.3.5

#### Time in lieu

*Insight: The most popular support among staff respondents was time in lieu or release during working hours for Irish-language learning.*

60% of staff respondents expressed an interest in taking Irish classes in exchange for time in lieu. One member of professional staff raised a related concern:

*If we start running [Irish classes] during work hours, people are going to do them during work hours [because] people are interested in*

*learning a new language all the time [...]  
I think management might have an issue with  
that because they say 'well they are needed  
for their job'. So that buy-in piece would be  
very important if that's going to be introduced.  
(FP1)*

Léiríonn an t-ábhar imní sin go bhfuil an-tábhacht ag baint le tacaíocht na hinstiúide agus na bainistíochta agus am cúitimh á thairiscint amach anseo.



*learning a new language all the time [...] I think management might have an issue with that because they say 'well they are needed for their job'. So that buy-in piece would be very important if that's going to be introduced.*  
(PS1)

This concern underlines the importance of clear institutional commitment and management support to any move towards work-time provision.

Foirgneamh Iontas  
Iontas Building



*“Bheadh spéis agam Gaeilge  
a úsáid i mo ról.”*

---

D’aontaigh

**45%**

de na baill foirne

*“I would be interested in using Irish in my role.”*

---

**45%**

of staff respondents agreed

## 2.5 An Ghaeilge ar an gcampas

*Caithfimid ceanntar Gaedhealach do chruthughadh dhúinn féin annso, má's maith linn an sean-theanga do shábháil 'sa' tigh.*

(Gan ainm, *Irisleabhar Mhá Nuad* 1905: 113)

Déantar scrúdú sa chuid seo ar fheiceálacht agus ar ghnáthúsáid na Gaeilge ar champas OMN. Díritear ar dhá phríomhábhar:

1. Pobal na Gaeilge agus na himeachtaí lena mbaineann, ag díriú go háirithe ar líonraí Gaeilge ar champas agus an t-eispéireas atá ag baill foirne agus ag mic léinn agus iad ag iarraidh teacht orthu agus a bheith páirteach iontu.
2. An teanga agus an spás: na spásanna fisiciúla, sóisialta agus siombalacha ina bhfeictear an Ghaeilge nó ina labhraítear í (*na tearmainn teanga*) - agus cad atá ag teastáil chun inbhuanaitheacht na spásanna sin a chinntiú.

### 2.5.1 Pobal agus imeachtaí

#### 2.5.1.1 Cothú pobail

Cé go bhfuil cumas láidir Gaeilge i measc na mac léinn agus na mball foirne, níl pobal láidir Gaeilge ann go fóill. Dúirt 50% de na baill foirne go bhfuil leibhéal B1 nó níos airde acu sa Ghaeilge labhartha, ach:

- Dúirt níos lú ná an tríú cuid den fhoireann go mbíonn a ndóthain deiseanna acu an Ghaeilge a úsáid in OMN.
- Dúirt 44% de na freagróirí nach mbíonn sé éasca teacht ar dhaoine ar féidir leo Gaeilge a labhairt leo
- Dúirt 52% de na freagróirí nach dtuigeann siad cár féidir leo Gaeilge a úsáid ar champas na hOllscoile.

Cuirtear teannas in iúl sna torthaí sin: tá an cumas ann, ach tá an úsáid agus an tairiscint ghníomhach chun an teanga a úsáid in easnamh.

*[We need to get] to the the point where there's enough of us doing it that everybody else feels like they can as well, like a critical mass...<sup>(FP9)</sup>*

Is éard atá ag teastáil chun pobal a chothú ná infheistíocht straitéiseach, ceannaireacht agus am. Tá ról tábhachtach ag Oifig na Gaeilge sa phróiseas sin.

## 2.5 Irish on campus

*We must create for ourselves an Irish quarter here, if we wish to save the old tongue in the College.*

(Anonymous, *Irisleabhar Mhá Nuad* 1905: 113, Author's translation)

This section examines the presence, visibility, and everyday use of Irish on the MU campus. The section is concerned with two main areas:

1. The Irish-language community and associated events, with a focus on how staff and students experience, access, and contribute to Irish-speaking networks on campus.
2. Language and space: the physical, social, and symbolic spaces in which Irish is visible or spoken (the language's *breathing spaces*) - and the conditions needed to ensure these spaces are sufficient and sustainable.

### 2.5.1 Community and events

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#### 2.5.1.1 Community-building

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While there is significant latent ability in Irish among staff and students, evidence suggests that this potential is not yet translating into a strong, cohesive Irish-speaking community. 50% of staff respondents report B1+ spoken Irish, yet:

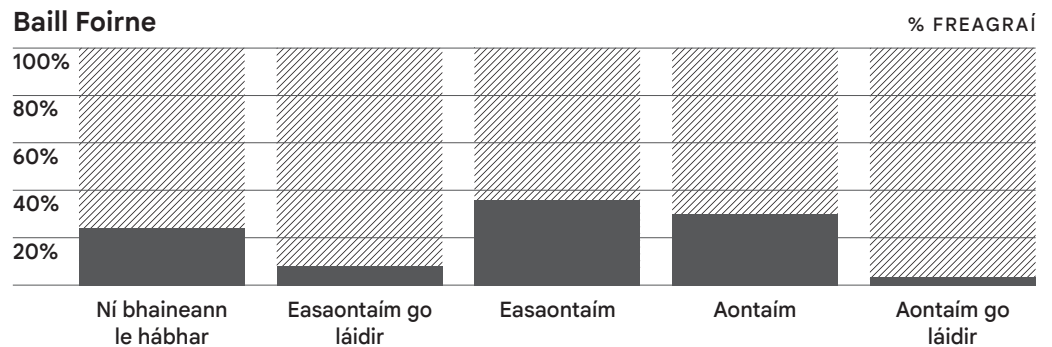
- Fewer than a third of staff agreed that they have enough opportunities to use Irish in MU.
- 44% of staff respondents say it is not easy to find others to speak Irish with.
- 52% of staff respondents say they don't know where they can use Irish on campus.

These findings highlight a key tension: ability exists, but usage and active offers, or invitations to use the language, are low. As one member of staff remarked,

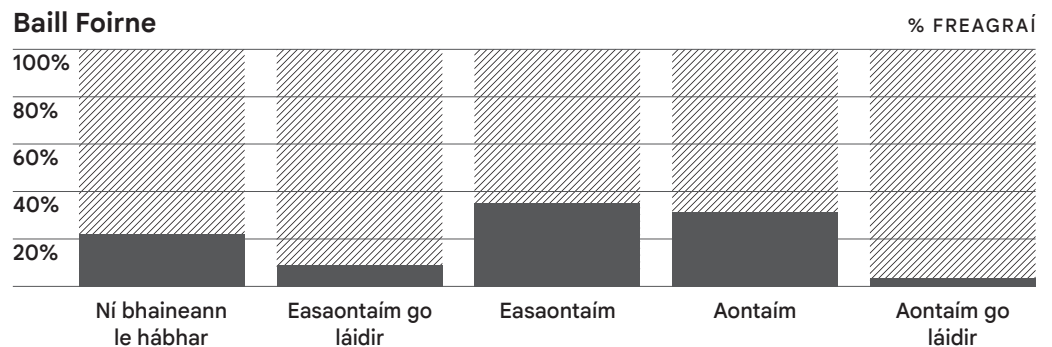
*[We need to get] to the point where there's enough of us doing it that everybody else feels like they can as well, like a critical mass...* <sup>(PS9)</sup>

Effective community-building requires strategic investment, leadership, and time. The role of Oifig na Gaeilge is central in this process.

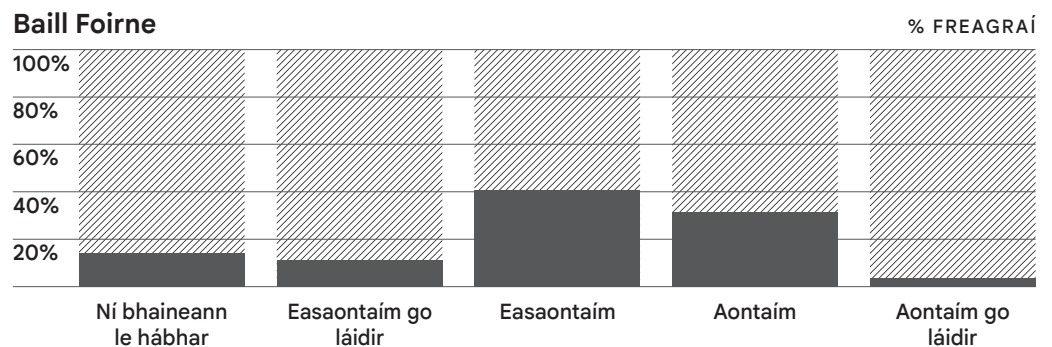
Léaráid 14: *“Bíonn mo dhóthain deiseanna agam an Ghaeilge a úsáid in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad.”*



Léaráid 15: *“Bíonn sé éasca teacht ar dhaoine ar an gcampas chun Gaeilge a labhairt leo.”*



Léaráid 16: *“Tuigim cén áit ar féidir liom an Ghaeilge a úsáid ar an gcampas.”*



### 2.5.1.2

#### Imeachtaí le haghaidh na mac léinn

Tá fianaise ann go bhfuil fíorspéis ag mic léinn in imeachtaí Gaeilge, go háirithe imeachtaí atá neamhfhoirmiúil, sóisialta agus nach bhfuil mórán ceangail ag baint leo. I measc na moltaí coitianta bhí tráthanna ceist, ciorcail chomhrá neamhfhoirmiúla, oícheanta ceoil thraidisiúnta agus céilithe, seisiúin spóirt Gaeilge (m. sh. sacar cúigear an taobh, ióga), scannáin, clubanna leabhar, karaoke, grúpaí ealaíon.

Bíonn an-chuid imeachtaí dá leithéid sin ar siúl ar an gcampas cheana féin, arna n-eagrú ag Cuallacht Cholm Cille nó ag Oifig na Gaeilge. Léiríonn na torthaí

Figure 14: *“I have enough opportunities to use Irish in Maynooth University.”*

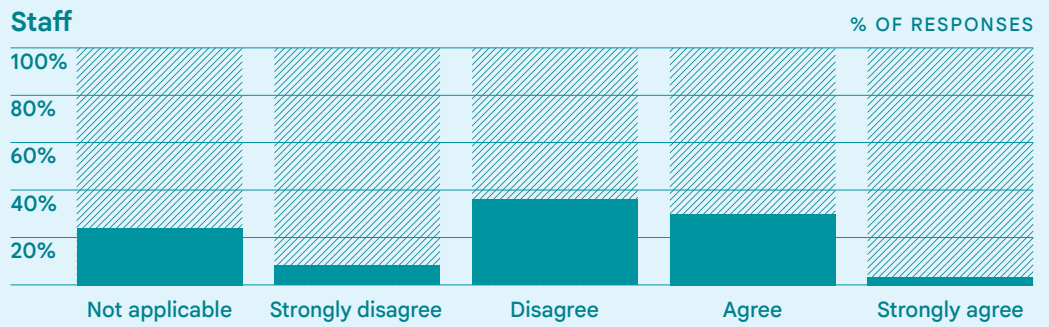


Figure 15: *“It’s easy to find people on the campus to speak Irish to.”*

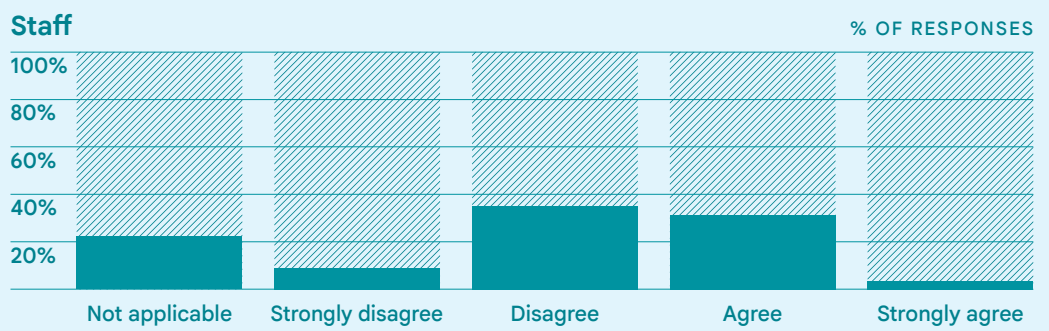
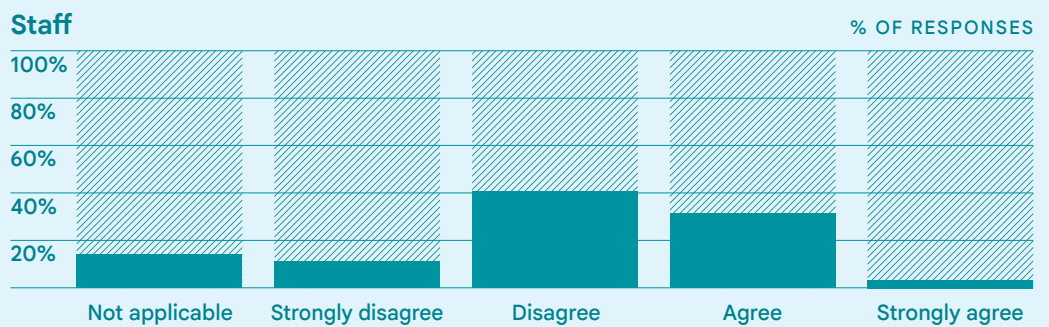


Figure 16: *“I know where I can use Irish on the campus.”*



2.5.1.2

**Student events**

There is evidence of real interest in Irish-language events among students, particularly low-commitment, informal, and socially rewarding activities. Popular suggestions included table quizzes, informal conversation circles, traditional music nights and céilís, Irish-language sport sessions (e.g. 5-a-side soccer, yoga), film screenings, book clubs, karaoke, and arts groups, to name a few.

Many such Irish-language events already take place on-campus, organised by Cuallacht Cholm Cille or Oifig na Gaeilge, a fact that highlights the importance of effective awareness-raising and promotion of the current

thuasluaite go bhfuil an-tábhacht ag baint le daoine a chur ar an eolas faoi na ranganna agus faoi na himeachtaí Gaeilge a chuirtear ar siúl cheana féin. Ar an ábhar sin, léirigh 56% de na mic léinn a d'fhreagair an suirbhé go mbeadh spéis acu clárú le haghaidh liosta seachadta maidir le himeachtaí Gaeilge.

Tá dlúthbhaint idir rath na n-imeachtaí neamhfhoirmiúla sin agus ceist athbheochan an champais: más é an chaoi nach mbíonn na mic léinn ar an gcampas ach dá gcuid léachtaí, ba cheart na himeachtaí a chur ar siúl ar bhonn straitéiseach agus leanúnach chun go bhfreastalódh an oiread daoine agus is féidir orthu. Luaitear tionscnamh an *Champais Bheo* i *bPlean Straitéiseach na hOllscoile*, tionscnamh a bhfuil sé mar aidhm aige cur leis an muintearas agus leis an bhfolláine ar fud phobal an champais.

Ó tharla teideal Gaeilge a bheith ar an tionscnamh, d'fhéadfaí an deis a thapú chun an phleanáil teanga Gaeilge a fhí isteach leis na straitéisí forbartha campais ar bhonn níos leithne. Dá dtabharfaí an dá chuspóir sin le chéile bheadh athnuachan an champais agus feiceálacht agus úsáid na Gaeilge ar an gcampas ag cur lena chéile.

### 2.5.1.3

#### Imeachtaí le haghaidh na mball foirne

Léirigh na baill foirne a chomhlánaigh an suirbhé an-spéis in imeachtaí sóisialta neamhfhoirmiúla – ach luadh imní maidir leis an mbrú agus leis an méid a mbeifí ag súil leis uathu:

*Having informal learning opportunities like conversational Irish sessions, workshops, social events for people at the same level as opposed to people who are fluent. I think a lot of it is perceived [like] If I go to this, everyone's speaking Irish and I don't... I only have the bare minimum. So I think something without any pressure on people would be good.* <sup>(FP1)</sup>

I measc na n-imeachtaí a luaigh na baill foirne sna hagallaimh agus sa suirbhé tá ranganna Gaeilge aghaidh ar aghaidh (praiticiúla, gan bhéim ar an ngramadach, iad oscailte do thosaitheoirí, gan aon bhrú); imeachtaí cultúrtha sóisialta (ceol traidisiúnta, céilithe, tráthanna ceisteanna); cainteanna/ léachtaí agus imeachtaí comhrá neamhfhoirmeálta amhail cruinnithe caife agus Tob-Ghaeltachtaí. Cuireadh béim ar an tábhacht a bhaineann leis na himeachtaí sin a bheith ar siúl go rialta agus go leanúnach.

Chuir Lárionad na Gaeilge dhá imeacht ar bun le déanaí a bhfuil ag éirí go maith leo: seisiún ióga seachtainiúil agus tob-Ghaeltacht a thagann le chéile gach seachtain i gcaifé TSI. Léiríonn na torthaí thuasluaite go bhfuil féidearthachtaí breise ag baint le tuilleadh deiseanna sóisialta a thairiscint agus a chomhordú don fhoireann.

provision of Irish classes and events. On that issue, 56% of student respondents said they would be interested in joining a mailing list about Irish-language events.

The potential of these informal events is closely tied to wider questions of campus renewal: if students only attend campus for lectures, these events should be scheduled strategically and consistently for maximum attendance. The *Campas Beo (Living Campus)* initiative, as outlined in the *Maynooth University Strategic Plan*, focusses on enhancing belonging and wellbeing across the campus community.

The use of an Irish-language title for the initiative signals a clear opportunity to integrate Irish-language planning into broader campus development strategies. This alignment would allow for a more cohesive approach to both physical campus renewal and the visibility and use of Irish in everyday university life.

### 2.5.1.3

#### Staff events

Staff members expressed strong interest in social and informal activities, but also concerns about pressure and expectations. As one member of staff remarked:

*Having informal learning opportunities like conversational Irish sessions, workshops, social events for people at the same level as opposed to people who are fluent. I think a lot of it is perceived [like] If I go to this, everyone's speaking Irish and I don't... I only have the bare minimum. So I think something without any pressure on people would be good.* <sup>(PS1)</sup>

Specific events mentioned by staff in the interviews and survey included in-person, low-stakes Irish classes with an emphasis on communication rather than grammar; social cultural events, including traditional music sessions, céilís, and table quizzes; talks and lectures; and informal conversation groups, such as coffee meet-ups or *Pop-Up Gaeltachts*. An emphasis was put on the need for such meet-ups to take place consistently and regularly.

Two successful initiatives that have been recently introduced by Larionad na Gaeilg are a weekly Irish-language yoga session and a weekly Pop-Up Gaeltacht in the TSI café. The findings above demonstrate that there are additional possibilities to offer and coordinate such social events for staff.

## 2.5.2 An tearmann teanga

Tá an-tábhacht ag baint le ceist an spáis in athbheochan na dteangacha mionlaithe. Tá an chuid seo bunaithe ar choincheap an *tearmainn teanga* (nó *breathing space* i mBéarla), coincheap de chuid an teangeolaí Joshua Fishman (1991). Déantar iniúchadh sa chuid seo ar conas a rinneadh an Ghaeilge a leabú i dtírdhreach teanga an champais go dtí seo agus conas is féidir cur leis an leabú sin amach anseo.

### 2.5.2.1

#### Tearmainn don Ghaeilge ar champas na hOllscoile

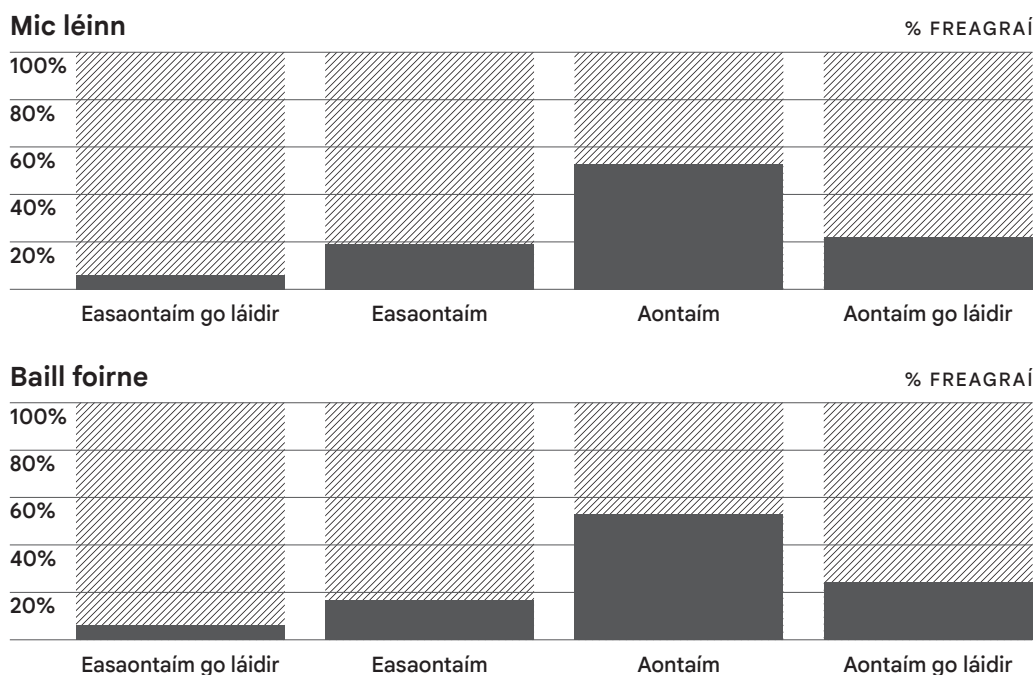
**Léargas:** *Tá an-éileamh ann i measc na bhfreagróirí, idir bhaill foirne agus mhic léinn, ar níos mó spásanna Gaeilge a bheith ar fáil ar an gcampas.*

I measc na mac léinn, d'aontaigh 75% acu gur cheart níos mó spásanna Gaeilge a bheith ar fáil ar champas. I measc na mball foirne, 77% a bhí i gceist. Ina theannta sin, ní thuigeann ach 28% de na mic léinn agus 34% de na baill foirne cár féidir an Ghaeilge a úsáid ar champas na hOllscoile.

Tagann sonraí cáilíochtúla na suirbhéanna agus na n-agallamh leis an éileamh atá ann ar bhreis *tearmann teanga* ar champas na hOllscoile, mar a léirítear sna sleachta seo a leanas:

*Níos mó béime curtha ar an dteanga taobh amuigh de na haonaid (mar shampla níos mó áiteanna Gaeilge amháin seachas Seomra na Gaeilge).* (Suirbhé na mac léinn)

Léaráid 17: *“Ba cheart go mbeadh níos mó spásanna Gaeilge-amháin ar an gcampas.”*



## 2.5.2 Breathing spaces

The concept of space is critical in the revitalisation of minoritised languages. Drawing on linguist Joshua Fishman’s notion of *breathing spaces* (1991), this section explores how Irish has been, and can continue to be, embedded into the physical environment and linguistic landscape of the campus.

### 2.5.2.1 Breathing spaces for Irish on campus

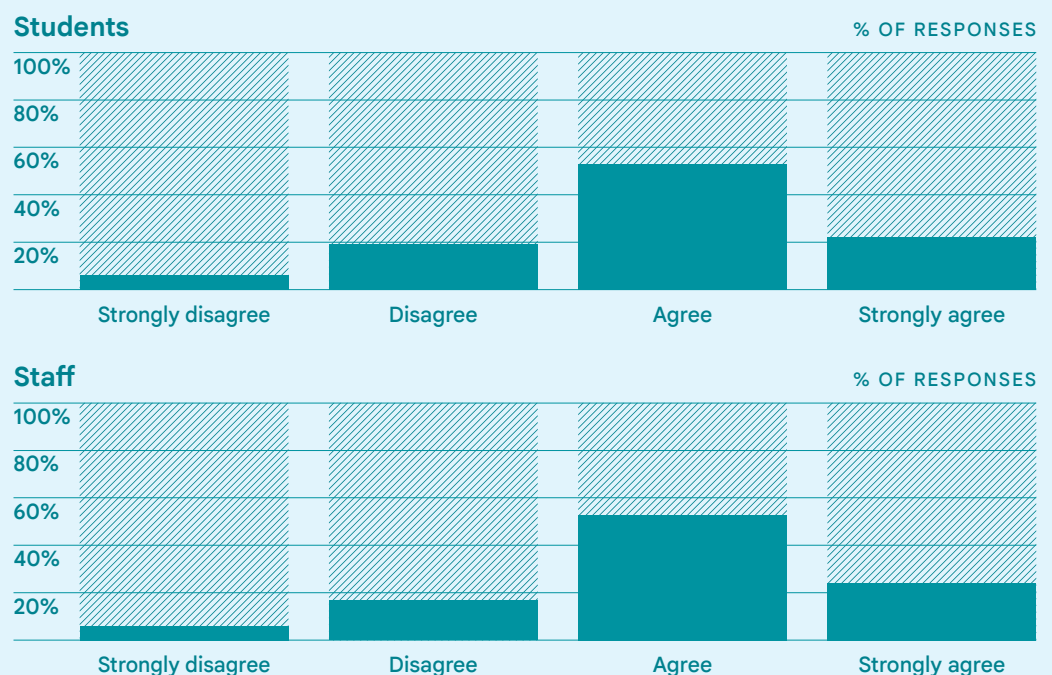
**Insight:** *There is strong demand among staff and student respondents for more Irish-language spaces on campus.*

Among student respondents, 75% either strongly agree or agree that there should be more Irish-language spaces on campus. Among staff the figure was 77%. Moreover, only 28% of students and 34% of staff respondents agreed with the statement ‘I know where I can use Irish on campus’.

The demand for additional *breathing spaces* for Irish on-campus is also supported by qualitative data from the surveys and interviews, as illustrated in the following excerpts:

*Put more emphasis on the language outside the departments (for example more Irish-only spaces, not just Seomra na Gaeilge).* (Student survey, author’s translation)

**Figure 17: “More space on campus should be dedicated to using Irish.”**



*Is cinnte gur buntáiste a bheadh ann dá mbeadh spás faoi leith ag an nGaeilge, cineál cosúil le Áras na Gaeilge,<sup>[2]</sup> a bheadh ina thearmann teanga do lucht na Gaeilge; cineál Gaeltacht bheag ar an gcampas.* <sup>(FP8)</sup>

I bhfianaise an éilimh sin, is fiú machnamh a dhéanamh ar cén áit a bhféadfaí a leithéid de spásanna a chruthú. Foirgneamh na nEalaíon an áit is mó a úsáidtear an Ghaeilge go mór fada de réir thorthaí suirbhé na mac léinn. Breis is 25% a luaigh Foirgneamh na nEalaíon nó Seomra na Gaeilge (n=141/549) nuair a fiafraíodh díobh cén áit is mó a mbíonn an Ghaeilge á n-úsáid acu.

Ábhar tábhachtach nár mhiste a lua, an méid a dúradh sna hagallaimh faoi Sheomra na Gaeilge (féach Cuid 1.2.5). Tar éis an athchóirithe a rinneadh ar Fhoirgneamh na nEalaíon le linn shamhradh 2024, dúnadh Seomra na Gaeilge agus aistríodh go suíomh nua é ar an taobh eile de Sheomra Caidrimh nua na Mac Léinn. Osclaíodh An Seomra Gaeilge nua ar an 11 Samhain 2025.

Ba mhinic athoscailt Sheomra na Gaeilge á lua ag mic léinn a raibh Gaeilge acu agus iad ag rá go rabhthas gan aon spás poiblí don Ghaeilge don chuid is mó de bhliain acadúil 2024-5:

*Bíonn deacrachtaí againn [...] de réir easpa Sheomra na Gaeilge - agus sin fadhb eile.* <sup>(ML1)</sup>

Ina theannta sin, luaigh roinnt mhaith mac léinn Seomra na Gaeilge agus freagra á thabhairt acu ar an gceist “conas a d’fhéadfadh Ollscoil Mhá Nuad tacú le húsáid na Gaeilge ar an gcampas, dar leat féin?” Ní raibh aon amhras faoi mheon na mac léinn a mbíodh Seomra na Gaeilge á úsáid acu sular dúnadh é: léiriú drochmheasa ar an nGaeilge a bhí ann ó thaobh údaráis na hOllscoile de.

#### 2.5.2.2

#### **Feiceálacht na Gaeilge agus comharthaíocht**

Mar eagraíocht phoiblí, ba chóir go mbeadh gach comhartha in OMN dátheangach agus an Ghaeilge agus Béarla le feiceáil go soiléir. De réir Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla 2003, agus an Achta leasaithe 2021, ní mór go dtiocfadh an téacs Gaeilge ar dtús agus ba cheart go mbeadh sé ar cóimhéid agus chomh feiceálach céanna leis an téacs Béarla. Baineann na dualgais reachtúla sin le gach comhartha, scáileán taispeána agus fógra ar fud an champais agus cinntíonn siad go mbíonn an Ghaeilge ar a laghad chomh feiceálach céanna leis an mBéarla agus an Ollscoil ag dul i mbun cumarsáide leis an bpobal.

Cuireadh ceist faoin gcomharthaíocht sna suirbhéanna. Thacaigh na mic léinn agus na baill foirne araon a d’fhreagair na suirbhé go mór le go gcuirfí níos mó comharthaí Gaeilge suas ar fud an champais. D’aontaigh 84% de na baill foirne, agus 85% de na mic léinn, leis an ráiteas “Ba mhaith liom níos mó Gaeilge a fheiceáil ar chomharthaí na hOllscoile.”

[2] Is éard atá in Áras na Gaeilge ná foirgneamh lán-Ghaeilge in Ollscoil na Gaillimhe ina bhfuil oifigí, seomraí teagasc agus spásanna sóisialta do phobal na Gaeilge ar an gcampas.

*It would certainly be a benefit if Irish had its own space, sort of like Áras na Gaeilge,<sup>[2]</sup> that would be a sanctuary for Irish speakers; a kind of small Gaeltacht on campus.*

(PS8, author's translation)

Given this demand, it is worth considering where such spaces might be created. The Arts Building was by far the most frequently mentioned space when students were asked where they use Irish on campus, with over 25% of responses (n=141/ 549) referring either to the Arts Building or Seomra na Gaeilge.

An important point to mention that was often raised in interviews was the issue of Seomra na Gaeilge (see Section 1.2.5). Following the refurbishment of the Arts Building in the summer of 2024, Seomra na Gaeilge was closed and relocated to the other side of the new Student Common Room. The new Seomra na Gaeilge was opened on 11 November 2025.

The question of when Seomra na Gaeilge would be reopened and the fact that, for a substantial part of the 2024-5 academic year no public space was dedicated to the use of Irish on campus, was a key theme that was raised among Irish-speaking students:

*It's challenging [...] because we have no Seomra na Gaeilge.* (ML1, author's translation)

Moreover, several student survey respondents to the question “in your opinion, how could Maynooth University support the use of Irish on campus?” mentioned Seomra na Gaeilge specifically. There was a clear feeling among students who had tended to use Seomra na Gaeilge before its closure that the delay to its reopening reflected a lack of respect towards Irish among University authorities.

#### 2.5.2.2

#### Visibility of Irish and signage

As a public body, all signage in Maynooth University should be bilingual, with both Irish and English clearly displayed. According to the Official Languages Act 2003 and its 2021 Amendment, the Irish text must appear first and must not be less prominent, less visible, or smaller than the English text. These legal obligations apply to all signs, displays, and branding across the campus, ensuring that Irish is given equal or greater prominence in the University's public communications.

The question of signage was put to students and staff in the surveys. The results show that there is strong support for more Irish-language signage across campus: 84% of staff respondents and 85% of students agreed with the statement “I would like to see more Irish-language signage on the campus.”

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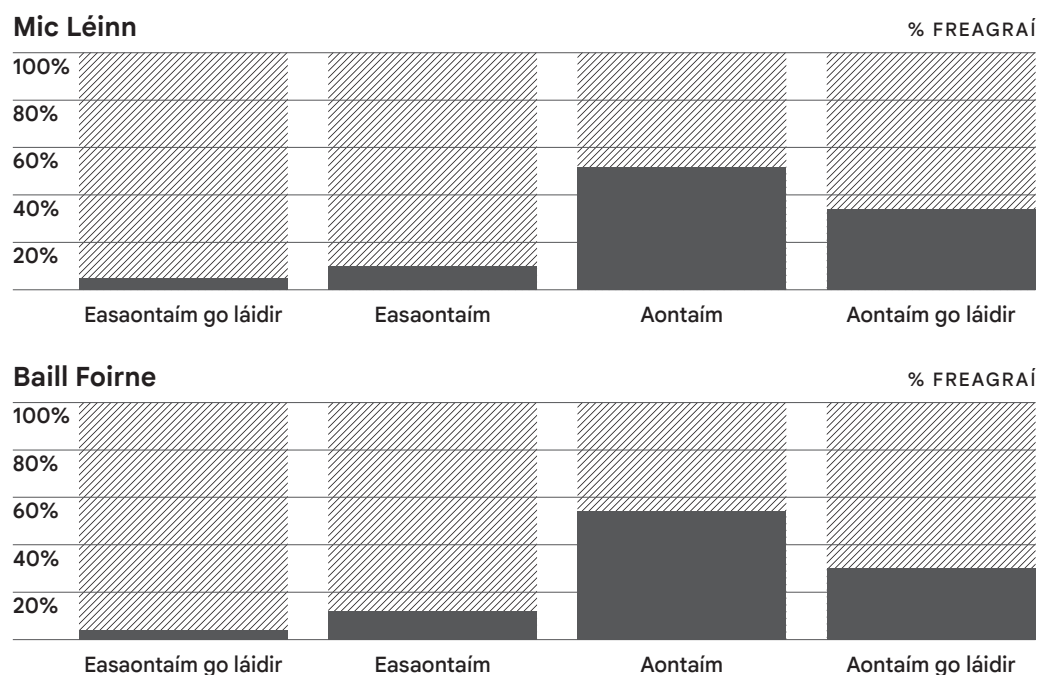
[2] Áras na Gaeilge is a dedicated Irish-language building in the University of Galway, containing offices, teaching and social spaces for the Irish-speaking community on campus.

Tugann na sonraí agallaimh le fios go bhfuil tuairimí éagsúla ag an bhfoireann maidir le comharthaíocht Ghaeilge ar an gcampas. Cé go dtacaítear le méadú fheiceálacht na Gaeilge, bhí éagsúlacht tuairimí i measc na n-agallaithe faoin tábhacht a bhaineann le comharthaíocht i gcomparáid le tosaíochtaí eile, agus chuir cuid acu in iúl go bhfuil an próiseas lán chomh tábhachtach leis an toradh. A dhála sin, luaigh na daoine sin a thábhachtaí atá sé dul i gcomhairle le baill foirne a bhfuil Gaeilge acu ionas go seachnófar botúin a chuirfeadh costais bhreise ar an Ollscoil agus a tharraingeodh droch-cháil uirthi de bharr Gaeilge mhícheart a bheith ar chomharthaí an champais.

*Más rud é go dtéann comharthaí in airde, gan é a bheith [...] faofa ag éinne ón bpobal Gaeilge roimh ré, agus ansin tá botún ann, [...] tá an méid sin impleachtaí leis sin. Caithfidh tú an comhartha a cheartú chomh luath agus is féidir, agus, is dócha, an damáiste a laghdú chomh mór agus is féidir.* (FP10)

*Bíonn an-aird againn ar chomharthaí, agus tá comharthaíocht tábhachtach go cinnte, ach sílim go bhfuil sé níos tábhachtaí an Ghaeilge a chluinstin.* (FA1)

Léaráid 18: “Ba mhaith liom níos mó Gaeilge a fheiceáil ar chomharthaí na hOllscoile.”

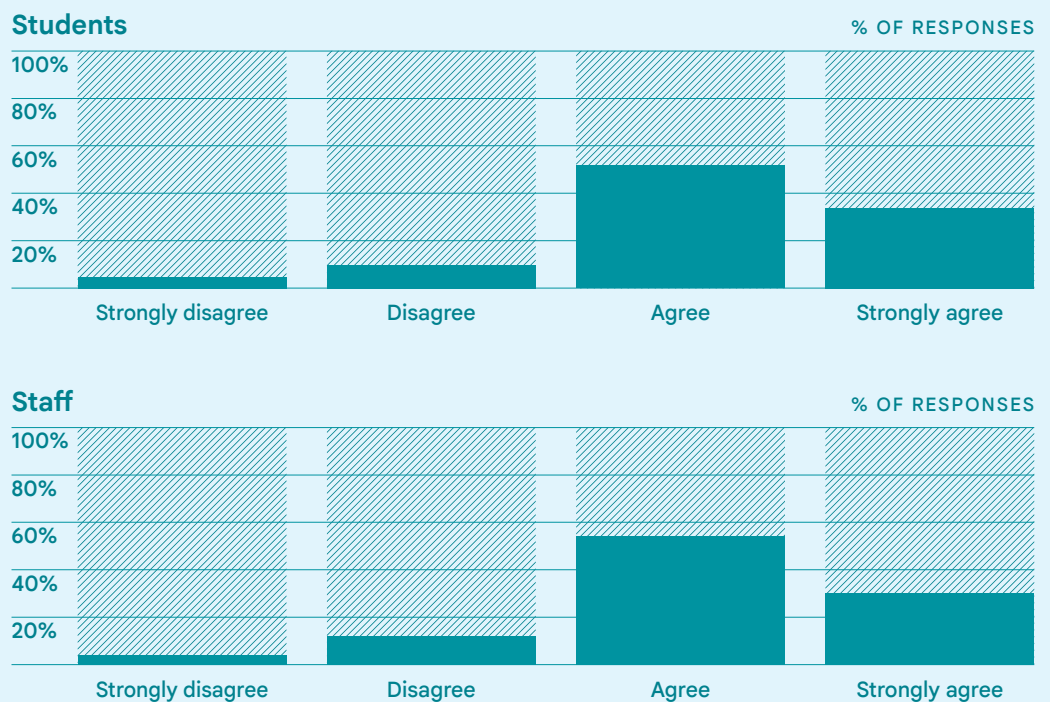


Interview data suggests that staff hold a range of views on Irish-language signage on campus. While there is broad support for increasing the visibility of Irish, interviewees differed in the weight they place on signage relative to other priorities, and several stressed that the process matters as much as the end product. In particular, they highlighted the importance of consulting Irish-speaking staff in advance to avoid errors and the reputational and practical costs that follow from having to correct mistakes.

*If signs go up without being approved in advance by anyone from the Irish-speaking community, and then there’s a mistake, [...] that has consequences. You have to correct the sign as soon as possible and minimise the damage as much as possible.* (PS10, author’s translation)

*We place great emphasis on signage, and signage is certainly important, but I think it’s more important to hear Irish being spoken.* (AS1, author’s translation)

Figure 18: “I would like to see more Irish-language signage on the campus.”



Ag an am céanna, luaigh roinne agallaithe go bhfuil an-luach le ceannaireacht a thabhairt le dea-shampla. Nuair a chuirtear an Ghaeilge san áireamh sa sreabhadh oibre ón tús, a dúradh, bíonn sé éasca cloí leis na dualgais teanga. Mhol ball foirne áirithe an cur chuige atá ag oifig faoi leith san Ollscoil mar a ndeartar comharthaí go dátheangach ó thús an phróisis. Thug an ball foirne céanna le fios dá mbeadh oifigí eile chomh coinsiasach céanna ó thaobh na Gaeilge de go réiteofaí go leor de na ceisteanna a bhaineann leis an gcomhlíonadh:

*Tá duine iontach ann [...] nuair atá comhartha nua le crochadh, tagann sé chugam an chéad lá, agus déarfaidh sé liom ‘táim ag iarraidh na comharthaí seo a chur suas, ar mhiste leat iad a chur ar fáil as Gaeilge?’. So, tá sé sa chur chuige oibre atá [aige], aon rud atá le déanamh aige, beidh sé ar fáil go dátheangach.* (FA3)

Léargas: Tá an-éileamh ar chomharthaíocht Ghaeilge i measc bhail foirne agus mhic léinn na hOllscoile. Mar sin féin, tá go leor den chomharthaíocht ar champas nach bhfuil ag teacht leis na riachtanais reachtúla i dtaca le comharthaíocht dhátheangach.

I measc na moltaí a thugtar i gCuid 3.1.1 moltar gur cheart an Ghaeilge a fhí le riarachán na hOllscoile ó thús deiridh chun an teanga a leabú sa champas i gceart.

### 2.5.2.3

#### Bacanna struchtúir

Léargas: Tá ceangal láidir idir an míshásamh faoi na spásanna atá ar fáil don Ghaeilge in OMN agus brú níos leithne faoi spás, lóistín agus áiseanna an champais.

Tugann na hagallaimh agus an suirbhé le fios go mbíonn tionchar ag áiseanna an champais ar na dearcthaí atá ag daoine i leith spásanna lán-Ghaeilge: tá níos mó i gceist ná easpa suime sa teanga. Dúradh go minic i sonraí an tionscadail go bhfuil infreastruchtúr agus áiseanna na hOllscoile teoranta. Bíonn an chomaitéireacht, an easpa lóistín agus áiseanna, agus an costas ard maireachtála ina mbacanna ar dhaoine agus iad ag iarraidh am a chaitheamh ar an gcampas nó pobal a chothú ann ar chor ar bith. Ba sa chomhthéacs sin a dúirt rannpháirtithe áirithe go mbeadh sé deacair cur leis na spásanna lán-Ghaeilge atá ann cheana mura rachfaí i ngleic leis na bunbhacanna siúd ag an am céanna.

Léirítear an dearcadh céanna i gcuntais agallaimh ina luaitear na deacrachtaí a bhaineann le dul chomh fada leis an gcampas agus gan a bheith in ann teacht ar shuíochán, nó gan an t-am a bheith ag daoine dul chomh fada leis an gcampas mar gheall air nach fiú an turas:

At the same time, some interviewees pointed to the value of leading by example, noting that when Irish is built into administrative workflows from the outset, compliance becomes straightforward. One staff member praised the approach taken by one particular office, where new signage is planned as bilingual from the beginning, and suggested that if other offices were similarly conscientious with Irish, many current compliance issues would disappear:

*There's a great guy [...] when a new sign is to be put up he comes to me straight away and he says 'I'm going to put these signs up, would you mind translating them for me?' So it's in the way he works to make sure that anything he does is bilingual.* (AS3, author's translation)

**Insight:** *There is massive support amongst staff and student respondents for more Irish-medium signage. However, much signage on campus is not currently compliant with the statutory requirements for bilingual signage.*

Among the recommendations in Section 3.1.1 it is proposed that Irish-language considerations be built into administrative processes from start to finish in order to truly embed the language across the campus.

### 2.5.2.3

#### Structural barriers on campus

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**Insight:** *Dissatisfaction with the spaces provided for Irish in Maynooth University is closely bound up with wider pressures around space, accommodation, and facilities on campus.*

Rather than reflecting a simple lack of interest in Irish, interview and survey comments suggest that perceptions of Irish-language spaces are shaped by the practical realities of campus life. Student and staff participants frequently described Maynooth University as constrained in terms of infrastructure and amenities. Issues such as commuting, limited accommodation, high day-to-day costs, and a shortage of basic facilities can make it difficult to spend time on campus or to build a sense of community in the first place. In that context, some respondents argue that attempts to create or expand Irish-language spaces will struggle to gain traction unless those more fundamental shortcomings are addressed in parallel.

This view is reflected in accounts that reflect on the everyday experience of arriving on campus and struggling to find somewhere to sit, or not having the time or incentive to remain on site:

*Baineann sé [...] le commuting agus spásanna – teacht anseo, easpa lóistín, tiomáint, easpa páirceála, ag teacht isteach ag a 9 a chlog chun áit páirceála a fháil agus léacht a bheith agat ag a 1, gan aon áit a bheith agat le suí, is araile.* (FA4)

*Our campus is dead [...] What do students get from coming to campus [with] the problems with accommodation and travel costs and of food... Just living, you know? If there was some hook there around the Irish language and around [...] it being part of building that sense of community.* (PS11)

Luaigh mac léinn áirithe go bhfuil ganntanas suíochán ar an gcampas, rud a fhágann, dar leo féin, go mbeadh sé deacair spás lán-Ghaeilge a dhéanamh agus an t-easnamh seo ann cheana. Dar leo gur cheart a leithéid de spás a chur ar fáil mar chuid d'fhoirgneamh nua seachas spás atá ann cheana a chur i leataobh le haghaidh na Gaeilge:

*There's barely enough seating on campus, making an Irish-only area would be unwise, unless it was a new area, but I really think making enough parking spaces is much more important.* (Suirbhé na mac léinn)

Léirítear sna tráchtanna sin nach féidir ceist na spásanna lán-Ghaeilge a phlé astu féin. Má tá an Ghaeilge le bheith ina dlúthchuid de ghnáthshaol an champais, caithfear díriú ar na coinníollacha uile a chuidíonn le daoine am a chaitheamh ar champas, bualadh le daoine eile agus páirt a ghlacadh in imeachtaí ar champas.

*It's about commuting and spaces – getting here, a lack of accommodation, driving, a lack of parking, coming in at nine o'clock to get a parking space for your lecture at one, having nowhere to sit, et cetera.* (AS4, author's translation)

*Our campus is dead [...] What do students get from coming to campus [with] the problems with accommodation and travel costs and of food... Just living, you know? If there was some hook there around the Irish language and around [...] it being part of building that sense of community.* (PS11)

Similarly, one student noted that the scarcity of seating makes it difficult to designate Irish-exclusive areas at present, and suggested that any Irish-medium space would be more feasible if it formed part of a new building rather than reallocating existing limited facilities:

*There's barely enough seating on campus, making an Irish-only area would be unwise, unless it was a new area, but I really think making enough parking spaces is much more important.* (Student survey)

Taken together, these comments suggest that strengthening Irish-language spaces on campus cannot be considered in isolation. If Irish is to become a meaningful part of everyday campus life, the wider conditions that enable students and staff to spend time on campus, meet one another, and participate in community activities will also need to improve.

*“Ba mhaith liom níos mó  
Gaeilge a fheiceáil ar  
chomharthaí na hOllscoile.”*

---

D’aontaigh

**84%**

de na baill foirne

D’aontaigh

**85%**

de na mic léinn

*“I would like to see more  
Irish-language signage  
on the campus.”*

---

84%

of staff respondents agree

85%

of student respondents agree

## 2.6 An Ghaeilge i saol na mac léinn

Pléitear sa chuid seo saincheistean a bhaineann le cur chun cinn agus úsáid na Gaeilge i measc mhic léinn OMN. Tá an plé bunaithe ar na hábhair inní a cuireadh in iúl sna hagallaimh a rinneadh le baill Aontas na Mac Léinn OMN (AMLMN), le baill Chuallacht Cholm Cille, le mic léinn ar an Scéim Chónaithe agus le mic léinn i Roinn Froebel don Bhun- agus Luath-Oideachas.

### 2.6.1 Aontas Mac Léinn Ollscoil Mhá Nuad

*Léargas: Mura ndéantar post lánaimseartha de ról an Oifigigh Gaeilge in AMLMN, ní bheidh an tAontas in ann a ghealltanais bunreachtáil a chomhlíonadh chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar an gcampas.*

Mar atá luaite i gCuid 1.4.4, déantar tagairt shonrach do chur chun cinn na Gaeilge i mbunreacht AMLMN. Murab ionann agus na ról lánaimseartha shabóideacha atá ag Uachtarán an Aontais agus ag na Leas-Uachtaráin um Ghnóthaí Acadúla agus um Shaol na Mac Léinn, áfach, is post páirtaimseartha é post an Oifigigh Gaeilge. Ba é sin an cheist ba choitianta a luadh sna hagallaimh ina measc siúd a bhíonn ag plé le AMLMN. D'áitigh na mic léinn sin arís is arís eile go bhfuil sé riachtanach post tiomnaithe lánaimseartha a bheith ag an Oifigeach Gaeilge chun dul chun cinn fiúntach a dhéanamh. Luaigh siad na deacrachtaí a bhaineann le bheith i do mhac léinn lánaimseartha agus i d'Oifigeach Gaeilge, agus nach n-éiríonn leis an duine sin ach imeachtaí bliantúla a eagrú in áit an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn i ngnáthobair laethúil an Aontais:

*Tá géarghá le hoifigeach lánaimseartha, ceapaim. Sin an t-aon rud – bheadh i bhfad níos mó Gaeilge san Aontas dá [mbeadh an tOifigeach in ann a] ról a dhéanamh lánaimseartha. <sup>(ML2)</sup>*

*Bíonn tú i do mhac léinn lánaimseartha agus tú á dhéanamh so muna bhfuil tacaíocht éigin ón bhfoireann lánaimseartha, ní féidir mórán a dhéanamh. <sup>(FP12)</sup>*

## 2.6 Irish in student life

This section considers issues relating specifically to the promotion and use of Irish among Maynooth University's student body. It draws on concerns raised by members of Maynooth University Students' Union (MSU), Cuallacht Cholm Cille, the Scéim Chónaithe (Irish Language Residential Scheme), and students in the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education.

### 2.6.1 Maynooth University Students' Union

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*Insight: Without a full-time Oifigeach Gaeilge (Irish Language Officer), MSU is not in a position to effectively uphold its constitutional commitment to promoting Irish on campus.*

As outlined in Section 1.4.4, the promotion of Irish is enshrined in the MSU constitution. However, the MSU Oifigeach Gaeilge is currently a part-time position, unlike the full-time sabbatical roles held by the President and the Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs, Welfare & Equality, and Student Life. In the interview data, this was by far the most frequently raised issue among those involved with MSU. Respondents repeatedly argued that meaningful progress requires dedicated, full-time capacity, noting that a part-time Officer who is also a full-time student can struggle to move beyond core annual events and to sustain Irish in the day-to-day work of the Union:

*A full-time [Irish Language] Officer is a must, in my opinion. That's the only thing – there would be a lot more Irish in the union if [the Officer could] do their job full-time.*

(S2, author's translation)

*You're a full-time student while you're doing it, so if you don't get any support from the full-time staff, you can't get much done.*

(PS12, author's translation)

*Anois, tá Oifigeach na Gaeilge, Aontas na Mac Léinn ach sin fadhb eile - go bhfuil an post sin páirtaimseartha agus nach mbíonn deiseanna ag an duine sin mórán a dhéanamh seachas ag rith Seachtain na Gaeilge.* <sup>(ML1)</sup>

Is mar seo a mhínigh Oifigeach na Gaeilge ó Aontas na Mac Léinn in ollscoil eile an scéal:

*An tábhacht a bhaineann leis an ról seo a bheith lánaimseartha ná tugann sé stádas don Ghaeilge; léiríonn sé meas don teanga.* <sup>(TS2)</sup>

Aithnítear in aontais mac léinn ar fud na hÉireann go mbíonn teorainn leis an méid is féidir le hOifigeach Gaeilge páirtaimseartha a bhaint amach. Rinneadh post lánaimseartha de ról an Oifigigh Gaeilge in Ollscoil na Gaillimhe in 2022 agus i gColáiste na Tríonóide in 2024 tar éis do mhic léinn na n-ollscoileanna sin feachtas agus reifrinn bhunreachta a réachtáil.

## 2.6.2

### Cuallacht Cholm Cille

Bunaíodh Cuallacht Cholm Cille in 1898 agus is í an Cumann Gaelach is sine in Éirinn í. Tugtar tuilleadh eolais faoi stair na Cuallachta i gCuid 1.4.3.

Tá sé mar aidhm ag an gCuallacht an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn i measc na mac léinn. Eagraíonn baill na Cuallachta cruinnithe neamhfhoirmiúla, imeachtaí cultúrtha agus turais i rith na bliana acadúla. Ba léir ó na hagallaimh a rinneadh le baill na Cuallachta go mothaíonn cuid acu nach dtugann an Ollscoil go leor tacaíochta don Chuallacht. Cheap rannpháirtithe áirithe gur ar an gCuallacht amháin a thiteann an fhreagracht ar fad maidir le Gaeilge a chur chun cinn i measc na mac léinn:

*Is í an Chuallacht an t-aon ghrúpa a bhíonn ag cur na Gaeilge chun cinn ar champas. Agus tá sé sin chomh amaideach – go bhfuil saol na teanga ... nach bhfuil ach grúpa mac léinn i gceannas ar na deiseanna atá ag daoine Gaeilge a labhairt.* <sup>(ML1)</sup>

Ag an am céanna, aithnítear gurb í Oifig na Gaeilge an príomhphointe nádúrtha tacaíochta do thionscnaimh Ghaeilge de chuid na mac léinn, ach go mbíonn bac ar an Oifig mar gheall ar easpa foirne agus ar na dualgais eile atá uirthi:

*Bíonn [Oifigeach Gaeilge na hOllscoile] gnóthach go leor gan bacadh le cúrsaí na*

*Now, you do have the MSU Oifigeach Gaeilge, but that's a different problem – that post is part-time and that person doesn't have the chance to do much except to run Seachtain na Gaeilge.* (S2, author's translation)

As the Oifigeach Gaeilge of another Irish university's student union explained:

*The reason it's important that this role is full-time is that it gives status to Irish; it shows respect for the language.* (EC2, author's translation)

The limitations of part-time Oifigeach Gaeilge roles have been recognised across students' unions in Ireland. Following student-led campaigns and successful constitutional referendums, full-time Oifigeach Gaeilge roles were established in the University of Galway in 2022 and in Trinity College Dublin in 2024.

## 2.6.2

### Cuallacht Cholm Cille

Founded in 1898, Cuallacht Cholm Cille is the oldest Irish-language student society in the country. More information on the history of the Cuallacht is given in Section 1.4.3.

The Cuallacht aims to promote the Irish language among students by organising informal meet-ups, cultural events and trips throughout the academic year. On the basis of interviews with members of the Cuallacht, it was apparent that some in the society feel that the organisation lacks adequate institutional support. Some contributors felt that responsibility for the promotion of Irish among students rests on the Cuallacht alone:

*The Cuallacht is the only group that promotes Irish on the campus. And that's so stupid – that the life of the language... that it's just a group of students who are in charge of the opportunities that people have to speak Irish.* (S1, author's translation)

At the same time, there is recognition that Oifig na Gaeilge is the natural point of support for student Irish language initiatives, but that limited staffing and competing responsibilities can constrain its involvement:

*The [Oifigeach Gaeilge] is busy enough without having to worry about the Cuallacht*

*Cuallachta [...] toisc go bhfuil [an tOifigeach Gaeilge] gnóthach, ní bheadh an t-am aige cabhrú linn nó rudaí breise a chur ar siúl.* <sup>(ML1)</sup>

Léiríonn na léargais sin an tábhacht atá le hacmhainní cuí a chur ar fáil d'Oifig na Gaeilge. Tá an-tábhacht ag baint leis na himeachtaí a chuireann mic léinn ar siúl, iad siúd a chuireann an Chuallacht ar siúl san áireamh, ach bíonn tionchar i bhfad níos mó ag na himeachtaí sin má bhíonn maoiniú seasmhach, tacaíocht ón bhfoireann agus aitheantas ón Ollscoil taobh thiar díobh. Gan an tacaíocht struchtúrtha sin, bíonn bac ar na mic léinn agus iad ag iarraidh imeachtaí a chur ar siúl agus a chur chun cinn.

### 2.6.3

### An Scéim Chónaithe

Léargas: *Tá na mic léinn sásta leis an Scéim Chónaithe den chuid is mó agus is cosúil nach bhfuil formhór na mac léinn ag iarraidh go gcuirfead leis an scéim.*

Mar sin féin, chuir líon beag rannpháirtithe imní in iúl maidir le húsáid na Gaeilge ar an Scéim. Cé gurb é aidhm na Scéime timpeallacht lán-Ghaeilge a chur ar fáil, tugadh le fios nach n-úsáideann na cónaitheoirí ar fad an Ghaeilge go rialta agus nach nglacann siad ar fad ról lárnach i saol Gaeilge an champais. Bhíothas den tuairim freisin go bhféadfadh na cónaitheoirí ról níos gníomhaí a ghlacadh maidir leis an nGaeilge a chur chun cinn i measc phobal iomlán na hOllscoile.

Is sa chomhthéacs sin a rinne agallaithe áirithe tagairt d'institiúidí eile, amhail an Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath, áit a mbíonn cónaitheoirí na scéime Gaeilge ag cur imeachtaí ar siúl ar bhonn neamhspleách ó na cumainn mac léinn:

*Ideal world, bheadh níos mó daoine i Seomra na Gaeilge agus lucht na Scéime ag cuidiú leis an nGaeilge. Agus taobh amuigh den Chuallacht freisin [...] is maith liom an scéim atá ann in UCD. Bíonn Teach na Gaeilge ansin ag déanamh an-chuid – a n-imeachtaí féin, ní imeachtaí a bhaineann leis an gCumann Gaelach.* <sup>(ML3)</sup>

Tríd is tríd, tugtar le fios sna torthaí go bhfuil meas ar an Scéim agus go bhfuil sí ag feidhmiú go maith, ach go bhféadfaí cur lena tionchar dá mbeadh na dualgais atá ar na cónaitheoirí ní ba shoiléire ó thaobh chur chun cinn na Gaeilge ar fud an champais.

*[...] because [the Officer] is so busy, they wouldn't have time to help us or put any additional [events] on.* (S1, author's translation)

These insights highlight the importance of providing adequate resourcing to Oifig na Gaeilge. Student-led events such as those organised by Cuallacht Cholm Cille are vital to fostering a vibrant Irish-language community, but their impact is significantly enhanced when backed by consistent funding, staff support, and recognition from the University. Without this structural support, it is difficult for such initiatives to sustain momentum or grow their reach across the student body.

### 2.6.3

## Irish-Language Residential Scheme

**Insight: Students are generally satisfied with the Irish-Language Residential Scheme, and there is no widespread demand for its expansion.**

That said, a small number of participants raised concerns about language use within the Scéim. While the programme is intended to provide an Irish-speaking environment, the research suggests that not all residents use Irish regularly or participate fully in Irish-language life on campus. There was also a perception that participants could play a more active role in promoting Irish across the wider university community.

In this context, some interviewees pointed to practice in other institutions, such as University College Dublin, where residents in comparable accommodation schemes organise Irish-language events independently of student societies:

*Ideal world, more people would use Seomra na Gaeilge and the people on the scheme would help out [more] with Irish. And outside the Cuallacht as well [...] I like the way that they do it in UCD; the people in the Irish-language accommodation there do a lot – their own events, not events that are related to the Irish language society.* (S3, author's translation)

Overall, the findings suggest that the Scéim is valued and functioning well, but that clearer expectations and stronger resident-led activity could help it to deliver a more consistent Irish-speaking environment and a greater campus-wide impact.

## 2.7 Comhionannas, éagsúlacht agus ionchuimsitheacht (CÉI)

Tá dhá ghné éagsúla ag baint le stádas na Gaeilge in Éirinn: is í an chéad teanga oifigiúil de chuid an Stáit í, agus ag an am céanna is teanga mhionlaithe í a ndearnadh imeallú uirthi ar feadh na gcéadta bliain ar chúiseanna stairiúla, polaitiúla agus socheacnamaíocha.

Sa chuid seo pléitear an Ghaeilge i gcomhthéacs na hionchuimsitheachta bunaithe ar shonraí na suirbhéanna agus na n-agallamh. Pléitear conas a thuigtear an Ghaeilge i gcomhthéacs CÉI agus ar cheart í a leabú ar bhonn níos follasaí i struchtúir agus i straitéisí CÉI na hOllscoile.

### 2.7.1

#### Clár Rochtana Ollscoil Mhá Nuad

Tacaíonn Clár Rochtana Ollscoil Mhá Nuad (CROMN) le mic léinn atá faoi ghannionadaíocht. 24.1% de mhic léinn na hOllscoile agus 28.8% d'fhochéimithe nua a fhaigheann tacaíocht ón gclár agus bhí 22% de fhreagróirí shuirbhé na mac léinn i measc an ghrúpa sin. De réir na hanailíse staitistiúla a rinneadh ar shonraí an tsuirbhé, ní raibh difríocht shuntasach idir freagróirí CROMN agus na freagróirí eile ó thaobh an luach a shamhlaigh siad leis an nGaeilge nó an spéis a bhí acu inti: ar scála ceithre phointe, ba é 2.99 (SD 0.88) an meánleibhéal comhaontaithe leis an ráiteas "Tá an Ghaeilge tábhachtach dom" i measc fhreagróirí CROMN, agus ba é 3.02 (SD 0.89) an meán i measc na bhfreagróirí eile. Ní raibh an difríocht sin suntasach ó thaobh staidrimh de ( $t = -0.74, p = 0.46$ ).

Ní raibh aon difríocht shuntasach staitistiúil idir na freagróirí a dtacaíonn CROMN leo agus freagróirí nach iad maidir leis an spéis a bhí acu sa Ghaeilge ná a gcuid dearcthaí i leith na teanga. Mar sin féin, thuiriscigh na freagróirí a fuair tacaíocht CROMN inniúlacht níos ísle sa Ghaeilge ná na freagróirí eile. Ba é 2.72 (SD 1.08) an mheán-inniúlacht fhéintuairiscithe thar na ceithre scil teanga i measc fhreagróirí CROMN, i gcomparáid le 2.98 (SD 1.04) i measc na bhfreagróirí eile. Difríocht shuntasach atá i gceist ó thaobh staidrimh de ( $t = -5.09, p < 0.001$ ).

Anuas air sin, thuiriscigh freagróirí a fuair tacaíocht CROMN deiseanna níos lú chun an Ghaeilge a úsáid ar an gcampas. Maidir leis an ráiteas "Bíonn mo dhóthain deiseanna agam an Ghaeilge a úsáid in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad," ba é 2.74 (SD 1.09) an meánráta comhaontaithe i measc fhreagróirí CROMN, i gcomparáid le 2.86 (SD 1.03) i measc freagróirí nach iad. Difríocht shuntasach a bhí ann ó thaobh staidrimh de ( $t = -2.38, p = 0.017$ ).

## 2.7 Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

Irish occupies a dual position in Irish society: as the first official language of the State, and simultaneously as a minoritised language that has experienced long-term marginalisation due to historical, political and socioeconomic pressures.

In the sections that follow, the relationship between Irish and wider inclusion efforts is examined, drawing on survey and interview data. The discussion considers how Irish is understood within EDI contexts and whether it should be more explicitly embedded in the University's EDI structures and strategies.

### 2.7.1 Maynooth Access Programme

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The Maynooth Access Programme (MAP) supports students from underrepresented backgrounds. MAP students make up 24.1% of the overall student population and 28.8% of new undergraduates. 22% of respondents to the student survey identified themselves as MAP students. According to statistical analyses of the survey data, MAP-supported respondents did not place significantly lower value on Irish or show significantly lower interest in the language than those who did not receive MAP support: on a four-point scale, the mean agreement with the statement "Irish is important to me" was 2.99 (SD 0.88) for MAP respondents vs. 3.02 (SD 0.89) for non-MAP. This difference was not statistically significant ( $t = -0.74, p = 0.46$ ).

There was no statistically significant difference between respondents supported by MAP and respondents who were not supported by MAP in terms of their self-reported interest in Irish or their attitudes towards Irish. However, respondents who received MAP support reported lower Irish proficiency than other respondents. The mean self-reported proficiency across the four language skills was 2.72 (SD 1.08) among MAP respondents, compared with 2.98 (SD 1.04) among other respondents. This difference was statistically significant ( $t = -5.09, p < 0.001$ ).

MAP-supported respondents also reported fewer opportunities to use Irish on campus. For the statement "I have enough opportunities to use Irish at Maynooth University," the mean agreement rating was 2.74 (SD 1.09) among MAP respondents, compared with 2.86 (SD 1.03) among respondents who were not supported by MAP. This difference was statistically significant ( $t = -2.38, p = 0.017$ ).

Bhí difríocht ann freisin i gcás roinnt athróg eile ag brath ar cé acu a thacaíonn CROMN le mic léinn nó nach dtacaíonn. Rinne níos lú freagróirí a dtacaíonn CROMN leo Gaeilge ar an meánscoil; bhí seans i bhfad ní ba mhó ann go bhfaigheadh freagróirí CROMN diolúine ón nGaeilge ar scoil (14.2% i gcás fhreagróirí CROMN vs. 3.2% de na freagróirí nach iad); agus bhí tréimhse caite sa Ghaeltacht ag 23.8% de fhreagróirí CROMN i gcomparáid le 33.5% de na freagróirí eile.

Mar achoimre, b'ionann an spéis a léirigh freagróirí CROMN sa Ghaeilge agus an spéis a bhí ag na freagróirí eile, ach dúirt siad go raibh leibhéal *inniúlachta* sa Ghaeilge ní b'íse agus ba lú an líon *deiseanna* a dúirt siad a bhíonn acu an teanga a úsáid. Léirítear sna torthaí sin a thábhachtaí atá sé an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn mar acmhainn ar cheart rochtain chomhionann a bheith ag gach éinne uirthi, go háirithe ag mic léinn atá faoi mhíbhuntáiste nó faoi ghannionadaíocht.

## 2.7.2

### An Ghaeilge agus *Turn to Teaching*

Tríd an mBonnteastas *Turn to Teaching* tacaíodh le mic léinn atá faoi ghannionadaíocht dul le múinteoireacht. Dhéanadh mic léinn *Turn to Teaching* ocht n-uair an chloig de ranganna Gaeilge in aghaidh na seachtaine mar chuid den Bhonnteastas. Níl an Bonnteastas ar fáil le linn na bliana acadúla 2025/26.

I measc na rannpháirtithe taighde a bhí ar an gclár *Turn to Teaching*, bhí éagsúlacht mhór sa chineál taithí a bhí acu ar an nGaeilge roimhe sin. D'fhreastail daoine áirithe ar scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge agus bhain siad an-taitneamh as filleadh ar an teanga:

*I grew up in [the Gaeltacht] so I kind of grew up around Irish [...] I went to college and then it was a five-year gap before I spoke it again before I came back here [to Maynooth] [...] So it was kind of refreshing coming back here [...] It's great getting back into it.* (GFML4)

Bhí drocheispéireas ag roinnt rannpháirtithe leis an nGaeilge ar scoil:

*I never enjoyed it in primary school. It was always my least favourite. And then because I was struggling, they kind of just went, 'we'll just reduce it' so I don't have to do what everyone else is doing. So it was always kind of a big thing.* (GF3)

Several other variables also differed according to whether a student received support from MAP or not. Fewer respondents who receive support from MAP had Irish in second-level education; MAP respondents were far more likely to have been exempt from Irish in school (14.2% of MAP respondents vs. 3.2% non-MAP); and only 23.8% of MAP respondents had spent time learning Irish in the Gaeltacht compared to 33.5% of non-MAP students.

In summary, MAP-supported respondents did not show significantly less *interest* in Irish but did report significantly lower *proficiency* and fewer *opportunities* to use Irish. These results highlight the importance of treating Irish as a resource to which equal access must be ensured, particularly for students from underrepresented or disadvantaged backgrounds.

## 2.7.2

### Irish and *Turn to Teaching*

The *Turn to Teaching* Foundation Certificate course supported students from under-represented backgrounds into, through, and beyond teacher education. As part of the foundation certificate programme, students undertook eight hours of Irish lessons per week. The *Turn to Teaching* Foundation Certificate course is not available for the 2025/26 academic year.

Research participants on the *Turn to Teaching* programme had a wide range of experiences with Irish. Some had attended Irish-medium schools and were enjoying reconnecting with the language:

*I grew up in [the Gaeltacht] so I kind of grew up around Irish [...] I went to college and then it was a five-year gap before I spoke it again before I came back here [to Maynooth] [...] So it was kind of refreshing coming back here [...] It's great getting back into it. (SFG4)*

Some expressed holding a negative view of Irish in school:

*I never enjoyed it in primary school. It was always my least favourite. And then because I was struggling, they kind of just went, 'we'll just reduce it' so I don't have to do what everyone else is doing. So it was always kind of a big thing. (FG3)*

Rinne na rannpháirtithe ar fad a raibh an bonnteastas idir lámha acu an múinteoir Gaeilge a mholadh, is cuma cén taithí a bhí acu ar an teanga:

*Since coming here, I've loved learning it. I hated Irish so long, but I love it now. And just like that, [Teacher] is absolutely brilliant. So she makes a huge difference... [I'm] understanding it more because I'm not just translating things and learning stuff off; I completely understand. And I've loved it so far, so yeah, I'm delighted.* (GFML8)

Mhol na rannpháirtithe na ranganna a cuireadh ar siúl mar chuid den chlár agus luaigh siad an timpeallacht thacúil foghlama a bhain leis an gcúrsa. Léirítear sna torthaí sin gur mór an tionchar a bhíonn ag cúrsa éifeachtach agus ag múinteoir spreagúil ar inniúlacht agus ar dhearcthaí na mac léinn, fiú ina measc siúd a raibh deacrachtaí acu leis an teanga roimhe sin nó a raibh deacrachtaí diúltacha acu ina leith.

### 2.7.3

## An Ghaeilge agus an pobal idirnáisiúnta

Tá an-éagsúlacht i gceist leis na tíortha agus leis na cúlraí teanga atá ag mic léinn agus ag foireann OMN.

Ba é an grúpa foirne ba mhó a dúirt go bhfuil an Ghaeilge tábhachtach dóibh féin daoine a chuir in iúl gur Éireannaigh iad ó thaobh eitneachta de. Mar sin féin, bhí ráta ard tacaíochta do chur chun cinn na Gaeilge ar an gcampas i measc na ngrúpaí eitneacha ar fad. Ní raibh an ráta tacaíochta sin mórán ní b'ísle i measc freagróirí nach Éireannaigh iad ná i measc na nÉireannach féin.

Maidir leis an ráiteas "tá an Ghaeilge tábhachtach dom", bhí meánscór na mball foirne Éireannach i bhfad ní b'airde ná meánscór na bhfreagróirí nach iad ( $M = 4.03$  vs.  $3.17$ ;  $t(412) = 7.87$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), rud a léiríonn difríocht láidir shuntasach ó thaobh staitisticí de. Maidir leis an ráiteas "Ba cheart an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar champas na hOllscoile", bhí meánscór na bhfreagróirí Éireannacha  $4.23$  beagán ní b'airde ná meánscór na bhfreagróirí eile  $4.11$ , ach ní raibh an difríocht sin suntasach ó thaobh staitisticí de ( $t(df) = 1.30$ ,  $p < 0.194$ ).

Chuir baill foirne áirithe in iúl go bhféachtar ar an nGaeilge, uaireanta, mar theanga nach bhfuil fáil ag gach éinne uirthi nó mar rud atá dúnta:

*If we do something in Irish first... A lot of the cohorts who we work with won't be able to access it... It's definitely a tension.* (FP3)

All *Turn to Teaching* participants, no matter their previous experience with Irish, lauded the quality of the Irish teaching provided as part of the *Turn to Teaching* programme:

*Since coming here, I've loved learning it. I hated Irish so long, but I love it now. And just like that, [Teacher] is absolutely brilliant. So she makes a huge difference... [I'm] understanding it more because I'm not just translating things and learning stuff off; I completely understand. And I've loved it so far, so yeah, I'm delighted.* <sup>(SFG8)</sup>

The focus group participants spoke very positively about the Irish classes provided through the programme and highlighted the supportive learning environment. These results demonstrate that a well-planned and well-delivered curriculum can enhance not only proficiency in Irish but also attitudes towards the language, even among those who had previously struggled with it or held negative views.

### 2.7.3

### Irish and the international community

MU is characterised by superdiversity: the University's staff and students come from dozens of national and linguistic backgrounds.

While the cohort of staff respondents most likely to consider Irish personally important were those who identified as ethnically Irish, support for the promotion of Irish on campus was high across all ethnic groups and not significantly lower than support amongst Irish respondents.

For the statement "Irish is important to me", staff members who identified as Irish had a significantly higher mean score than non-Irish respondents ( $M = 4.03$  vs.  $3.17$ ;  $t(412) = 7.87$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This indicates a strong and statistically significant difference in personal valuation of the Irish language. For the statement "Irish should be promoted on the University campus", the average score among Irish respondents was 4.23, compared to 4.11 among non-Irish respondents. However, this difference was not statistically significant ( $t(df) = 1.30$ ,  $p = 0.194$ ).

It is worth noting that some members of staff voiced concerns that the Irish language is sometimes perceived as exclusive or insular:

*If we do something in Irish first... A lot of the cohorts who we work with won't be able to access it... It's definitely a tension.* <sup>(PS3)</sup>

*That has been my real contact with the Irish language, just seeing it as a massive barrier.*

(AS5)

Luaigh baill foirne áirithe a dhearfaí agus a fhiosraí a bhíonn baill foirne idirnáisiúnta i leith na Gaeilge:

*There's a really positive interest in the Irish language from people when they come here [...] we have over forty different nationalities working here. My only concern is that we don't exclude people who are not from Ireland when we're trying to [promote Irish]. To make sure it's inclusive.* (FP1)

Tháinig patrún den chineál céanna chun solais i measc na mac léinn a thug freagra ar an suirbhé. Tríd is tríd, léirigh na freagraí go bhfuil an Ghaeilge níos tábhachtaí do mhic léinn ar Éireannaigh iad ná mar atá do na mic léinn eile. Cé gur thacaigh mic léinn nach Éireannaigh iad go ginearálta le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge ar an gcampas, ba mhó an tacaíocht a thug mic léinn Éireannacha dó sin.

Bhí meánscór i bhfad ní b'airde i measc na mac léinn Éireannach a d'fhreagair an suirbhé i leith an ráitis "Tá an Ghaeilge tábhachtach dom" ( $M = 3.91$ ) ná mar a bhí ag na freagróirí eile ( $M = 2.63$ ),  $t(df) = 19.63$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . Difríocht láidir shuntasach ó thaobh staitisticí de atá sa toradh sin a thugann le fios gur tábhachtaí i bhfad an Ghaeilge do na freagróirí Éireannacha ná do na freagróirí eile.

I gcás an ráitis "ba cheart an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar champas na hOllscoile", bhí meánráta tacaíochta ní b'airde i measc na bhfreagróirí Éireannacha ( $M = 4.25$ ) ná mar a bhí i measc na bhfreagróirí eile ( $M = 3.76$ ),  $t(df) = 9.44$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , rud a léiríonn go bhfuil difear suntasach idir an dá ghrúpa maidir le tacaíocht do chur chun cinn na Gaeilge, ach go bhfuil an dá ghrúpa fabhrach, den chuid is mó.

Cuirtear in iúl sna torthaí sin nach bhfuil cur chun cinn na Gaeilge ar an gcampas chomh tábhachtach céanna do mhic léinn nach Éireannaigh iad agus atá do na mic léinn Éireannacha a d'fhreagair an suirbhé. Is fiú a lua, áfach, go raibh céatadán na mac léinn a chomhlánaigh an suirbhé teoranta go leor, rud a fhágann nach féidir tátal láidir a bhaint as na torthaí sin. D'fhéadfaí iniúchadh breise a dhéanamh ar na dearcthaí atá ag an ngrúpa sin chun tuiscint ní b'fhearr a fháil ar an difear atá ann idir a ndearcthaí siúd agus dearcthaí na bhfreagróirí Éireannacha.

*That has been my real contact with the Irish language, just seeing it as a massive barrier.*

(AS5)

Others strongly emphasised the positive engagement and curiosity international staff show toward Irish:

*There's a really positive interest in the Irish language from people when they come here [...] we have over forty different nationalities working here. My only concern is that we don't exclude people who are not from Ireland when we're trying to [promote Irish]. To make sure it's inclusive.* <sup>(PS1)</sup>

A similar pattern was identified among student respondents to the survey. Irish-identifying student respondents on the whole describe Irish as more important to them than non-Irish students. They are also, on the whole, more strongly in favour of the promotion of the language on campus, though non-Irish students are also broadly supportive.

For the statement “Irish is important to me”, Irish-identifying student respondents had a significantly higher mean score ( $M = 3.91$ ) than non-Irish respondents ( $M = 2.63$ ),  $t(df) = 19.63$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . This is a very strong and statistically significant difference, suggesting that Irish students are far more likely to express personal identification with the language.

For the statement “Irish should be promoted on the University campus”, Irish-identifying respondents again scored higher on average ( $M = 4.25$ ) than non-Irish respondents ( $M = 3.76$ ),  $t(df) = 9.44$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . This indicates a significant difference in support for promotion, although both groups are generally positive.

These results show that there is evidence that non-Irish students are less supportive of the promotion of Irish on-campus than Irish students. It should be noted, however, that the sample size of the student survey leaves little room to draw detailed conclusions on this question. There may be scope for further investigation of views among this group in order to better understand the underlying causes of this difference in attitude.

## 2.7.4

## An Ghaeilge agus an polasaí CÉI

Léargas: *Is léir go dtacaíonn na páirtithe leasmhara le múnla oibre ina mbeadh Oifig na Gaeilge ag obair i bpáirt leis an Oifig CÉI, nó le hionad cultúrtha idirdhisciplíneach nua a bhunú ina dtabharfaí an Ghaeilge, an CÉI, an inbhuanaitheacht agus ceisteanna folláine le chéile.*

Thacaigh na páirtithe leasmhara go láidir le moladh gur cheart caitheamh leis an nGaeilge mar cheist CÉI agus cúrsaí pleanála teanga a fhí isteach sa straitéis CÉI agus leis na córais oibríochtúla a bhaineann léi. Tá castachtaí ag baint leis an moladh céanna, áfach, mar gur teanga náisiúnta í an Ghaeilge a ndearnadh imeallú uirthi go stairiúil. Níor chuir ach agalláí amháin i gcoinne an Ghaeilge a thabhairt faoi scáth CÉI. D'áitigh an duine sin nár cheart a bheith ag plé leis an nGaeilge mar “chás speisialta” mar gheall gur teanga náisiúnta í:

*I don't think Irish language should be considered as an EDI issue [...] because it's one of our national languages. It's not a special case.* (PS13)

Dúirt rannpháirtithe eile, os a choinne sin, gur mór an méid atá i bpáirt ag an nGaeilge agus ag an CÉI ó thaobh struchtúir de, i gcomhthéacs na ndualgas reachtúil agus an chothaithe cultúir go háirithe. Thuigfí, ar an gcaoi sin, an fiúntas a bhainfeadh le feidhmiú Oifig na Gaeilge agus an CÉI a ailíniú ar bhonn ní ba dhlúithe. Rogha amháin a luadh ná Oifig na Gaeilge a thabhairt faoi Oifig an CÉI:

*I feel that it would be very good for the Irish Language Office to work closely with other offices that might be dealing with different matters, but that use the same approach [...] There are similarities, I feel, between the work that the Irish Language Office does and the work that the Equality Office does, because both offices have statutory duties, but both offices have a role in creating a community that is sympathetic towards the Irish language and towards equality.*

(FP14, author's translation)

Mhol duine eile go bhfágfaí an Ghaeilge agus an CÉI ina réimsí éagsúla mar gheall ar na dualgais dhlíthúla atá orthu, ach go mbeadh an dá oifig ag obair as lámh a chéile go laethúil. Mhol an duine céanna gur cheart an Ghaeilge a thuiscint i gcomhthéacs na héagsúlachta cultúrtha, seachas mar rud a bhaineann le heitneacht nó le náisiúntacht faoi leith.

## 2.7.4

### Irish and EDI policy

*Insight: There is clear support among stakeholders for a more integrated operational model involving closer alignment between Oifig na Gaeilge and the EDI Office, or a new interdisciplinary cultural unit bringing together Irish, EDI, sustainability, and wellbeing.*

Stakeholders expressed strong support for treating Irish as part of the University's EDI landscape, and for better integration between Irish language planning and EDI strategy at an operational level. Irish occupies a complex space in this context as both a national language and one that has been historically minoritised. Only one interviewee explicitly rejected the framing of Irish as an EDI matter, arguing that, as a national language, Irish should not be treated as a "special case". That view is captured in the following comment:

*I don't think Irish language should be considered as an EDI issue [...] because it's one of our national languages. It's not a special case.* (PS13)

In contrast, other stakeholders argued that Irish and EDI share important structural similarities, particularly in relation to statutory duties and culture-building. From this perspective, there is a rationale for closer operational alignment between Oifig na Gaeilge and EDI functions, including a potential restructuring of Oifig na Gaeilge under the EDI Office:

*I feel that it would be very good for the Irish Language Office to work closely with other offices that might be dealing with different matters, but that use the same approach [...] There are similarities, I feel, between the work that the Irish Language Office does and the work that the Equality Office does, because both offices have statutory duties, but both offices have a role in creating a community that is sympathetic towards the Irish language and towards equality.*

(PS14, author's translation)

Another stakeholder suggested an approach where Irish and EDI remain clearly separate areas, because they have different legal obligations, but the work is more joined up in day-to-day practice. They also argued that Irish should be seen as part of cultural diversity, not just something that relates to a particular nationality or ethnicity.

*We can look at these two portfolios (EDI and Irish) [...] collectively and separately. And I think it's important that they've got the visibility separately: like you say, there's a legislative requirement of the organisation in relation to the Irish language, equally for public sector duty, equality and human rights legislation and equality legislation. But there are probably operational things that we could do much more integrated [...] to be able to see [Irish] as part of our cultural diversity [...] as opposed to always be thinking, say internationally or you know from a national or an ethnicity.* <sup>(FP9)</sup>

Moladh eile a bhí ann scóip na ceiste a leathnú amach níos faide ná an CÉI amháin agus an struchtúr institiúideach a athshamhlú mar phortfóilió cultúrtha níos iomláine. D'áireofaí an Ghaeilge i measc tograí trasréimse eile amhail an inbhuanaitheacht agus an fholláine, rud a léireodh an ceangal atá idir na réimsí sin ó thaobh cúraimí agus cuspóirí de:

*Part of me that would love to see, instead of EDI on their own, we have Healthy Campus, we've got EDI, we've got Green Campus and we've got Oifig na Gaeilge. I don't see why you wouldn't bring those four sections together as a 'culture unit' within the University, because we all do the same thing through different remits.* <sup>(FP3)</sup>

Tá creat polasaí ann faoi láthair a thacaíonn leis an bplé seo. Faoi mar a tugadh le fios i gCuid 1.5.2.2 déantar tagairt shonrach don Ghaeilge i bPolasaí CÉI na hOllscoile:

*Geallann an Ollscoil tacú le héagsúlacht teangacha agus cultúir agus iad a chur chun cinn le haird faoi leith ar chaomhnú, cur chun cinn agus úsáid na Gaeilge, agus ar stádas na Gaeilge mar chéad teanga oifigiúil agus an Bhéarla mar dhara theanga oifigiúil an Stáit a aithint.* (Ollscoil Mhá Nuad 2018: 6)

*We can look at these two portfolios (EDI and Irish) [...] collectively and separately. And I think it's important that they've got the visibility separately: like you say, there's a legislative requirement of the organisation in relation to the Irish language, equally for public sector duty, equality and human rights legislation and equality legislation. But there are probably operational things that we could do much more integrated [...] to be able to see [Irish] as part of our cultural diversity [...] as opposed to always be thinking, say internationally or you know from a national or an ethnicity.* <sup>(PS9)</sup>

A further suggestion was to broaden the scope beyond EDI alone and to reimagine the institutional architecture as a more holistic cultural portfolio. In this model, Irish would sit alongside other cross-cutting initiatives such as sustainability and wellbeing, reflecting the overlap in their remit and institutional purpose:

*Part of me that would love to see, instead of EDI on their own, we have Healthy Campus, we've got EDI, we've got Green Campus and we've got Oifig na Gaeilge. I don't see why you wouldn't bring those four sections together as a 'culture unit' within the University, because we all do the same thing through different remits.* <sup>(PS3)</sup>

This discussion is supported by an existing policy framework. As noted in Section 1.5.2.2 Irish is already explicitly mentioned in the University's Equality and Diversity Policy:

*The University will commit to support and promote diversity of languages and cultures with special regard to the preservation, promotion and use of the Irish language, and also recognising the status of the Irish language as the first official language and the English language as a second official language of the State.* <sup>(Maynooth University 2018: 6)</sup>

Cuireann an tiomantas sin bunús láidir polasaí ar fáil chun an Ghaeilge a thabhairt faoi scáth an CÉI. Is fiú a lua, áfach, gur léirigh mic léinn agus baill foirne as cúlraí faoi ghannionadaíocht nó as cúlraí idirnáisiúnta idir spéis agus inní i leith na Gaeilge, rud a léiríonn an gá atá le tacaíochtaí agus le gníomhaíochtaí for-rochtana lena chinntiú go mbíonn fáil ag cách ar an nGaeilge.

Ar an iomlán léiríonn sonraí na n-agallamh go bhfuiltear go mór i bhfách le cur chuige comhtháite, bíodh sé sin trí chomhoibriú níos dlúithe idir Oifig na Gaeilge agus Oifig an Leas-Uachtaráin um Chomhionannas agus Éagsúlacht; Oifig na Gaeilge a thabhairt faoi scáth Oifig an CÉI; nó, Ionad Cultúir nua a chur ar bun a bhfuil an Ghaeilge, an CÉI, an Campas Glas agus an Campas Folláin faoina scáth. Ag eascairt as an méid atá thuas, moltar i gCuid 3.1.4 den tuarascáil seo go mbeadh comhoibriú níos dlúithe idir Oifig na Gaeilge agus Oifig an Leas-Uachtaráin um Chomhionannas agus Éagsúlacht, chun an comhordú, an fheiceálacht agus an soláthar trasna an dá réimse ghaolmhara sin a láidriú.

**Tá castachtaí ag baint leis an moladh céanna, áfach, mar gur teanga náisiúnta í an Ghaeilge a ndearnadh imeallú uirthi go stairiúil.**



This commitment provides a strong policy basis for including Irish within broader diversity efforts. It is also relevant that staff and students from underrepresented and international backgrounds reported both interest and apprehension around Irish, reinforcing the need for outreach and supports that make Irish accessible to all groups.

Overall, the interview data indicates a clear appetite for more joined-up practice, whether through closer collaboration between Oifig na Gaeilge and the Office of the Vice-President for Equality and Diversity, restructuring of Oifig na Gaeilge under the EDI Office, or the creation of a cross-functional Culture Unit encompassing Irish, EDI, Green Campus, and Healthy Campus. Reflecting this, one recommendation in Section 3.1.4 is that Oifig na Gaeilge work more closely with the Office of the Vice-President for Equality and Diversity, with a view to strengthening coordination, visibility, and delivery across these related portfolios.

**Irish occupies a complex space in this context as both a national language and one that has been historically minoritised.**

## 2.8 An polasaí teanga agus struchtúr na hinstitiúide

Pléitear sa chuid seo na struchtúir institiúideacha agus an creat straitéiseach trína ndéantar an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn in OMN agus úsáid na Gaeilge a rialú. Díreann ar chúraimí agus ar acmhainní Oifig na Gaeilge, ar an gcomhlíonadh agus ar an bhfreagracht atá ar an Ollscoil de réir an dlí, agus ar na dearthaí atá ag pobal na hOllscoile maidir leis an tacaíocht institiúideach a thugtar don Ghaeilge ag leibhéal na bainistíochta sinsearaí.

### 2.8.1 Oifig na Gaeilge

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Tá dhá phríomhfhreagracht ag Oifig na Gaeilge:

1. A chinntiú go gcomhlíonfar na dualgais a leagtar amach in Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (2003) agus a Leasú (2021)
2. Úsáid na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn i measc na foirne agus i measc na mac léinn ar an gcampas.

Tá an-tábhacht ag baint leis an dá fhreagracht idirspeálacha sin – is iad sin, an comhlíonadh agus an cur chun cinn. Cuirtear inné in iúl sna sonraí suirbhé agus agallamh, áfach, nach leor an struchtúr reatha atá ar an Oifig le freastal ar le riachtanais na hOllscoile, riachtanais atá ag méadú.

#### 2.8.1.1 An brú atá ar Oifig na Gaeilge

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*Léargas: Aithnítear go forleathan go bhfuil ar a laghad dhá ról lánaimseartha ag teastáil ó Oifig na Gaeilge. Mura dtugtar na hacmhainní cuí don Oifig tá an baol ann go dtarraingeofar droch-cháil ar an Ollscoil.*

Téama a tháinig aníos arís is arís eile le linn na n-agallamh a rinneadh leis an bhfoireann ná nach bhfuil na hacmhainní cuí ag Oifig na Gaeilge. Tá an Ollscoil méadaithe faoi dhó le blianta beaga anuas ach níl ach Oifigeach Gaeilge amháin san Oifig. Tá an t-aon duine amháin sin freagrach as a chinntiú go bhfuil an Ollscoil ag comhlíonadh a dualgas reachtúil agus, ag an am céanna, pobal Gaeilge bríomhar a chothú ar an gcampas. Cuireadh an inné sin in iúl sna hagallaimh mar a leanas:

## 2.8 Language policy and the structure of the institution

This section examines the institutional structures and strategic frameworks that underpin the promotion and regulation of the Irish language at MU. It focusses on the responsibilities and resourcing of Oifig na Gaeilge, the compliance and accountability mechanisms required under national legislation, and perceptions of institutional support at senior levels.

### 2.8.1 Oifig na Gaeilge (The Irish Language Office)

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Oifig na Gaeilge has two main responsibilities:

1. Ensuring compliance with the Official Languages Act 2003 and its Amendment (2021)
2. Promoting the active use of Irish among staff and students on campus.

These two pillars – regulatory compliance and community development – are essential and interdependent. However, data from the surveys and interviews indicate growing concern that the Office’s current structure is no longer adequate to meet the University’s evolving needs.

#### 2.8.1.1 Pressures on Oifig na Gaeilge

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**Insight:** *There is a widespread recognition that at least two full-time posts are required in Oifig na Gaeilge, and that failing to resource Oifig na Gaeilge adequately poses reputational risks to the University.*

A consistent theme in staff interviews is that Oifig na Gaeilge is under-resourced. While the University has doubled in size in recent years, Oifig na Gaeilge has remained a single-person unit in which the sole Oifigeach Gaeilge (Irish Language Officer) is expected to meet growing statutory obligations while also fostering a vibrant Irish-language culture on campus. That concern is illustrated in the following interview excerpts:

*Ní dóigh liom go bhfuil Oifig na Gaeilge, faoi mar atá, fit for purpose níos mó [...] tá an Ollscoil éirithe rómhór [...] tá an jab i bhfad rómhór do dhuine amháin.* <sup>(FP4)</sup>

*Tá an t-uafás brú faoi láthair ar [Oifig na Gaeilge] [...] tá a fhios agam go bhfuil easpa acmhainní ann [...] le méid na hOllscoile agus leis an Acht agus leis na dualgais bhreise seo.*  
(FP14)

*As long as I've been here, there's been [one] Oifigeach Gaeilge and the University has more or less doubled in size [...]. Something is not right.* <sup>(FPi11)</sup>

Dúirt na páirtithe leasmhara go mbíonn trí réimse oibre éagsúla i gceist leis an ualach oibre atá ar an Oifig: comhlíonadh an dlí, lena n-áirítear monatóireacht agus tuairisciú a dhéanamh ar an gcomhlíonadh céanna; cur chun cinn na teanga, lena n-áirítear imeachtaí a chur ar siúl agus a bheith ag plé go dlúth leis na mic léinn; agus riarachán, lena n-áirítear aistriúchán agus cúrsaí cumarsáide. Is mar seo a rinne ball foirne amháin cur síos ar an scéal:

*Tá trí rud le déanamh [ag an Oifigeach Gaeilge]: tá an tAcht, agus dualgais fhoirmeálta; cur chun cinn na Gaeilge mar saghas obair forbartha agus ansin tá saghas obair [ar nós] aistriúchán, cúrsaí cumarsáide, roinnt riaracháin [...] tá go leor oibre iontu [...] ceapaim féin go bhfuil na trí rud sin ann, agus bíonn an tOifigeach saghas ag iarraidh píosáide na trí rud a dhéanamh.* <sup>(FP14)</sup>

Dúirt ball eile:

*Tá ar a laghad beirt ag teastáil san oifig sin. Ba cheart an dá chúram sin a scaradh ó chéile [...] Ní dóigh liom gur dea-chleachtas é go mbeadh duine amháin ag plé le, cineál, leis an mbata agus leis an gcairéad.* <sup>(FP8)</sup>

*I don't think that Oifig na Gaeilge is fit for purpose any more [...] the University has become too big. The job is much too big for one person.* (PS4, author's translation)

*There is terrible pressure on [Oifig na Gaeilge] at the moment [...] I know that resources have been lacking [...] with the size of the University and with the Act and these additional obligations.* (PS14, author's translation)

*As long as I've been here, there's been [one] Oifigeach Gaeilge and the University has more or less doubled in size [...]. Something is not right.* (PS11)

Stakeholders consistently report that the workload associated with Oifig na Gaeilge spans three distinct domains: legal compliance, including monitoring and reporting; cultural promotion, including events and student engagement; and administrative tasks, including translation and communications. As one member of staff described:

*[The Oifigeach Gaeilge] has three things to do: there is the Act [with its] formal obligations; the promotion of Irish as a kind of development work; and then there is work such as translation, communications, a lot of administration [...] each requires a lot of work [...] I think that there are those three things and that the Oifigeach Gaeilge is trying to do a bit of each.* (PS14, author's translation)

Another suggested that:

*That Office needs at least two people. The two roles should be separated from one another [...] I don't think it's good practice for one person to be dealing with both the carrot and the stick.* (PS8, author's translation)

I bhfianaise na ndualgas reachtúil ar fad atá le comhlíonadh ag an Ollscoil, mura gcuirtear tuilleadh acmhainní ar fáil, tá an baol ann go dtabharfar tús áite don chomhlíonadh seachas do chur chun cinn na Gaeilge. Seo mar a labhair ball foirne sinsearach amháin:

*In compliance approaches [...] you will do what you must, because you must. The health and vibrancy of the Irish language on the campus and the culture of the Irish language on the campus [are] almost diametrically opposite. One should be fun; one is regulatory. If the Irish language isn't fun or a point of enjoyment for the people, they won't use it... [but] any resources will always go to compliance over culture.* <sup>(FP13)</sup>

Tá sé tábhachtach a thabhairt faoi deara go bhfuil cur chun cinn na teanga agus comhlíonadh na ndualgas reachtúil fite fuaite ina chéile. Chun an comhlíonadh a bhaint amach i gceart is é atá ag teastáil ná pobal Ollscoile atá ar an eolas faoin méid atá ag teastáil, agus atá sásta a bheith ag plé leis an nGaeilge ar bhonn dearfach. Is trí bheith ag plé leis an bpobal ar bhonn pearsanta a chothófar an fheasacht agus an bhá sin. Mar a luaigh agalláí áirithe,

*I would like to be able to speak more Irish [...] but I don't like being forced to do it.* <sup>(FP2)</sup>

Is léir ó thorthaí an taighde go bhfuil ar a laghad dhá bhunfheidhm ag Oifig na Gaeilge:

1. An comhlíonadh leis na dualgais teanga reachtúla (lena n-áirítear monatóireacht agus tuairisciú a dhéanamh ar dhul chun cinn an chomhlíonta; pleanáil teanga na hinstiúide a chomhordú; agus cáipéisí oifigiúla a aistriú)
2. An Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar champas na hOllscoile (lena n-áirítear an cothú pobail, imeachtaí a chur ar siúl agus rannpháirtíocht na mac léinn agus na foirne a spreagadh).

Dúradh arís is arís eile sna hagallaimh go bhfuil an dá fheidhm sin riachtanach ach go bhfuil sé ag éirí níos deacra ag duine amháin iad a bhainistiú, go háirithe i bhfianaise an mhéadaithe atá tagtha ar an Ollscoil agus ar a dualgais teanga. Ina theannta sin, is cosúil, i bhfianaise na dtorthaí, go mbeidh ar an Oifig tús áite a thabhairt don chomhlíonadh seachas don chothú pobail. Is dócha, mar sin, go samhlófar an Ghaeilge leis an bhforfheidhmiú seachas leis an rannpháirtíocht laethúil agus leis an taitneamh.

Without further resources, and in an increasingly strict regulatory environment, the promotion of Irish on campus is likely to fall by the wayside in favour of ensuring compliance with legislative duties. A senior member of staff remarked:

*In compliance approaches [...] you will do what you must, because you must. The health and vibrancy of the Irish language on the campus and the culture of the Irish language on the campus [are] almost diametrically opposite. One should be fun; one is regulatory. If the Irish language isn't fun or a point of enjoyment for the people, they won't use it... [but] any resources will always go to compliance over culture.* (PS13)

Crucially, promotion and compliance are not competing aims. In practice, effective compliance relies on broad awareness of what is required and a willingness across the University community to engage positively with Irish. That kind of awareness and goodwill is best fostered through a strong, visible, community-facing presence. As one interviewee remarked,

*I would like to be able to speak more Irish [...] but I don't like being forced to do it.* (PS2)

In summary, the evidence indicates that Oifig na Gaeilge currently encompasses at least two core functions:

1. Compliance with statutory obligations (including monitoring and reporting on compliance; coordinating institutional language planning efforts; and translating official documents).
2. Promotion of Irish on campus (including community development, events, and staff and student engagement).

Interviewees repeatedly emphasised that these functions are both essential, but increasingly difficult to sustain within a single-person unit, particularly in a context where the University has expanded significantly and statutory obligations have intensified. The data further suggest that, without additional resourcing, the Office will be compelled to prioritise compliance over community-building, with the likely consequence that Irish becomes associated primarily with enforcement rather than everyday participation and enjoyment.

Moltar i gCuid 3.1.5, mar sin, gur cheart Oifig na Gaeilge a mhéadú mar aitheantas ar a leithne agus a chasta atá a cúraimí agus mar gheall ar na dualgais bhreise a thiocfaidh uirthi agus an córas rialála teanga ag fás. Cinnteofar trí na hacmhainní breise sin go gcloífead leis an dlí i gcónaí agus go gcosnófar an obair phobail, obair a chothaíonn dea-thoil, a dhéanann normálú ar an nGaeilge i ngnáthshaol an champais, agus a spreagann daoine chun an teanga a fhoghlaim agus a úsáid. Ar bhonn praiticiúil, tugann an fhianaise le fios gur riachtanas stratéiseach é na hacmhainní cuí a thabhairt don Oifig chun dea-cháil na hOllscoile a chosaint, chun an fuinneamh a choinneáil faoi chur chun cinn na Gaeilge, chun a chinntiú go bhfuil pobal na hOllscoile ar an eolas maidir leis na dualgais teanga atá orthu, agus chun a chinntiú gur ar rannpháirtíocht an phobail sin atá an comhlíonadh bunaithe ar fud na hOllscoile.

### 2.8.1.2

#### Cúrsaí aistriúcháin

**Léargas:** *Caitear an iomarca d'acmhainní Oifig na Gaeilge ar an aistriúchán. Is minic a iarrtar aistriúcháin ar bhaill foirne eile a bhfuil Gaeilge acu, rud a chuireann lena n-ualach oibre féin. Tá an t-ualach aistriúcháin atá ar an Oifigeach Gaeilge ina bhac ar chur chun cinn na Gaeilge i measc phobal na hOllscoile.*

Tá an-bhrú ag baint leis an ualach aistriúcháin atá ar Oifig na Gaeilge. Éilíonn an t-aistriúchán thart ar 50% d'am an Oifigigh, rud a fhágann gur lú i bhfad an t-am atá aige le haghaidh an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn i measc an phobail. Mar a luaigh páirtí leasmhar sinsearach áirithe:

*I don't think enough [work] has been done on goodwill ... Oifig na Gaeilge is too busy translating to do the other stuff.* <sup>(FP13)</sup>



It is therefore recommended in Section 3.1.5 that Oifig na Gaeilge be expanded, in recognition of the scale and complexity of its remit and the growing regulatory environment in which it operates. This additional capacity would help to ensure that statutory obligations can be met consistently while safeguarding the community-facing work that sustains goodwill, normalises Irish in day-to-day campus life, and encourages voluntary uptake. In practical terms, the evidence suggests that resourcing the Office adequately is not simply a matter of operational convenience, but a strategic necessity for protecting institutional reputation, sustaining momentum in Irish-language development, and ensuring that compliance is underpinned by genuine awareness and engagement across the University.

#### 2.8.1.2

#### The question of translation

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*Insight: Translation currently consumes a disproportionate share of Oifig na Gaeilge's capacity. Translation demands are frequently redirected to other Irish-speaking staff, adding to workload and reducing capacity for proactive, community-facing Irish-language development.*

Translation represents a major pressure point for Oifig na Gaeilge. It currently consumes approximately 50% of the Officer's time, significantly reducing capacity for community engagement. As one senior stakeholder commented:

*I don't think enough [work] has been done on goodwill ... Oifig na Gaeilge is too busy translating to do the other stuff.* <sup>(PS13)</sup>

Táthar ar aon intinn gur ceist chomhlíonta é an t-aistriúchán sa mhéid gur gá príomhcháipéisí na hInstitiúide a chur ar fáil sa dá theanga oifigiúla. Ag an am céanna, ba mhinic a caitheadh amhras ar a inbhuanaithe agus atá an cur chuige reatha i bhfianaise an mhéadaithe atá ag teacht ar na dualgais teanga reachtúla agus ar sholáthar seirbhísí Gaeilge. Cuireadh imní in iúl freisin maidir leis an tionchar cultúrtha a bhaineann leis an gcur chuige reatha – is é sin go bhfuil baol ann go gceilfidh roinnt ball foirne a gcuid scileanna Gaeilge ar eagla go n-iarrfaí aistriúcháin orthu nó go gcuirfí lena n-ualach riaracháin. Rinne agalláí áirithe comparáid idir an cleachtas sa Státseirbhís agus an méid a d'fhéadfadh tarlú in OMN:

*Níor mhaith liom go dtarlódh sé go mbeadh faitíos ar dhaoine a admháil go bhfuil Gaeilge acu ar fhaitíos go gcuirfí iad ag aistriú cáipéisí. Tarlaíonn sé sin cheana féin sa státchóras. Tá aithne agam ar dhaoine nach n-admhaíonn go bhfuil Gaeilge acu ar fhaitíos go dtabharfaí na poist nó na cúraimí is leadránaí dóibh ... le bheith ag aistriú.* (FP8)

Is léir ón bhfianaise sin go bhfuil gá le cur chuige níos córasaí chun bainistíocht a dhéanamh ar iarratais ar aistriúcháin ar fud na hOllscoile, mar a leagtar amach i measc na moltaí i gCuid 3.1. Tá córas soiléir uile-Ollscoile ag teastáil chun na hiarratais a chur in ord tosaíochta, chun an obair a dháileadh ar bhonn trédhearcach, agus chun a chinntiú go gcloífear leis na riachtanais chomhlíonta gan an iomarca acmhainní a iarraidh ar Oifig na Gaeilge agus gan a bheith ag brath ar obair dheonach ball foirne eile.

Ba cheart a fhiosrú, mar chuid den chur chuige sin, na deiseanna a bhaineann leis an aistriúchán ríomhchuidithe – is é sin, sainuirlisí gairmiúla aistriúcháin a d'fhéadfadh cur le luas, le héifeachtúlacht agus le leanúnachas na hoibre aistriúcháin a dhéanfaí san Ollscoil.

Laghdódh a leithéid de chóras an t-ualach oibre atá ar Oifig na Gaeilge, rud a d'fhágfadh níos mó ama don Oifig tabhairt faoin obair réamhghníomhach leis an bpobal, obair a bhfuil cur chun cinn na Gaeilge ar an gcampas go fadtéarmach ag brath uirthi.

## 2.8.2

### Comhlíonadh agus freagracht

Pléitear sa chuid seo na struchtúir freagrachta taobh amuigh d'Oifig na Gaeilge a bhfuil sé mar aidhm acu a chinntiú go gcloífear leis na dualgais atá ar an Ollscoil faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021. Mínítear conas a dháiltear na freagrachtaí polasaí agus pleanála teanga in OMN, conas a dhéantar monatóireacht ar an gcomhlíonadh, agus conas a chuirtear i bhfeidhm é.

Léargas: *Tugann sonraí na n-agallamh agus na suirbhéanna le fios nach léir cá dtiteann an fhreagracht maidir le comhlíonadh polasaí teanga in OMN.*

There is broad agreement that translation is, in part, a compliance matter, in that key institutional documents must be available in both official languages. At the same time, stakeholders consistently questioned the sustainability of the current approach, particularly as statutory language obligations expand and expectations around service provision become more exacting. Concerns were also raised about the wider cultural impacts of the current model, including the risk that staff may be reluctant to make their Irish-language skills visible if doing so leads to ad hoc translation requests or additional administrative burdens. One interviewee drew a direct parallel with practice in the Civil Service, saying:

*I wouldn't want people to be scared to admit that they speak Irish in case they were made to translate documents. That already happens in the Civil Service... I know people who don't admit that they speak Irish in case they are given the most boring jobs or tasks to translate.* (PS8, author's translation)

In light of this evidence, and as outlined among the recommendations in Section 3.1, a more systematic approach to managing translation requests across the University is warranted. Introducing a clear, institution-wide system would help to triage requests appropriately, allocate work transparently, and ensure that compliance requirements are met without disproportionately consuming the capacity of Oifig na Gaeilge or relying on informal, goodwill-based contributions from other Irish-speaking staff.

This approach should include an exploration of the options afforded by machine-aided translation – that is, dedicated professional translation tools that could increase the speed, efficiency and consistency of translation work within the institution.

Crucially, such a system would also help to rebalance the workload on Oifig na Gaeilge, enabling it to devote greater attention to the proactive, community-facing work that underpins long-term Irish-language development on campus.

## 2.8.2

### Compliance and accountability

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This section examines the accountability structures beyond Oifig na Gaeilge that are intended to ensure the University's compliance with the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021. It outlines how responsibility for language planning and policy is assigned within MU, and how compliance is monitored and followed through.

*Insight: Interview and survey data suggest that responsibility for language-policy compliance in MU is unclear.*

## 2.8.2.1

## Coiste na Gaeilge

*Léargas: Tá tuiscint ann i measc bhaill Choiste na Gaeilge agus i measc baill foirne shinsearacha eile nach bhfuil Coiste na Gaeilge ag feidhmiú chomh héifeachtach agus a d'fhéadfadh sé a bheith.*

Déanann Coiste na Gaeilge maoirseacht ar na polasaithe agus ar na nósanna imeachta atá i bhfeidhm chun úsáid na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn ar an gcampas. Cuirtear síos ar fheidhm agus ar bhaill an Choiste i gCuid 1.4.2. Tugadh le fios sna hagallaimh go gcuireann an cur chuige reatha atá ag an gCoiste srian ar a éifeachtúlacht, go háirithe mar gheall ar an sceideal teoranta cruinnithe atá aige:

*Ní bhraithim go bhfuil Coiste na Gaeilge chomh gníomhach agus a d'fhéadfadh sé a bheith. Nó chomh héifeachtúil céanna nuair nach bhfeicfidimid a chéile [ach ceithre huair sa bhliain].* <sup>(FP4)</sup>

Cuireadh imní in iúl maidir leis an méid is féidir leis an gCoiste a bhaint amach. Dúirt roinnt daoine gur gá tuilleadh acmhainní a thabhairt don Choiste ionas gur féidir leis a dhualgais a chomhlíonadh:

*Coiste na Gaeilge needs to step up, and it probably needs additional resources.* <sup>(PS13)</sup>

Ina theannta sin aithítear go mbeadh sé de bhuntáiste téarmaí tagartha an Choiste a nuashonrú. Scríobhadh na téarmaí reatha sular ceapadh Oifigeach Gaeilge lánaimseartha agus luaigh roinnt ball den Choiste gur cháipéis ghairid ghinearálta atá ann.

*An cháipéisíocht a bhaineann le Coiste na Gaeilge, tá sé sách simplí. Tá sé sách gairid.*

<sup>(FA6)</sup>

Luaigh roinnt agallaithe nach ndéantar cur síos soiléir sna téarmaí tagartha reatha ar chúraimí Choiste na Gaeilge ná ar a chaidreamh leis an Oifigeach Gaeilge.

*Tá sé ráite ag an gCoiste cúpla babhta anois go mbraitheann muid nach bhfreastalaíonn na téarmaí tagartha reatha chomh maith agus ab fhéidir leo ar an nGaeilge agus ar an gcaidreamh atá ann idir an Coiste agus an tOifigeach.* <sup>(FP14)</sup>

## 2.8.2.1

**Coiste na Gaeilge (The Irish Language Committee)**

*Insight: There is a sentiment among committee members and other senior staff that Coiste na Gaeilge is not operating as effectively as it could.*

Coiste na Gaeilge oversees the policies and procedures that are in place to promote the use of the Irish language on campus. The function and composition of Coiste na Gaeilge are outlined in Section 1.4.2. Interviewees suggested that the current mode of operation limits the effectiveness of the Committee, particularly in light of its limited meeting schedule:

*I don't feel that Coiste na Gaeilge is as active as it could be, or as effective, when we only see one another [four times a year].* (PS4, author's translation)

More broadly, interviewees also raised concerns about capacity, suggesting that the Committee may require stronger resourcing in order to fulfil its remit:

*Coiste na Gaeilge needs to step up, and it probably needs additional resources.* (PS13)

It is also acknowledged that the terms of reference of Coiste na Gaeilge would benefit from being updated. The current terms were written before a full-time Oifigeach Gaeilge was appointed, and a number of members of the Coiste noted that the document is short and unspecific:

*The paperwork relating to Coiste na Gaeilge is quite simple. It's quite short.* (AS6, author's translation)

Indeed, several interviewees stated that the current terms of reference do not clearly define either the remit of Coiste na Gaeilge or its relationship with the Oifigeach Gaeilge:

*The Committee has said a few times now that we feel that the current terms of reference don't serve the Irish language, or the relationship between the Committee and the Oifigeach Gaeilge, as well as they could.* (PS14, author's translation)

Luaigh na hagallaithe céanna gurbh fhiú an caidreamh idir an tOifigeach agus an Coiste a shoiléiriú:

*Bheadh soiléiriú sa chaidreamh agus an gaol idir an tOifigeach agus an Coiste a shainmhíniú [...] sílim go mbeadh sé sin an-chabhrach don Oifig [...] ach don Choiste féin chomh maith.* <sup>(FP14)</sup>

Ina theannta sin, cuireadh imní in iúl go bhfuil na téarmaí tagartha róghinearálta agus go bhfuil ábhair ar leith doiléir:

*[Tá] na téarmaí tagartha atá ann faoi láthair an-ghinearálta agus fágann siad an-chuid le díospóireacht a dhéanamh air... níl na treoirlínte soiléir go maith.* <sup>(FP14)</sup>

I measc na moltaí i gCuid 3.1 den tuarascáil moltar go ndéanfaí nuashonrú ar théarmaí tagartha Choiste na Gaeilge mar chuid d'athbhreithniú níos leithne ar an gcomhlíonadh i gcomhthéacs na Gaeilge san Ollscoil.

#### 2.8.2.2

#### Oifigeach na dTeangacha Oifigiúla

**Léargas:** *Agus an tuarascáil seo á scríobh níl Oifigeach na dTeangacha Oifigiúla ceaptha in OMN agus mar sin de, níl na dualgais reachtúla á gcomhlíonadh ag an Ollscoil.*

Cuireann Alt 4B d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla 2003 (arna leasú in 2021) ceangal ar cheannaire gach comhlachta phoiblí comhalta foirne eile den chomhlacht a cheapadh, ón mbainistíocht shinsearach, chun formhaoirsiú a dhéanamh ar chomhlíonadh oibleagáidí an chomhlachta faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla. Is fiú a lua nach ról iomlán nua san Ollscoil é seo: ceapadh Oifigeach na dTeangacha Oifigiúla in 2008, ach níor líonadh an post sin tar éis don Oifigeach sin imeacht ón ról.

Tá deis straitéiseach ag baint le ceapadh Oifigeach na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (i) chun an struchtúr freagrachta idir Oifigeach na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, an tOifigeach Gaeilge, agus Coiste na Gaeilge a shoiléiriú; (ii) chun ról monatóireachta an Choiste a threisiú, agus (iii) chun comhlíonadh na ndualgas teanga a leabú i ngnáthphróisis rialachais.

#### 2.8.2.3

#### Dul i dtreo creat comhordaithe comhlíontachta

**Léargas:** *Is iomaí ball foirne a d'fhreagair an suirbhé nach dtuigeann na dualgais atá ar an Ollscoil faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla.*

Tá tuiscint ar dhualgais na hOllscoile faoin Acht ag roinnt baill foirne shinsearacha in Oifig na nAcmhainní Daonna, Seirbhísí na Teicneolaíochta Faisnéise agus in Oifig na Cumarsáide, mar gheall air go bhfuil taithí acu ar cheisteanna comhlíonta nó toisc go mbíonn siad ag obair go dlúth le hOifig

In particular, they highlighted the value of clarifying the relationship between the Coiste and the Officer:

*I think it would be very helpful to the Oifigeach Gaeilge [...] but also to Coiste na Gaeilge if the relationship between the Oifigeach and the Coiste were clarified and defined.* (PS14, author's translation)

Concerns were also raised that the terms of reference are too general, leaving certain matters open to interpretation:

*The current terms of reference are very general and they leave a lot of matters open to debate... The guidelines are not clear enough.* (PS14, author's translation)

Among the recommendations in Section 3.1 of the report is a proposal that the terms of reference of Coiste na Gaeilge be updated, in the context of a wider review of Irish-language compliance liability.

#### 2.8.2.2

#### Official Languages Officer

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**Insight:** *As of the time of writing, MU has not appointed an Official Languages Officer and is therefore not currently meeting its statutory obligations.*

Section 4B of the Official Languages Act 2003 (as amended in 2021) requires the head of each public body to appoint a member of senior management to oversee, and report on, the body's performance of its obligations under the Official Languages Act. It is also worth noting that this is not an entirely new function within the institution. The University appointed an Official Languages Act Officer in 2008; however, following the departure of the post-holder, the role was not filled again.

The imminent appointment of the Official Languages Officer presents a strategic opportunity to (i) clarify reporting and accountability structures between the Official Languages Officer, the Irish Language Officer, and Coiste na Gaeilge, (ii) reinforce the committee's oversight role in monitoring Irish-language obligations, and (iii) embed Irish-language compliance reporting within routine institutional governance processes.

#### 2.8.2.3

#### Towards a co-ordinated compliance framework

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**Insight:** *Awareness of the University's obligations under the Official Languages Act is inconsistent among staff respondents to the survey.*

Some senior staff members in key areas such as HR, IT, and Communications are aware of the University's statutory obligations under the Act, often due to past compliance experience or close working relationships with Oifig na Gaeilge. However, there is currently no dedicated forum or targeted

na Gaeilge. Mar sin féin, níl aon fhóram ná cúrsa oiliúna ar fáil san Ollscoil faoi láthair chun daoine a chur ar an eolas faoi dhualgais an Achta.

De réir mar a thugtar na dualgais reachtúla isteach agus de réir mar a eisítear treoir oifigiúil don earnáil phoiblí maidir le comhlíonadh rachadh sé chun tairbhe don Ollscoil fóram a chur ar bun ar mhaithe le feasacht a ardú. Tríd an bhfóram sin, bheifí in ann na páirtithe leasmhara a choinneáil ar an eolas maidir leis na treoracha is déanaí agus an dea-chleachtas a roinnt. Tá eiseamláir ar fáil i gCoiste Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, a cuireadh ar bun in COBÁC sa bhliain 2022. Fóram atá ann a thugann le chéile ionadaithe ó na hOifigí Acmhainní Daonna, Airgeadais, Teicneolaíocht Faisnéise agus Cumarsáide, i measc páirtithe leasmhara eile, chun comhordú a dhéanamh ar chur i bhfeidhm Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla.

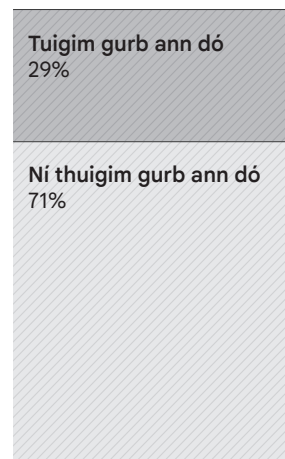
Moltar i gCuid 3.1.5 den tuarascáil seo Fóram tras-aonaid Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla a chur ar bun mar spás inar féidir eolas, ceisteanna agus dea-chleachtas maidir le cur i bhfeidhm an Achta a roinnt. Ina theannta sin, moltar Plean Gnímh Institiúideach don Ghaeilge a chur ar fáil: cáipéis oifigiúil polasaí teanga a stiúrfaidh obair Oifig na Gaeilge, Oifigeach na dTeangacha Oifigiúla agus Choiste na Gaeilge.

### Léaráid 19: Tuiscint ar Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021

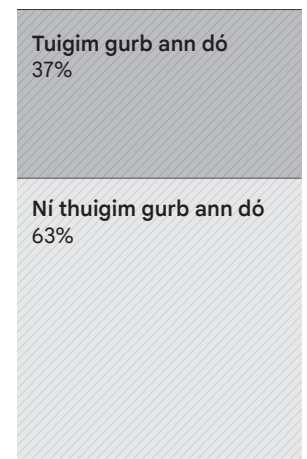
#### Baill foirne neamhadúla



#### Baill foirne acadúla



#### Na baill foirne uile



#### 2.8.2.4

#### Tacaíocht institiúideach

**Léargas:** Tá tuairim láidir i measc na foirne agus na mac léinn araon go bhfuil míréir idir an meas atá ag pobal na hOllscoile ar an nGaeilge agus an tacaíocht institiúideach a thugtar don teanga.

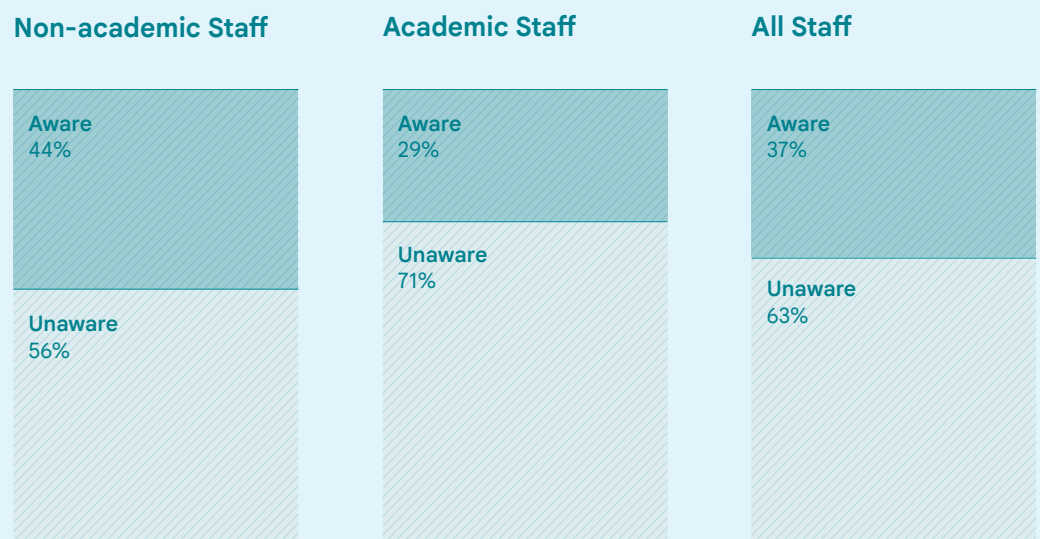
Cé go bhfuil meas ag daoine ar an nGaeilge ar fud na hOllscoile, bhraith go leor agallaithe nach mbíonn an dea-thoil céanna á léiriú i gcónaí ag ceannaireacht shinsearach na hOllscoile maidir le cur i bhfeidhm an pholasaí, leis an maoiniú a thugtar don teanga, ná le cúrsaí rialachais. Mar a dúirt ball foirne amháin:

training in place to raise awareness more broadly.

As the statutory duties are introduced and official guidance for public sector compliance is issued, the establishment of a forum for awareness-raising would be beneficial. Such a space would allow key stakeholders to stay informed of developments and share best practices. A model for such a forum can be found at UCD, where Coiste Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (the Official Languages Act Committee) was established in 2022. This working group brings together representatives from HR, Finance, IT, Communications and other key functions to coordinate implementation of the Official Languages Act.

Section 3.1.5 of this report contains recommendations that an Official Languages Act Forum be established as a space for sharing knowledge, concerns and best practice about the implementation of the Act. Moreover, a recommendation is made that the University prepare an institutional Irish Language Action Plan as an explicit language policy document to guide the work of Oifig na Gaeilge, the Official Languages Officer, and Coiste na Gaeilge.

### Léaráid 19: Awareness of the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021



#### 2.8.2.4

#### Institutional support

**Insight:** *There is a strong sense among both staff and students that the level of institutional support for Irish does not reflect the importance placed on the language by the wider University community.*

While Irish is widely valued across the University, many interviewees felt this goodwill is not consistently matched by senior leadership in relation to Irish-language policy and its implementation, sustained resourcing, or clear governance oversight. As one member of staff suggested:

*Tacaíocht institiúideach (don Ghaeilge),  
níl sé sin ann, ní dóigh liom, go ginearálta,  
faoi láthair. Beidh le feiscint cén feabhas  
a thiocfaidh air sin nuair a thiocfaidh an  
reachtaíocht nua isteach...* (FP4)

Luaigh roinnt ball foirne freisin go dtiteann freagracht na Gaeilge ar Oifig an Chláraitheora, a bhfuil Oifig na Gaeilge faoina scáth. Táthar den tuairim nach bhfuil an cúlra teanga, na hacmhainní ná an tacaíocht institiúideach a theastaíonn san oifig sin chun tograí pleanála agus polasaí teanga a mhaoirsiú.

*Ní bhíonn aon tuiscint... just titeann an cúram  
[ar an gCláraitheoir] trí thimpiste, agus  
pléitear leis [an nGaeilge] mar afterthought.*  
(FP4)

Meastar go bhfuil bearna ann idir dea-thoil an phobail agus an tacaíocht struchtúrtha atá ar fáil don Ghaeilge agus mar gheall air sin tá ábhair imní ann maidir le hinbhuanaitheacht agus éifeachtacht chur chuige na hOllscoile i dtaca le cur chun cinn na teanga. De réir mar a thagann oibleagáidí reachtúla i bhfeidhm beidh ar an Ollscoil ceannaireacht shoiléir a thabhairt agus úinéireacht láidir a ghlacadh ar a polasaí i leith na Gaeilge agus é a chur i bhfeidhm go héifeachtach.

Agus í ag scríobh faoin nGaeilge i gColáiste Phádraig, luaigh Ní Mhaonaigh (2022: 215) go rabhthas ‘always dependent on the right students, the right attitude and the right people in authority working for it. The slightest change in mind-set could, and did, impact greatly on how the language was perceived and supported on campus.’ Tá dinimic den chineál céanna le sonrú in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad, áit a mbíonn an tacaíocht a thugtar don Ghaeilge ag brath go mór ar mheonta institiúideacha, ar an gceannaireacht, agus ar thiomantas daoine faoi leith.

*There is generally no institutional support (for Irish) at the moment. We'll see whether any improvement happens when the new legislation takes effect...* (PS4, author's translation)

Several staff noted that responsibility for Irish falls by default to the office of the Registrar under whose remit Oifig na Gaeilge sits. It is felt that this office may not have the language background, capacity, or institutional support required to oversee language planning and policy initiatives.

*They don't have any understanding... the responsibility [for Irish] just happens to fall [on the Registrar] and it's treated as an afterthought.* (PS4, author's translation)

This perceived gap between community goodwill and structural support raises concerns about the sustainability and effectiveness of the University's approach to promoting Irish. As new statutory obligations come into effect, the need for clearer leadership and stronger institutional ownership of Irish-language policy and implementation becomes more pressing.

Writing on Irish in St Patrick's College, Ní Mhaonaigh (2022: 215) commented that the language was 'always dependent on the right students, the right attitude and the right people in authority working for it. The slightest change in mind-set could, and did, impact greatly on how the language was perceived and supported on campus.' A similar dynamic is evident at Maynooth University, where support for Irish has likewise depended to a significant degree on institutional attitudes, leadership, and the commitment of certain individuals.

## 2.9 An caidreamh seachtrach

### Sa chuid seo, déantar plé ar an gcaidreamh atá idir OMN agus eagraíochtaí Gaeilge taobh amuigh den Ollscoil

Tugtar léargas, ar dtús, ar an gcaidreamh atá idir pobal na Gaeilge san Ollscoil agus pobal na Gaeilge i mbaile Mhaigh Nuad, i gContae Chill Dara, agus i nGaeltacht na Mí. Ina dhiaidh sin, pléitear an caidreamh le céimithe de chuid na hOllscoile, agus ar deireadh, tugtar tuairisc ar staid reatha na Gaeilge sa Centre Culturel Irlandais i bPáras, áit a bhfuil dlúthbhaint aige le Maigh Nuad.

Deiseanna atá sa chaidreamh sin chun ról na hOllscoile maidir le hathneartú na teanga a threisiú, agus naisc níos láidre a chothú le pobail Ghaeilge taobh amuigh de champas na hOllscoile.

#### 2.9.1 An caidreamh idir an Ollscoil agus an ceantar áitiúil

##### 2.9.1.1 Maigh Nuad

Is grúpa pobail é Gaeilge Nuada a bunaíodh chun an Ghaeilge agus an cultúr Gaelach a chur chun cinn i gceantar Mhaigh Nuad. Tá tuairim ann i measc bhail Ghaeilge Nuada go bhfuil OMN scoite amach ó bhaile Mhaigh Nuad:

*Tá an Ollscoil cosúil le baile eile.* <sup>(TS1)</sup>

Tá sé mar thosaíocht sa Phlean don Ghaeilge i gContae Chill Dara 2024-2030 an ceangal idir Gaeilge Nuada agus OMN a neartú. Moltar ann gur cheart an ceangal sin a chothú, mic léinn a spreagadh chun a bheith ina mbaill ghníomhacha de Ghaeilge Nuada, agus a bheith ag obair as lámh a chéile chun imeachtaí a eagrú i bpáirt le chéile le linn Sheachtain na Gaeilge agus ag amanna eile den bhliain (Cill Dara le Gaeilge 2024: 152-3).

Is léir, mar sin, go bhféadfaí an ceangal idir an Ollscoil agus Gaeilge Nuada a dhoimhniú agus a bhuanú. Bealach amháin leis sin a bhaint amach ná a chinntiú go mbíonn baint ag an Ollscoil le struchtúir phleanála Ghaeilge Nuada; mar shampla, dá mbeadh Oifigeach Gaeilge na hOllscoile ina bhall de choiste na heagraíochta, chinnteodh sé nach mbraithfeadh an caidreamh ar theagmhálacha ad hoc ná ar dhea-mhéin daoine áirithe.

Moltar go n-oibreodh an Ollscoil agus Gaeilge Nuada le chéile le himeachtaí agus deiseanna a bhaineann leis an nGaeilge a chur chun cinn, chun mic léinn, baill foirne agus baill Ghaeilge Nuada a chur ar an eolas maidir leis an méid atá ag tarlú san Ollscoil agus sa cheantar áitiúil.

I measc na moltaí i gCuid 3.1.6, moltar an caidreamh idir Gaeilge Nuada agus OMN a neartú chun go mbeadh saol Gaeilge an bhaile agus na hOllscoile fite fuaite ina chéile.

## 2.9 External relations

This section explores the relationship between Maynooth University and Irish-language organisations outside the University.

It begins with a discussion of relationship between the Irish language community in Maynooth University and Maynooth town, in County Kildare, and in the Gaeltacht regions in County Meath. It then discusses alumni relations, before concluding with a report on the current status of the Irish language in the Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris, an institution with a close connection to Maynooth.

These external relations offer valuable opportunities to strengthen the University's role in language revitalisation, and connect with Irish-speaking communities, beyond the campus.

### 2.9.1 University-local area relations

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#### 2.9.1.1 Maynooth town

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*Gaeilge Nuada* is a community group established to promote the Irish language and culture in the Maynooth area. Some members feel, however, that the University and the town remain somewhat separate in practice:

*The University is like a different town.*

(EC1, author's translation)

The Kildare Irish-Language Plan 2024–2030 identifies strengthening the relationship between *Gaeilge Nuada* and Maynooth University as one of its priorities. It notes that a connection with the University should be nurtured, that students should be encouraged to become active in *Gaeilge Nuada*, and that the partnership should continue through jointly organised events during Seachtain na Gaeilge and at other points in the year (Cill Dara le Gaeilge 2024: 152–3).

There is clear potential to build a deeper and more sustained relationship between the University and *Gaeilge Nuada*. One practical step would be to ensure regular University representation in *Gaeilge Nuada*'s planning structures, for example through a member of Oifig na Gaeilge participating on the committee, so that collaboration does not depend on ad hoc contacts or individual goodwill.

It is recommended that the University and *Gaeilge Nuada* promote Irish-medium events and opportunities together so that students, staff, and *Gaeilge Nuada* members are better connected to what is happening in the University and in the local area.

As recommended in Section 3.1.6, establishing formal links between MU and *Gaeilge Nuada* would help to support a more integrated Irish-language ecosystem in Ireland's only university town.

### 2.9.1.2 Contae Chill Dara

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Bíonn OMN ag comhoibriú le Comhairle Contae Chill Dara ar dhá thogra éagsúla cheana. Cuireann siad imeacht dar teideal an Tolg Liteartha ar siúl gach bliain agus cuireann siad maoiniú ar fáil le haghaidh Scríbhneoir Cónaithe in OMN (féach Cuid 1.4.7). Léiríonn an dá shampla sin an méid is féidir a bhaint amach agus an Ollscoil agus an Chomhairle Contae ag obair as lámh a chéile.

Is iomaí deis atá ann chun an caidreamh idir OMN agus Comhairle Contae Chill Dara a neartú chun leas na hOllscoile agus an chontae trí chéile. Dá dtógfaí ar an gcaidreamh sin, d'fhéadfaí:

- níos mó imeachtaí Gaeilge a chur ar siúl san Ollscoil atá oscailte don phobal ionas gur féidir le muintir na háite freastal ar chainteanna, léamha, ceardlanna agus imeachtaí cultúrtha
- spásanna oiriúnacha ar an gcampas a chur ar fáil le haghaidh imeachtaí pobail Gaeilge
- cur leis na deiseanna atá ann chun an Ghaeilge a fheiceáil agus a úsáid i ngnáthshaol an phobail trí imeachtaí a chur ar siúl agus a chur chun cinn le chéile i rith na bliana

Is mó an tionchar a bhíonn ag a leithéid sin d'obair má bhíonn sí rialta. Dá gcuirfí le hacmhainní Oifig na Gaeilge, bheadh an Oifig in ann a bheith i dteagmháil le hOifigeach Gaeilge Chomhairle Contae Chill Dara go rialta agus clár bliantúil a leagan amach. Bheadh an Ollscoil in ann, ar an gcaoi sin, aghaidh a thabhairt ar dheiseanna nua go tapa agus ról níos gníomhaí a ghlacadh i gcur chun cinn na Gaeilge ar fud an chontae, ní hamháin ar an gcampas.

### 2.9.1.3 Gaeltacht na Mí

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Níl ach líon beag institiúidí tríú leibhéal atá in aice na Gaeltachta; tá OMN ar cheann acu. Is ceantar bríomhar Gaeltachta í Gaeltacht na Mí, Ráth Chairn go háirithe.

Le blianta beaga anuas tá cúrsa cónaithe á reáchtáil ag Comharchumann Ráth Chairn le haghaidh lucht Scéim Chónaithe OMN. Beidh sraith gearrchúrsaí Gaeltachta ar fáil do mhic léinn na Nua-Ghaeilge le linn na bliana acadúla 2025-6.

Bíonn OMN agus Ráth Chairn ag comhoibriú ar thionscadail eile freisin, go hoifigiúil agus go neamhoifigiúil. Tá maoiniú faighte ag Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge ón gComhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta chun an Scríbhneoir Cónaithe a chur ag múineadh na scríbhneoireachta cruthaithí, trí mheán na Gaeilge, do dhaltáí Choláiste Pobail Ráth Chairn. Bíonn ról lárnach ag seanchaithe agus ag amhránaithe Ráth Chairn i bhFéile Ealaíon agus Eagna ó bunaíodh an fhéile. Mar an gcéanna, tá foireann Leabharlann OMN tar éis saineolas a roinnt le tionscadal cartlannaíochta pobail Ráth Chairn.

### 2.9.1.2

#### County Kildare

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Maynooth University already works with Kildare County Council on two Irish-language initiatives: the annual *Tolg Liteartha* literary event and the jointly-funded position of a Writer in Residence at MU (see Section 1.4.7). These examples demonstrate the value of active collaboration between the University and the County Council.

There is strong scope to deepen relationship between MU and Kildare County Council benefit both the University and the wider county. Further collaboration could help to:

- open more University-based Irish-language events to the public, so that local residents can attend talks, readings, workshops, and cultural events
- make available suitable spaces on campus for Irish-language community events
- create simple, regular opportunities for Irish to be visible and used in public life, through joint events, shared publicity, and coordinated planning across the year

This kind of work is most effective when it is sustained rather than occasional. Expanding the resources of *Oifig na Gaeilge* would make it possible to maintain consistent contact with the Kildare County Council Irish Language Officer to plan a yearly programme in advance. It would also help the University to respond quickly to new opportunities and to take a more active role in supporting Irish-language life across the county, not only on campus.

### 2.9.1.3

#### Meath Gaeltacht

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Maynooth University is one of the few major third-level institutions located near an active Gaeltacht region. The Meath Gaeltacht, and Ráth Chairn in particular, is a thriving Irish-speaking region.

For several years, *Comharchumann Ráth Chairn* has hosted an annual residential course for the residents of the *Scéim Chónaithe*. A series of short Gaeltacht courses for students of Irish at MU will also be offered in 2025-6.

There are also other formal and informal connections between MU and Ráth Chairn. For example, *Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge* have secured consecutive funding from an *Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta* (Council for Gaeltacht and Irish-Medium Education) to allow the MU *Scríbhneoir Cónaithe* to teach creative writing in Irish to pupils at *Coláiste Pobail Ráth Chairn*. Singers and storytellers from Ráth Chairn have played an active role in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities annual Arts and Minds Festival since its inception. Similarly, the expertise of MU Library staff has been shared with the Ráth Chairn community archive project.

Aithníonn foireann OMN go bhfuil tuilleadh deiseanna ann chun an caidreamh idir an Ollscoil agus Gaeltacht na Mí a threisiú:

*Tarlaíonn sé go bhfuil Gaeltacht sa réigiún seo fosta – Ráth Chairn [...] déarfainn gur mhaith liom níos mó de cheangal a bheith againn le Gaeltacht Ráth Chairn.* <sup>(FA1)</sup>

Tá deis ann breis imeachtaí a chur ar siúl idir OMN agus Comharchumann Ráth Chairn, go háirithe i bhfianaise a chónagaraí atá an dá eagraíocht dá chéile. Is fiú a lua arís go bhfuil an-suim ag foireann agus ag mic léinn OMN i ndeiseanna tumoideachais Gaeilge: ina measc siúd a léirigh spéis i gcúrsa Gaeilge, dúirt níos mó ná leath na foirne (54%, n = 241/443) agus beagnach dhá thrian de na mic léinn (63%; 898/1426) go mbeadh suim acu tabhairt faoi chúrsa sa Ghaeltacht. Is cinnte go bhféadfaí an t-éileamh sin a shásamh agus cúrsaí á gcur ar siúl i nGaeltacht na Mí.

Moltar i gCuid 3.1.6 den tuarascáil seo an caidreamh idir OMN agus Gaeltacht na Mí a neartú agus a chur ar bhonn foirmeálta trí chomhpháirtíocht struchtúrtha.

## 2.9.2

### Iarmhíic léinn le Gaeilge

Cuid thábhachtach de phobal na Gaeilge nach mbaintear oiread leasa astu agus a d'fhéadfadh is ea iarmhíic léinn na hOllscoile a bhfuil Gaeilge acu. Tá roinnt mhaith céimithe de chuid OMN a bhfuil gairm acu in earnáil na Gaeilge, in earnáil an oideachais, sna meáin, sa Státseirbhís, i réimse na n-ealaíon agus eile, agus an-chuid acu, bíonn siad ag baint úsáid as an nGaeilge ina saol gairmiúil agus pearsanta.

Níl aon struchtúr foirmeálta ann faoi láthair trínar féidir le hiarmhíic léinn OMN páirt a ghlacadh i bpróiseas pleanála teanga na hOllscoile. Luaigh agallaithe áirithe go mbainfeadh an-luach leis an gcaidreamh leis na hiarmhíic léinn a chothú:

*Agus, alumni. Iarscoláirí le Gaeilge. Iarscoláirí atá bogtha amach sa saol; iarscoláirí atá ag plé le Gaeilge, nó iarscoláirí nach bhfuil ag plé le Gaeilge, but atá ag plé – go tábhachtach – le rudaí eile i saol na tíre. Sin goirt eile go mb'fhéidir gur fiú machnamh orthu.* <sup>(FA6)</sup>

Tríd an gceangal a chothú le hiarmhíic léinn a bhfuil Gaeilge acu is féidir próifíl na Gaeilge in OMN a neartú. D'fhéadfadh céimithe a bheith ina n-ambasadóirí Gaeilge taobh amuigh den champas; d'fhéadfaidís a bheith ina meantóirí nó ina ngairmthreoraithe. I gCuid 3.1.6 den tuarascáil seo moltar go ndéanfaí an

There is a recognition among MU staff that there is further untapped potential in the relationship between Maynooth University and the Meath Gaeltacht:

*It happens that there is a Gaeltacht in the area too – Ráth Chairn [...] I'd like us to have a greater connection with the Ráth Chairn Gaeltacht.* (AS1, author's translation)

This proximity presents a unique opportunity for collaborative events with Comharchumann Ráth Chairn. It is worth reiterating that there is a strong appetite for immersive learning experiences across staff and student cohorts in OMN: of those who expressed interest in taking an Irish course, just over half of staff respondents (54%, n = 241/443) and almost two-thirds of student respondents (63%; 898/1426) said they would be interested in attending a course in the Gaeltacht. The proximity of MU to the Meath Gaeltacht offers an excellent opportunity to meet that demand.

In the recommendations outlined in Section 3.1.6 it is proposed that the relationship between MU and the Meath Gaeltacht be developed and formalised through a structured partnership.

## 2.9.2

### Irish-speaking alumni

Alumni represent an important but underutilised resource for the Irish-language community at Maynooth University. Many Irish-speaking graduates go on to careers in education, media, the public service, the arts, and beyond, and a significant number continue to use Irish in their personal and professional lives.

At present, there is no formal structure for the involvement of alumni in language-planning efforts at MU. A number of interviewees noted the potential value of further engagement with alumni:

*And, alumni. Former students with Irish. Former students who have gone out into the world; former students who work with Irish, or those who don't but – importantly – who work with other parts of the country's civic life. Those are other areas that are worth considering.* (AS6, author's translation)

Maintaining links with these Irish-speaking alumni can strengthen the University's Irish-language profile. Alumni can act as ambassadors for Irish beyond the campus, and provide mentoring and career guidance to students and recent graduates. In Section 3.1.6 of the report a recommendation is made that the relationship between Maynooth University and its Irish-speaking alumni be formalised. A potential mechanism for alumni engagement would

caidreamh idir OMN agus iarmhac léinn le Gaeilge a chur ar bhonn foirmeálta. D'fhéadfaí, mar shampla, ionadaí na n-iarmhac léinn a ainmniú ar Choiste na Gaeilge, ról atá ann in ollscoileanna eile in Éirinn.

### 2.9.3

## An Ghaeilge sa Centre Culturel Irlandais

Lóchrann i saol na Gaeilge is ea an Centre Culturel Irlandais (CCI – Ionad Cultúrtha na hÉireann) i bPáras na Fraince. Is é an CCI croílár an chultúir Ghaelaigh ar mhór-roinn na hEorpa agus tá ról tábhachtach aige i gcur chun cinn na Gaeilge i gcomhthéacs ilteangach ilchultúrtha. Tá ról lárnach ag Lárionad na Gaeilge san obair sin, agus í ag tacú le teagasc agus le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge san Ionad ó bhí 2005 ann.

Rinneadh taighde le foghlaimeoirí Gaeilge sa CCI i mí Eanáir 2025 mar chuid den tionscadal *Ár gCampas, Ár dTeanga*. Cuirtear torthaí an taighde sin i láthair sa chuid seo. B'íonann an cur chuige a bhí ag an togra i bPáras agus an mórthionscadal in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad: líon 30 duine suirbhé amach agus rinneadh agallaimh eitneagrafacha le naonúr eile atá ag obair, ag teagasc agus/nó ag staidéar sa CCI.

Léiríonn torthaí an tionscadail go bhfuil pobal díograiseach tiomanta éagsúil foghlaimeoirí Gaeilge sa CCI. Cé go bhfuil an Ollscoil ag tabhairt tacaíocht láidir don Ghaeilge sa CCI, tá dúshlán ann fós maidir le húsáid na teanga a chothú ar bhonn seasmhach agus líonra Gaeilge a fhorbairt i bPáras.

#### 2.9.3.1

### Próifil agus spreagadh na bhfoghlaimeoirí

Is iomaí cúlra atá ag na foghlaimeoirí Gaeilge sa CCI. Is Éireannaigh iad roinnt acu; tá ceangal teaghlaigh ag roinnt eile le hÉirinn; tá suim ag daoine áirithe sa Ghaeilge mar gheall ar a gcuid suimeanna cultúrtha nó intleachtúla. Is iomaí cúis atá acu leis an nGaeilge a fhoghlaim. Dar le haon trian acu baineann an teanga le hoidhreacht agus le féiniúlacht – is bealach í chun filleadh ar a ndúchas, bíodh siad ina nÉireannaigh atá ina gcónaí i bPáras nó ina bhFraincigh de bhunadh na hÉireann. Is mar seo a mhínigh freagróir amháin an scéal:

*Probably a reconnection with my origins.  
I am nearing retirement, working less hours,  
so learning (or relearning) Irish will hopefully  
boost the brain cells.* <sup>(CCI1)</sup>

I gcás foghlaimeoirí áirithe eile, is é ceol traidisiúnta na hÉireann a spreag a suim sa Ghaeilge i dtosach:

*I would say that music was the vector that  
helped [me start learning Irish].* <sup>(CCI2)</sup>

be an alumni representative on Coiste na Gaeilge, a role that exists on other universities' Irish language committees.

### 2.9.3

## Irish in the Centre Culturel Irlandais

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The Centre Culturel Irlandais (CCI – the Irish Cultural Centre) in Paris occupies a unique position in the Irish-language landscape. As a beacon of Irish cultural life on the European continent, it plays a central role in sustaining and promoting Irish in a multilingual, multicultural environment. Lárionad na Gaeilge plays an important part in this work, supporting the teaching and promotion of Irish within the Centre since 2005.

Research was conducted with Irish-language learners at the CCI in January 2025 as part of the *Ár gCampas, Ár dTeanga* project. The findings of that research are presented in this section. The approach adopted in Paris mirrored that of the main study in Maynooth: 30 people completed a survey, and ethnographic interviews were conducted with a further nine individuals who work, teach and/or study at the CCI.

The results show a passionate, diverse, and committed community of language learners. While institutional backing for Irish at the CCI is strong, challenges remain in fostering consistent language use and building a wider Irish-speaking ecosystem in Paris.

#### 2.9.3.1

### Learner profile and motivation

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Students of Irish at the CCI come from a wide range of backgrounds. Some are Irish; others have family connections to Ireland; and others are drawn to the language through cultural or intellectual interests. Learners described several overlapping motivations for studying Irish. For around one third, the language is bound up with heritage and identity, offering a way to reconnect with their roots, whether as Irish people living in Paris or as French people of Irish descent. As one respondent explained:

*Probably a reconnection with my origins. I am nearing retirement, working less hours, so learning (or relearning) Irish will hopefully boost the brain cells.* <sup>(CCI1)</sup>

Others linked their interest in Irish to cultural engagement, particularly traditional Irish music:

*I would say that music was the vector that helped [me start learning Irish].* <sup>(CCI2)</sup>

Rinne grúpa foghlaimeoirí eile a spreagadh a mhíniú i gcomhthéacs na suime atá acu i dteangacha go ginearálta. Bhí cainteoirí Briotánaise, ar teanga Cheilteach eile í, ina measc:

*Étant issu d'une grande famille mi-Vendéenne, mi-Bretonne, j'ai baigné dans une atmosphère Celtique. [Is as teaghlach mór leath-Vendée, leath-Bhriotánach mé, agus mar sin de, tógadh i dtimpeallacht Cheilteach mé.]<sup>(CCI3)</sup>*

Tá dinimic ar leith ag baint leis na ranganna Gaeilge sa CCI mar gheall ar an éagsúlacht spreagtha sin agus an éagsúlacht atá i gcúlraí na bhfoghlaimeoirí.

### 2.9.3.2 Nósanna úsáide

Is sa seomra ranga is mó a úsáideann foghlaimeoirí Gaeilge an CCI an teanga. Ina theannta sin, baineann roinnt foghlaimeoirí úsáid as an teanga anois is arís ag ciorcail chomhrá nó ag imeachtaí cultúrtha.

Baineann gach foghlaimeoir úsáid as an nGaeilge sna ranganna seachtainiúla sa CCI; i gcás roinnt foghlaimeoirí, is sa seomra ranga amháin a bhaineann siad úsáid as an teanga go rialta.

*[J'utilise l'Irlandais] dans les cours d'irlandais au CCI uniquement. [Ní bhainim úsáid as an nGaeilge ach amháin sna ranganna sa CCI.]<sup>(CCI4)</sup>*

Taobh amuigh den seomra ranga, freastalaíonn mórán foghlaimeoirí ar an tob-Ghaeltacht arna eagrú ag *Gaeltacht-sur-Seine*, arb í an chraobh áitiúil de Chonradh na Gaeilge í. Úsáideann foghlaimeoirí áirithe an Ghaeilge lena gcairde, lena bpáirtithe nó le teagmhálaithe ar líne, agus bíonn cuid mhaith acu ag brath ar na meáin agus ar uirlisí féinstaidéir, leithéidí TG4, podchraoltaí Gaeilge agus aipeanna. Glacann foghlaimeoirí áirithe páirt i ngrúpa amhránaíochta ar an sean-nós. Is beag duine acu a bhíonn ag úsáid na teanga ar bhonn sóisialta go laethúil.

Is i spásanna struchtúrtha pleanáilte, leithéidí an CCI nó *Gaeltacht-sur-Seine*, a bhítear ag úsáid na Gaeilge i bPáras, rud a léiríonn a thábhachtaí atá spreagadh na bhfoghlaimeoirí agus an tacaíocht institiúideach a thugtar dóibh.

### 2.9.3.3 Pobal agus luach na Gaeilge

Chuir roinnt foghlaimeoirí Gaeilge sa CCI in iúl go bhfuil luach faoi leith ag baint leis an nGaeilge a fhoghlaim. Is lárionad cothaithe pobail iad na ranganna Gaeilge agus bhí an-mhuintearas idir na foghlaimeoirí is tiomanta. Is é an CCI an áit a nascann na heagraíochtaí agus na grúpaí Gaeilge ar fad i bPáras le chéile,

A further group framed their motivation in terms of an interest in languages more generally. Several learners described themselves as language enthusiasts, including speakers or learners of Breton, a fellow Celtic language:

*Étant issu d'une grande famille mi-Vendéenne, mi-Bretonne, j'ai baigné dans une atmosphère Celtique. [As I come from a large family that is half Vendéen and half Breton, I grew up immersed in a Celtic atmosphere.]*  
(CCI3)

Taken together, this mix of motivations contributes to a diverse and committed community of learners and shapes the distinctive dynamic of Irish classes at the CCI.

### 2.9.3.2

#### Usage

Irish is primarily used within structured classroom settings. Many learners take part in additional informal use during occasional meetups or cultural events.

All learners use Irish in weekly classes at the CCI; the classroom is often the *only* regular context for Irish-language interaction.

*[J'utilise l'Irlandais] dans les cours d'irlandais au CCI uniquement. [I only use Irish in the Irish lessons at the CCI.]*<sup>(CCI4)</sup>

Outside the classroom, many learners attend the monthly Pop-Up Gaeltacht organised by *Gaeltacht-sur-Seine*, the local branch of Conradh na Gaeilge. A handful use Irish with friends, partners, or online contacts, while many rely on media and self-study tools such as TG4, Irish-language podcasts and apps. Some participate in traditional Irish singing sessions. Ultimately, daily social use is rare, even among committed learners.

These patterns reflect a broader reality: the social use of Irish in Paris is largely confined to structured, intentional spaces such as at the CCI or *Gaeltacht-sur-Seine*. This dynamic accentuates the importance of learner motivation and institutional support.

### 2.9.3.3

#### Community and the value of Irish

Beyond linguistic proficiency, learners emphasised the wider value that Irish brings to their lives at the CCI. Classes function not only as sites of formal instruction, but also as focal points for community building. A strong sense of belonging has emerged among committed learners, with classes acting as a nucleus that links the CCI with wider Irish-language activity in Paris, most

*Gaeltacht-sur-Seine*, seisiúin cheoil thraidisiúnta agus imeachtaí cultúrtha eile ina measc.

*It is a very interesting experience as it is a strong and friendly community as the Centre Culturel provides good events.* (SCCI 1)

*Excellent community, very good teacher, appreciate the subtlety of the language and its grammar.* (SCCI 5)

Luaigh foghlaimoirí áirithe go gcuireann an Ghaeilge lena saol. Tá suim níos doimhne ag roinnt daoine sa teanga féin tar éis dul chuig na ranganna:

*I have found it an enjoyable experience, and have come to appreciate the richness of the language, something I was very ignorant of when I was in school.* (SCCI 6)

Luaigh daoine eile go mbíonn sásamh ag baint le dul chun cinn a dhéanamh, nó le dul ar ais chuig an teanga:

*I feel I'm progressing from year to year.* (SCCI 16)

*J'aime le fait de réapprendre quelque chose de complètement nouveau. [Is maith liom go bhfuil rud iomlán nua á athfhoghlaim agam.]* (SCCI 18)

Luadh an luach a bhaineann leis na dianchúrsaí lae a chuireann Lárionad na Gaeilge ar siúl sa CCI chun na foghlaimoirí a ullmhú le haghaidh scrúduithe TEG. Luaigh rannpháirtí áirithe gur maith leo deiseanna tumoideachais:

*I loved the intensive Saturday course. I would love if there was a Gaeltacht week in Paris at the Centre.* (SCCI 10)

Luaigh roinnt foghlaimoirí go ndeachaigh siad chuig an nGaeltacht chun tabhairt faoi dhianchúrsa Gaeilge chun cur lena gcuid foghlama i bPáras. Is fiú a lua gur moladh ardchaighdeán na ranganna Gaeilge arís is arís eile, agus dúradh gur croílár phobal Gaeilge Pháras iad. Moladh tiomantas agus fuinneamh an mhúinteora Gaeilge go hard:

*Notre professeur [...] est un professeur génial! [Is múinteoir iontach é [...] ár múinteoir!]* (SCCI 7)

notably *Gaeltacht-sur-Seine*, as well as with traditional music sessions and other cultural events.

*It is a very interesting experience as it is a strong and friendly community as the Centre Culturel provides good events.* (CCIS 1)

*Excellent community, very good teacher, appreciate the subtlety of the language and its grammar.* (CCIS 5)

Learners also highlighted the personal enrichment gained from studying Irish. For some, it has opened up a deeper appreciation of the language itself:

*I have found it an enjoyable experience, and have come to appreciate the richness of the language, something I was very ignorant of when I was in school.* (CCIS 6)

Others spoke of the satisfaction of steady progress, or of the pleasure of rediscovering the language:

*I feel I'm progressing from year to year.* (CCIS 16)

*J'aime le fait de réapprendre quelque chose de complètement nouveau. [I like the fact that I am relearning something completely new.]*  
(CCIS 18)

The intensive Irish day-courses which are offered by *Lárionad na Gaeilge* in part to help learners prepare for TEG examinations, also emerged as a valued element of the learning experience in the CCI. One participant highlighted the appeal of more immersive formats:

*I loved the intensive Saturday course. I would love if there was a Gaeltacht week in Paris at the Centre.* (CCIS 10)

A number of learners also described travelling to the Gaeltacht to undertake intensive Irish courses as a complement to their study in Paris. Finally, the quality of teaching was consistently singled out as a cornerstone of this community. Students praised the dedication and energy of their instructor:

*Notre professeur [...] est un professeur génial! [Our teacher [...] is a brilliant teacher!]* (CCIS 7)

*Is múinteoir den scoth é [Múinteoir] ... Is múinteoir díograiseach agus fuinniúil [é] agus déanann sé jab iontach.* <sup>(SCCI 12)</sup>

Léirítear sna sleachta sin nach samhlaíonn foghlaimeoirí Gaeilge an CCI an teanga le hábhar ranga amháin; cuireann sí go mór lena saol intleachtúil, tugann sí daoine le chéile, agus cothaíonn sí pobal.

#### 2.9.3.4

#### Dúshlán agus deiseanna

In ainneoin an tiomantais láidir atá ann sa CCI do theagasc agus do chur chun cinn na Gaeilge, tugann an taighde le fios go mbíonn roinnt dúshlán praiticiúil fós roimh fhoghlaimeoirí agus iad ag iarraidh plé leis an teanga ar bhonn rialta. Is é an bac is mó ná nach mbíonn go leor deiseanna ag daoine an Ghaeilge a úsáid go laethúil. Níl an teanga leabaithe i ngnáthshaol na bhfoghlaimeoirí agus bíonn sé deacair ar na foghlaimeoirí atá ardspreagtha, fiú amháin, an teanga a úsáid go rialta taobh amuigh den seomra ranga.

Baineann an dara deacracht leis an ábhar céanna: ní bhíonn mórán spásanna ar fáil ag na foghlaimeoirí inar féidir leo an teanga a chleachtadh ar bhonn neamhfhoirmiúil agus iad ar a suaimhneas. Ba é a leithéid de spásanna cleachtaidh an rud ba mhó a bhí ó na foghlaimeoirí a ghlac páirt sa taighde seo. Bíonn sé deacair dul chun cinn a dhéanamh má bhíonn an fhoghlaim agus an cleachtadh easnamhach mar gheall ar easpa deiseanna úsáide.

Constaic eile a chuir foghlaimeoirí áirithe in iúl ná nach bhfuil líonra piarthacaíochta acu. Bíonn siad ag obair ina n-aonar gan fáil a bheith acu ar líonraí comhordaithe foghlaimeoirí, ar chomrádaithe staidéir, ná ar ghrúpaí foghlama neamhfhoirmiúla, rudaí a spreagann iad chun seilbh a ghlacadh ar a gcuid foghlama féin ar bhonn leanúnach. I gcás na bhfoghlaimeoirí sin is caitheamh aimsire aonair í an Ghaeilge, rud a fhágann nach mbíonn an-mhuinín acu astu féin.

Léiríonn na constaicí sin nach bhfeictear agus nach n-úsáidtear an Gaeilge sa CCI oiread agus a d'fhéadfaí. Taobh amuigh de ranganna an CCI agus d'imeachtaí eagraithe, is beag spás atá ag an nGaeilge i ngnáthshaol mórán foghlaimeoirí. Sa CCI féin, fiú amháin, ní bhíonn an Ghaeilge an-fheiceálach ach le linn imeachtaí sceidealaithe. Tá na ranganna Gaeilge ar ardchaighdeán, ach beidh níos mó ná sin ag teastáil chun úsáid laethúil na Gaeilge a neartú: beidh deiseanna reatha ag teastáil ina mbíonn na foghlaimeoirí in ann an teanga a chleachtadh le daoine eile, idir fhoghlaimeoirí agus chainteoirí líofa.

*[Teacher] is an excellent teacher ... [He is] an enthusiastic and energetic teacher and he does a remarkable job.* (CCIS 12, author's translation)

Together, these testimonies illustrate how Irish at the CCI is experienced not simply as a classroom subject but as a source of cultural connection, intellectual enrichment, and communal belonging.

#### 2.9.3.4

#### Challenges and opportunities

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Despite the CCI's strong institutional commitment to teaching and promoting Irish, the research indicates that a number of practical challenges continue to limit learners' sustained engagement with the language. In particular, opportunities for everyday use remain constrained. For many learners, Irish is not embedded in their social routines, which means that even motivated students can struggle to move beyond the classroom and into regular, spontaneous interaction.

This is closely linked to a second issue: the relative scarcity of informal, low-pressure practice spaces. Learners frequently expressed a desire for more consistent opportunities to use Irish in relaxed settings, where participation does not depend on a special event or a formal class structure. Without such "normalised" contexts, language use can become episodic, and progress may feel difficult to maintain between scheduled courses.

A further barrier is the absence of clear peer-support structures. Many learners report studying alone, without easy access to coordinated learner networks, study partners, or informal groups that can provide encouragement, accountability, and continuity. This lack of social infrastructure reinforces the sense that Irish is something pursued individually rather than collectively, reducing the likelihood that learners will develop confidence over time.

Taken together, these factors contribute to a wider visibility gap. Outside specific CCI spaces and programmed events, Irish can remain largely "invisible" in learners' day-to-day lives, and, in some cases, even within the CCI itself beyond designated activities. Addressing this gap will require not only high-quality teaching, but also the deliberate creation of regular, socially supported opportunities that make Irish easier to practise, easier to share with others, and more consistently present in learners' everyday experience.

### 2.9.3.5 **Moltaí agus conclúidí**

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D'eascair roinnt moltaí praiticiúla as an staidéar seo a d'fhéadfadh dul chun leasa foghlaimeoirí Gaeilge sa CCI agus a neartódh an ról atá ag an Centre mar ghníomhaí polasaí Gaeilge atá ar thús cadhnaíochta ar an Mór-Roinn.

#### **Breis deiseanna cleachtaidh**

Bíonn imeachtaí neamhfhoirmiúla ar siúl ag an n*Gaeltacht-sur-Seine*, ar nós ciorcail chomhrá agus ceardlanna amhránaíochta. Moltar breis imeachtaí mar sin a chur ar siúl chun deis a thabhairt d'fhoghlaimeoirí a gcuid Gaeilge a úsáid i gcomhthéacsanna réchúiseacha san 'fhíorshaol'.

#### **Feiceálacht**

Moltar cur le húsáid na Gaeilge ar chomharthaí an CCI agus sa chumarsáid a dhéantar leis an bpobal chun cur le feiceálacht na Gaeilge i dtírdhreach teanga an Ionaid.

#### **An clár cultúrtha**

Moltar imeachtaí a chur ar siúl i gcónaí ina gcaitear léas ar an gcultúr Gaelach (idir cheolchoirmeacha, scannáin agus imeachtaí liteartha). Moltar a chinntiú go mbíonn rochtain acu siúd nach bhfuil Gaeilge acu ar na himeachtaí céanna (m.sh. tríd an ábhar a chur ar fáil go dátheangach).

#### **Comhoibriú agus cothú pobail**

An caidreamh a chothú idir an CCI agus eagraíochtaí eile i bPáras a bhíonn ag cur na Gaeilge/ na dteangacha Ceilteacha eile chun cinn.

#### **Cónaitheachtaí**

Moltar cur le líon na gcónaitheachtaí Gaeilge sa CCI agus caidreamh a chothú idir na cónaitheoirí sin agus na foghlaimeoirí Gaeilge sa Centre.

#### **Acmhainní digiteacha agus foghlama**

Moltar cur leis na hacmhainní Gaeilge atá ag an *médiathèque* chun tacú leis na foghlaimeoirí agus iad i mbun foghlaim neamhspleách.

Tá na moltaí thuasluaite ag teacht go dlúth leis an straitéis Ghaeilge atá á cur le chéile ag an CCI, i gcomhar le Lárionad na Gaeilge, faoi láthair. Bunús fianaise-bhunaithe atá sna torthaí a chuirtear i láthair sa tuarascáil seo a thacóidh le forbairt na straitéise.

Spriocanna de chuid OMN a leagtar amach sa Phlean Straitéiseach iad an t-idirnáisiúnú agus comhpháirtíochtaí fiúntacha a chothú. Tagann an chomhpháirtíocht idir Lárionad na Gaeilge agus an CCI go láidir leis an tiomantas sin trí phobal bríomhar foghlama Gaeilge a chothú i bPáras: tá tionchar dearfach fadtéarmach á imirt ag an gcomhpháirtíocht ar na foghlaimeoirí, ar an dá chomhpháirtí, agus ar phobal iomlán na Gaeilge.

### 2.9.3.5

#### Recommendations and conclusions

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The findings of this study point to a number of practical steps that could benefit learners of Irish in the CCI and reinforce the role of the Centre as a leading Irish language policy actor in Europe.

##### **Expanded practice opportunities**

Provide more, and support existing, informal conversation sessions such as *Gaeltacht-sur-Seine*, Irish singing workshops, and social events that allow learners to practice their Irish in relaxed, real-world contexts.

##### **Visibility**

Increase the use of Irish in signage, communications, and public messaging within the CCI, foregrounding Irish in the linguistic landscape.

##### **Cultural programming**

Continue to offer events that highlight Irish-language culture (e.g. concerts, film screenings, literary events) while ensuring accessibility for learners and non-speakers (e.g. bilingual materials, subtitled content).

##### **Collaborations and community-building**

Foster partnerships with Irish language organisations and other Celtic-language communities in Paris, and with Irish-language organisations in other European cities.

##### **Residencies**

Increase the number of Irish-language residencies and foster interaction between Irish-speaking artists-in-residence and learners of Irish at the CCI.

##### **Digital and learning resources**

Enhance the *médiathèque's* Irish language offerings to support independent learning.

The recommendations above align closely with the Irish-language strategy currently being drafted by the CCI in collaboration with Lárionad na Gaeilge. Moreover, the results outlined in this report provide an evidence base to support the development of the strategy.

The partnership between Lárionad na Gaeilge and the CCI fulfills a core ambition as articulated in MU's Strategic Plan. By cultivating a dynamic learning community in Paris the Lárionad and the CCI exemplify the University's strategic commitment to both internationalisation and "enabling meaningful partnerships," creating long-term positive impacts for both partners, for learners, and for the Irish language community as a whole.

# Súil Chun Cinn Looking Ahead



Sa chaibidil seo, caitear súil chun cinn ar a bhfuil i ndán don Ghaeilge in OMN. Ag tógáil ar thorthaí an taighde deisce agus allamuigh a chuirtear i láthair i gCaibidil 1 agus i gCaibidil 2, leagtar amach fíis dhearfach uailmhianach i gCaibidil 3 le tacú leis an Ollscoil a cuid dualgais áitiúla agus náisiúnta i leith na Gaeilge a chomhlíonadh. Tarraingítear aird sa chaibidil seo ar na deiseanna atá ann an Ghaeilge a leabú níos doimhne i saol an champais lena chinntiú go mbeidh sí ina dlúthchuid fheiceálach bhríomhar d'fhéiniúlacht na hinstiúide feasta.

Déantar moltaí praiticiúla réadúla sa chaibidil seo chun an fhís sin a bhaint amach, trí dhul i ngleic le dúshláin agus bearnaí struchtúrtha ar leith atá ann, agus tógáil ar an dea-thoil atá i measc phobal uile na hOllscoile i leith na Gaeilge. Is de réir téama a phléitear na moltaí sin.

Is é cuspóir na moltaí timpeallacht a chothú ar an gcampas atá dátheangach agus ionchuimsitheach ag an am céanna; timpeallacht a thógfaidh ar thraidisiún fada Ollscoil Mhá Nuad maidir le teagasc, taighde agus cur chun cinn na Gaeilge agus a dhéanfaidh ceiliúradh air sin.

This third chapter of the report looks ahead to the future of Irish at MU. Building on the evidence gathered in the desk-based and field-based research presented in Chapters 1 and 2, Chapter 3 sets out a positive and ambitious vision for how the University can meet both its local and national commitments to the promotion of the Irish language. The chapter highlights the opportunities that exist to embed Irish more fully across campus life, ensuring that the language becomes a visible, vibrant, and integral element of the institution's identity.

To realise this vision, a series of practical and achievable recommendations are presented in this chapter. These recommendations are grouped thematically, addressing structural gaps and challenges while drawing on the strong goodwill towards Irish expressed by staff and students.

The aim of these recommendations is to create the conditions for a genuinely bilingual environment that is inclusive of the whole University community and that builds on and celebrates Maynooth's long tradition of teaching, researching and promoting the Irish language.

Ag breathnú chun cinn, is féidir Ollscoil Mhá Nuad a shamhlú i gceann deich mbliana mar eiseamláir de champas dátheangach: campas ina gcloistear an Ghaeilge go nádúrtha i gcomhráite laethúla na mac léinn; ina gcuirtear fáilte roimh chuairteoirí i nGaeilge ag pointí seirbhíse; ina mbíonn an chomharthaíocht agus na fógraí digiteacha dátheangach i ngach áit; ina dtugann mic léinn idirnáisiúnta faoin nGaeilge mar chuid dá dtaithe idirchultúrtha; ina mbíonn deis ag gach mac léinn agus ball foirne tairbhe éigin a bhaint as an nGaeilge i saol an champais; agus ina dtuigeann siad go mbaineann oidhreacht uasal Ghaeilge leis an gcampas céanna.

Looking ahead, one can envisage Maynooth University a decade from now as an exemplar of a bilingual campus: a campus where Irish is heard in everyday conversation among students; where staff at service points routinely greet visitors in Irish; where bilingual signage and digital displays are the norm; where international students embrace Irish as part of their intercultural experience; where every student and member of staff has the opportunity to benefit, in some respect, from the presence of Irish in their University life; and where staff and students are aware of the campus's unique Irish language heritage.

# 3.1 Moltaí

## 3.1.1 Feiceálacht agus an tearmann teanga

Bíonn tábhacht faoi leith ag baint leis an spás fisiciúil don phleanáil agus do chaomhnú teangacha mionlaithe. Ní mór an Ghaeilge a bheith le feiceáil agus le cloisteáil ar fud na hOllscoile, agus *tearmainn teanga* a chur ar fáil chun í a fhí isteach sa champas ar bhealach feiceálach agus córasach.

Léirítear i dtorthaí an taighde go mbraitheann na rannpháirtithe nach bhfuil aon ‘bhaile’ ag an nGaeilge ar an gcampas agus nach mbíonn sí i gcónaí le feiceáil i dtimpeallacht thógtha na hOllscoile. D’fhéadfaí cur le feiceálacht na Gaeilge in OMN agus tacú léi, ní mar shiombail ach mar theanga bheo ar an gcampas, trí spásanna lán-Ghaeilge a chur ar fáil, agus trí chur leis an nGaeilge ar chomharthaí agus i gcumarsáid na hOllscoile.

### MoLadh 1: Glacadh le polasaí maidir le campas dátheangach

Is é atá i gceist le Gaeilge a ‘leabú’ ar an gcampas, timpeallacht a chruthú ina mbeidh an teanga le feiceáil, ina mbeidh meas uirthi, agus ina mbeidh deis ag daoine an Ghaeilge a úsáid ina saol laethúil más mian leo é sin a dhéanamh: campas atá dátheangach i ndáiríre.

Tógfaidh sé tamall an t-athrú sin a chur i bhfeidhm; ach fágann an dea-thoil agus an cumas atá ag an bhfoireann agus ag na mic léinn, chomh maith leis an infreastruchtúr polasaí agus pleanála teanga atá san institiúid, go bhfuil bunchloch mhaith in OMN chun campas a chothú ina mbeidh an Ghaeilge ina cuid nádúrtha bheo de shaol an phobail ar fad.

Is í an chéad chéim ina threo sin ná polasaí soiléir a chur i bhfeidhm chun an Ghaeilge a leabú ar chomharthaí, i seirbhísí agus i saol phobal an champais. Leagfadh an polasaí creat amach trína gcuirfear bearta pleanála teanga i bhfeidhm amach anseo lena chinntiú go mbeidh leanúnachas ag baint le cur chuige na hOllscoile i ngach réimse gníomhaíochta.

### MoLadh 2: ‘Ceathrú Ghaeltachta’ a chur ar bun

Moltar go gcuirfí ‘Ceathrú Ghaeltachta’ ar bun i bhFoirgneamh na nEalaíon idir Seomra na Gaeilge, Lárionad na Gaeilge agus Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge. D’fhéadfaí mic léinn agus baill foirne a spreagadh chun an Ghaeilge a úsáid ag caifé Fhoirgneamh na nEalaíon, agus d’fhéadfaí póstaí agus maisiúcháin a chur suas agus focail/ frásaí orthu chun úsáid na Gaeilge a spreagadh, fiú i measc tosaitheoirí. Thabharfadh sé sin aghaidh ar an bhfrustrachas atá ann faoi láthair faoin nganntanas spásanna atá ar fáil don Ghaeilge ar an gcampas. Dá gcuirfí spás dá leithéid ar fáil, léireodh sé gur gnáthchuid thábhachtach de shaol an champais í an Ghaeilge agus bheadh sé ina ‘thearmann teanga’ buan do chainteoirí líofa Gaeilge agus d’fhoghlaimoírí araon.

# 3.1 Recommendations

## 3.1.1 Visibility and breathing spaces

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Physical space has a particular importance in minority language planning and maintenance. Irish must be seen and heard around the University, and *breathing spaces* must be made available to ensure the systematic integration and visibility of Irish across the campus.

The research found that respondents felt that Irish lacked a clear physical ‘home’ on campus. Research participants also felt that the visibility of the language across the built environment could be improved. By establishing Irish-speaking spaces and enhancing the presence of Irish in signage and communications, Maynooth University can ensure that Irish is seen and supported not just as a symbol, but as a living language on campus.

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### **Recommendation 1: Adopt a bilingual campus policy**

To embed Irish on campus is to create an environment in which the language is visible, respected, and in which those who wish to use Irish in day-to-day life are able to do so: a truly bilingual campus.

This change will not happen overnight; however, the goodwill and latent ability in Irish among staff and students, and the language planning and policy infrastructure that already exists in the institution, mean that MU is already well-positioned to cultivate an everyday campus environment where Irish thrives as a natural part of life for all.

The first step in this process is to introduce an explicit policy to embed Irish systematically across signage, services, and community life. This policy would set a clear framework for putting further language planning measures in place, ensuring that the University’s approach is consistent across all areas of activity.

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### **Recommendation 2: Establish a ‘Gaeltacht Quarter’ on campus**

It is recommended that a ‘Gaeltacht Quarter’ be established in the Arts Building linking Seomra na Gaeilge, Lárionad na Gaeilge, and Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge. Staff and students could be encouraged to use Irish at the Arts Building café, and informative posters and decorations with Irish phrases/ words could be displayed to encourage the use of Irish even among beginners.

Having a dedicated section of the campus would address current frustrations about the lack of Irish-language spaces on campus. Such a visible commitment of space would demonstrate that Irish is an integral part of campus life, and would provide a permanent immersive environment, or ‘breathing space’, for speakers and learners of Irish alike.

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### **MoLadh 3: An Ghaeilge a fhí isteach sna próisis oifigiúla a bhaineann le hathfhorbairt an champais**

Moltar go déanfaí an Ghaeilge a leabú ar bhealach córasach i bpróisis na hOifige Seirbhísí Campais ionas go ndéanfaí gach comhartha nua agus gach togra athfhorbartha a phleanáil agus a chur i gcrích go dátheangach ón tús, agus go mbeadh ardchaighdeán ag baint leis na haistriúcháin Ghaeilge i gcónaí. Chinnteofaí tríd an mbeart sin go gcomhlíonfaí Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021, go mbeadh feiceálacht fhadtéarmach ag an nGaeilge ar fud an champais, agus nach mbeadh obair leasúcháin ag teastáil níos déanaí chun comharthaíocht chruinn dhátheangachach a chur ar fáil.

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### **MoLadh 4: Seirbhísí dátheangacha a chur ar fáil do mhic léinn ar bhonn píolótach**

Tá éileamh suntasach ar sheirbhísí Gaeilge do mhic léinn i measc fhreagróirí an tsuirbhé: dúirt 50% go mbainfidís úsáid as seirbhísí mar sin; 95% a bhí i gceist i measc na mac léinn a tógadh sa Ghaeltacht agus 71.6% i measc na mac léinn a mhaígh go bhfuil a gcuid Gaeilge labhartha ag leibhéal B2 nó níos airde. Dá gcuirfí seirbhísí ar fáil do mhic léinn go dátheangach, ar bhonn píolótach, sa leabharlann, mar shampla, d'fhéadfaí léargas a fháil ar na himpleachtaí praiticiúla agus ar na hacmhainní a bheadh i gceist le soláthar dá leithéid a chur ar fáil. Bheadh staidéar píolótach den sórt sin tráthúil, i bhfianaise an dualgais a chuireann Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021 ar chomhlachtaí poiblí seirbhísí dátheangacha a chur ar fáil.

## **3.1.2**

### **Deiseanna teagaisc agus foghlama**

Tá Ollscoil Mhá Nuad in áit mhaith chun dul i ngleic leis na dualgais nua atá ar chomhlachtaí poiblí faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021 agus an *Plean Náisiúnta um Sheirbhísí Poiblí Gaeilge 2024-2030*. Beidh ar 20% d'earcaithe nua sa tseirbhís phoiblí agus sa Státseirbhís cumas Gaeilge ag leibhéal B2 nó níos airde a bheith acu faoin mbliain 2030.

Tá ról rithábhachtach ag Ollscoil Mhá Nuad chun an fhoireann agus na mic léinn a ullmhú le dul i dtreo córas poiblí iomlán dátheangach. Leis sin a dhéanamh, ní mór forbairt a dhéanamh ar na deiseanna foghlama Gaeilge atá ar fáil, tacú le daoine ardscoiléanna teanga a bhaint amach, agus conairí creidiúnaithe foghlama a chruthú laistigh agus lasmuigh de Scoil an Léinn Cheiltigh. Tá sé mar aidhm ag na moltaí seo a leanas tacú leis an Ollscoil an ról sin a chomhlíonadh, agus teagasc agus foghlaim na Gaeilge a neartú ar fud na hOllscoile i gcomhréir leis na tosaíochtaí náisiúnta sin.

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### **MoLadh 5: Tacaíocht a chur ar fáil do bhaill foirne ar mian leo an Ghaeilge a úsáid ina gcuid oibre**

Léiríonn torthaí an tsuirbhé go bhfuil an-chuid dea-thola i leith na Gaeilge i measc na foirne, go bhfuil ardleibhéal inniúlachta Gaeilge ag go leor acu, agus ina theannta sin, go bhfuil fonn ar go leor acu an Ghaeilge a úsáid ina ról san Ollscoil.

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**Recommendation 3: Integrate Irish into official processes related to campus redevelopment**

Irish should be embedded systematically into Estates workflows so that all new signage, as well as broader redevelopment projects, are planned and delivered bilingually as a matter of course, and that Irish translations on all signage are of a high quality. This measure will ensure compliance with the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021, guarantee long-term visibility of Irish across the built environment of the campus, and avoid the need for retrofitting by incorporating accurate bilingual design from the outset.

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**Recommendation 4: Pilot bilingual provision for certain student-facing services**

Demand for Irish-medium student services among survey respondents is substantial: 50% indicate they would make use of such services; this figure rises to 95% among those students who were raised in the Gaeltacht and to 71.6% among those with a proficiency level of B2 or higher in spoken Irish. A time-limited pilot in student-facing roles, such as library helpdesks and other student services, would enable the University to assess the operational feasibility and resource implications of bilingual service provision. Such a pilot would be timely, given the statutory provision in the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021 that public bodies make services available bilingually.

### 3.1.2

## Teaching and learning opportunities

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Maynooth University is well placed to respond effectively to the new statutory obligations to provide bilingual services under the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021 and the *National Plan for Irish Language Services 2024–2030*. From 2030 onwards, 20% of all new recruits to the public service will be required to have a minimum of B2-level Irish.

In this context, MU has a critical role to play in preparing staff and students for the transition to a fully bilingual public sector by expanding access to Irish-language learning, supporting progression to higher levels of proficiency, and embedding accredited pathways within and beyond the School of Celtic Studies. The recommendations that follow are intended to support the University in fulfilling this role, and to strengthen Irish-language teaching and learning across the institution in line with these national priorities.

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**Recommendation 5: Provide targeted support for staff who wish to use Irish in their work**

The survey results demonstrate that there is both a great deal of goodwill towards Irish amongst staff, that there is a high level of Irish competence amongst many staff, and furthermore that many staff are keen to use Irish in their role in the University.



Ba cheart foghlaim na Gaeilge a nascadh leis an bhforbairt ghairmiúil ar bhonn foirmeálta chun aitheantas agus tacaíocht a thabhairt do bhaill foirne a bhíonn ag obair go dátheangach. Ba cheart go mbeadh fáil ag na baill foirne ar réimse níos leithne deiseanna foghlama trí Lárionad na Gaeilge, lena n-áirítear, sainoiliúint teanga, dianchúrsaí agus deiseanna tumoideachais, agus aitheantas foirmiúil don inniúlacht teanga mar chuid den Fhorbairt Leanúnach Ghairmiúil. D'fhéadfaí an t-aitheantas sin a thabhairt trí am cúitimh a thabhairt do bhaill foirne a bhíonn ag freastal ar ranganna Gaeilge; trí scoláireachtaí a chur ar fáil chun tabhairt faoi chúrsaí Gaeltachta; agus trí ghrádú cuí a dhéanamh ar phoist a mbeadh riachtanas teanga ag baint leo. Chuirfí sa chaoi sin le muinín agus cumas na mball foirne a bhfuil meánleibhéal Gaeilge acu agus thacófaí leo an teanga a úsáid ina ról féin.

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#### **MoLadh 6: Cur leis na deiseanna atá ag mic léinn tabhairt faoi chúrsaí creidiúnaithe i nGaeilge**

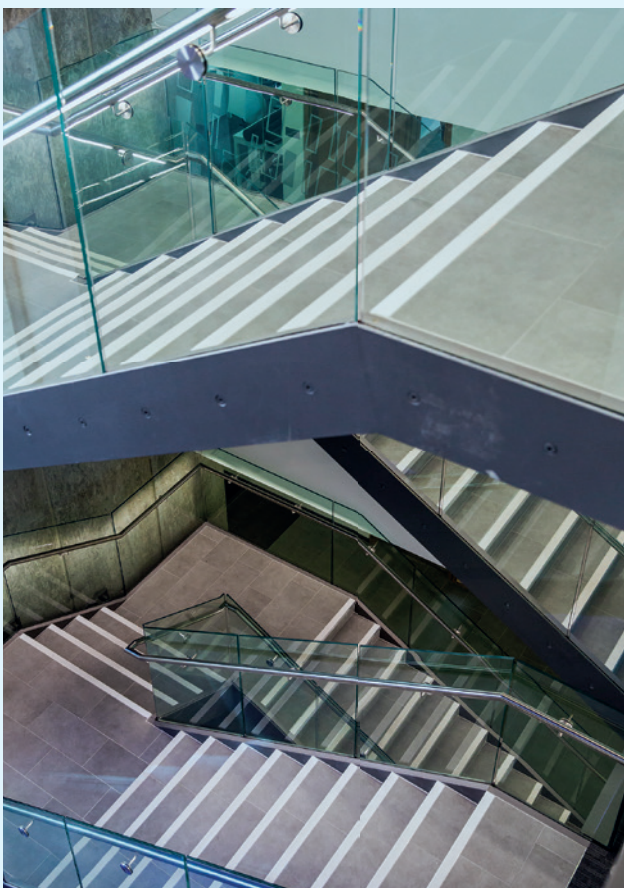
I measc na mac léinn a d'fhreagair an suirbhé agus a raibh suim acu feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge, dúirt 76% go mbeadh suim acu tabhairt faoi chúrsa creidiúnaithe. Ba cheart go mbeadh fáil ag mic léinn OMN ar chonairí foghlama Gaeilge atá soiléir agus a bhfuil creidiúnú ag baint leo agus ar féidir leo tabhairt fúthu le hais a gcéime. D'fhéadfaí cur leis na cúrsaí Gaeilge roghnacha atá ar fáil ag leibhéil agus ag amanna éagsúla ionas nach dtiocfadh na ranganna sin salach ar chroímhodúil. Dá mbeadh fáil ag na mic léinn ar níos mó cúrsaí creidiúnaithe, mhéadófaí ar an rannpháirtíocht, thacófaí le sprioc an champais dhátheangaigh, agus mhéadófaí ar líon na gcéimithe a bhfuil cumas gairmiúil creidiúnaithe acu sa Ghaeilge. Thiocfadh an chéim sin leis an sprioc earcaíochta atá ag an rialtas freisin go mbeidh 20% d'fhostaithe nua san earnáil phoiblí inniúil sa Ghaeilge faoin mbliain 2030.

The learning of Irish by staff should be formally associated with professional development so that staff who work bilingually are supported and recognised. This measure should include access to an expanded range of learning options through Lárionad na Gaeilge, including tailored language training where appropriate, opportunities for intensive or immersion learning and formal recognition of language ability in Continuing Professional Development. Time in lieu for class attendance, scholarships to attend courses in the Gaeltacht, and appropriate grading for posts that require Irish would acknowledge the additional skills involved and enable staff at intermediate level to build confidence and competence for workplace use.

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### **Recommendation 6: Increase opportunities for students across the University to take accredited courses in Irish**

Among student respondents who wished to improve their Irish, 76% indicated interest in taking an accredited course. Students should have clear, credit-bearing pathways to study Irish at MU alongside their main degree programmes. This provision could be expanded by widening Irish-language elective options across the University at multiple proficiency levels and timetabling to avoid clashes with core modules. Greater availability of accredited options would broaden participation, support the aim of a bilingual campus, and increase the number of graduates with accredited competence in Irish who are able to use the language in professional settings. Expanding the provision of accredited Irish modules would also align with national policy; namely the requirement that from 2030, at least 20% of new public sector recruits be proficient in Irish.



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### **MoLadh 7: Feasacht a ardú faoin soláthar atá ann cheana féin**

Bíonn go leor de na ranganna agus na gníomhaíochtaí Gaeilge is mó éileamh sna suirbhéanna ar fáil cheana féin ag Lárionad na Gaeilge agus Oifig na Gaeilge. Ní hé an soláthar an dúshlán is mó atá ann, mar sin, ach an fheiceálacht agus an fheasacht faoina bhfuil ar fáil. Chabhródh sé le foghlaimoirí agus le cainteoirí Gaeilge teacht ar na himeachtaí is mó a d'fheilfeadh dóibh féin dá gcuirfí feachtas feasachta ar bun chun daoine a chur ar an eolas maidir leis an soláthar reatha. D'fhéadfaí fógraí a chur ar Moodle, ar shuíomh gréasáin na hOllscoile agus ar na scáileáin fógraí timpeall an champais; agus d'fhéadfaí eolas faoi imeachtaí Gaeilge san Ollscoil agus sa cheantar áitiúil a scaipeadh trí liosta seachadta ríomhphoist agus trí Fhéilire Gaeilge roinnte a ndéanfaí uasdátú air go rialta.

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### **MoLadh 8: Dianchúrsaí gearra Gaeltachta a chur ar fáil don fhoireann agus do mhic léinn**

Léiríonn torthaí na suirbhéanna go mbeadh éileamh ar dheiseanna tumoideachais Gaeilge: ina measc siúd ar mhaith leo cúrsa Gaeilge a dhéanamh, léirigh 54% de na baill foirne agus 63% de na mic léinn spéis i gcúrsaí Gaeltachta. D'fhéadfaí dianchúrsaí a chur ar siúl ag an deireadh seachtaine nó le linn na laethanta saoire. Rogha inrochtana amháin le haghaidh comhpháirtíochta is ea Gaeltacht na Mí, atá cóngarach do OMN (féach Moladh 24 freisin).

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### **MoLadh 9: Modúil áirithe a chur ar fáil trí mheán na Gaeilge ar bhonn píolótach**

Ba iad Scoil an Ghnó agus an Dlí, Roinn na Staire agus na Ranna Oideachais na ranna acadúla ba mhó inar léiríodh éileamh ó mhic léinn ar mhodúil trí mheán na Gaeilge. Tá ardchaighdeán Gaeilge ag baill foirne i gcuid de na ranna sin chomh maith. Léiríonn sé sin go mbeadh deis ann modúil áirithe trí mheán na Gaeilge a chur ar fáil lasmuigh de Scoil an Léinn Cheiltigh, i gcomhar le, nó le tacaíocht ó, Lárionad na Gaeilge nó Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge, b'fhéidir. Bheadh a leithéid de thionscnamh tráthúil i bhfianaise na sprice atá leagtha amach sa Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge cur le líon na modúil atá ar fáil trí mheán na Gaeilge ag an tríú leibhéal, agus i bhfianaise an phlé atá ar bun faoi láthair faoin soláthar oideachais trí mheán na Gaeilge in institiúidí tríú leibhéal. Tá bunchloch mhaith in OMN modúil Ghaeilge a réachtáil ar bhonn píolótach sna ranna ina bhfuil éileamh orthu, agus cur ar an gcaoi sin leis an bplé atá ar siúl san earnáil faoi mhúnlaí soláthair don oideachas trí mheán na Gaeilge, agus na hacmhainní a bhainfeadh leo.

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### **MoLadh 10: Deiseanna a fhiosrú chun cur le soláthar na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge ag an tríú leibhéal**

Tá Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (Coláiste Náisiúnta na Breatnaise) ina eiseamláir úsáideach a léiríonn conas is féidir tacú le mionteanga ar fud córas iomlán ardoideachais. Cuireann an Coleg ollscoileanna ag obair as lámh a chéile chun a gcuid saineolais agus acmhainní teagaisc a roinnt, agus roghanna a chur ar fáil do mhic léinn tabhairt faoi ábhair éagsúla trí mheán na Breatnaise.

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**Recommendation 7: Raise awareness of current provision**

Many of the Irish-language classes and activities that attracted the highest level of demand in the surveys are already available on campus through Lárionad na Gaeilge and Oifig na Gaeilge, indicating that visibility rather than provision may be the main challenge. A light-touch awareness-raising campaign that builds brief announcements into lectures and inductions, places clear notices on Moodle and key University webpages, and uses digital noticeboards across campus to highlight what is on offer would help speakers and learners of Irish find activities that suit them. An opt-in mailing list and a shared Féilire na Gaeilge ('Irish Calendar') regularly updated with events in the University and in the local area, would help increase participation.

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**Recommendation 8: Provide immersion opportunities for staff and students**

Survey evidence indicates a clear appetite for immersive Irish language learning: among respondents who expressed interest in an Irish course, 54% of staff and 63% of students reported that they would attend a course in the Gaeltacht. The feasibility of short, structured immersive courses at weekends or during term breaks should therefore be investigated. The nearby Meath Gaeltacht offers an accessible option for further partnership (see also Recommendation 24).

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**Recommendation 9: Pilot the provision of Irish-medium modules**

The Schools of Business and Law, and the Departments of History and Education, recorded the highest student demand for Irish-medium modules. Some of these departments also recorded a high level of Irish proficiency among staff members. This suggests an opportunity to develop certain Irish-medium offerings beyond the School of Celtic Studies, perhaps with the support of, or in collaboration with, Lárionad na Gaeilge or the Department of Modern Irish. Such work would be timely in light of the policy objective set out in the *20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language* to expand the availability of Irish-medium modules at third level, and given the current national attention on the provision of Irish-medium education in higher education. Taken together, these factors suggest that MU is well placed to pilot targeted Irish-medium modules in areas of demonstrable demand, and to contribute to emerging sector-wide discussions on models of Irish-medium education provision and resourcing.

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**Recommendation 10: Investigate opportunities to expand the provision of Irish-medium third-level education**

The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (Welsh National College) in Wales is a useful example of how a minority language can be supported across a whole higher education system. It works by helping universities to work together, share teaching materials and expertise, and offer students options to study through Welsh in a range of subjects.

D'fhéadfaí an cur chuige céanna a thriail in Ollscoil na hÉireann, a bhfuil OMN ina comhcholaíste di. Ní gá go mbeadh ar gach institiúid an soláthar Gaeilge a fhorbairt ina haonar; d'fhéadfaí díriú trí scéim phiolótach idirinstiúideach ar an líon beag ábhar ina bhfuil an t-éileamh is láidre agus acmhainní a roinnt chun céimeanna Gaeilge a fhorbairt agus a chur ar fáil. Bheadh clár den chineál sin ina phointe tosaigh praiticiúil le haghaidh fhás fadtéarmach na hearnála ardoideachais Gaeilge. Chuirfeadh sé ar chumas na n-institiúidí comhpháirteacha a fháil amach céard a oibríonn, cén tacaíocht atá ag teastáil, agus cás níos láidre a dhéanamh chun an soláthar a fhorbairt amach anseo.

### 3.1.3

## Pobal Gaeilge a chothú ar an gcampas

Tá tábhacht ag baint le spásanna fisiciúla agus comharthaí, ach is mar gheall ar dhaoine agus ar ghníomhaíochtaí a bhainfear sprioc an champais dhátheangaigh amach. De réir na sonraí i gCaibidil 2, tá dea-mhéin shuntasach i leith na Gaeilge i measc phobal na hOllscoile, fiú ina measc siúd nach bhfuil an teanga ar a dtail acu. Anuas air sin, ba mhaith le 85% de na baill foirne agus 82% de na mic léinn feabhas a chur ar a gcuid Gaeilge.

Is é is sprioc leis na moltaí seo a leanas gníomh a dhéanamh den dea-mhéin sin agus pobal bríomhar Gaeilge a chothú ar an gcampas trí imeachtaí rialta sóisialta a chur ar siúl agus trí líonraí tacúla a fhorbairt. Díríonn na moltaí ar rannpháirtíocht taobh amuigh den seomra ranga agus ar ghné normalta spraiúil a dhéanamh den teanga i ngnáthshaol an champais.

### Moladh 11: Líonra Gaeilge a chothú ar an gcampas

Tá sé tábhachtach go mbeadh deiseanna rialta, nach bhfuil mórán brú i gceist leo, ar fáil do chainteoirí líofa agus d'fhoghlaimoirí Gaeilge chun an teanga a úsáid. Imeacht amháin atá ar siúl cheana ná tob-Ghaeltacht sheachtainiúil a bhíonn á heagrú ag Lárionad na Gaeilge do bhaill foirne gach maidin Chéadaoin i gCaifé an TSI. D'fhéadfaí tógáil ar an togra sin agus Líonra Gaeilge don Fhoireann a chur ar bun chun úsáid na Gaeilge a spreagadh i measc na foirne ar fud na hOllscoile.

Cuirtear spás ar fáil ag na himeachtaí rialta sin inar féidir le cainteoirí líofa Gaeilge a bheith ag comhrá go nádúrtha agus inar féidir le foghlaimoirí páirt a ghlacadh ar a luas féin, gan aon bhrú a bheith orthu. Chun go n-éireodh lena leithéid d'imeacht ba cheart go mbeadh sé leanúnach fáilteach agus éasca teacht air. Ba cheart normalú a dhéanamh ar an nGaeilge mar gnáth-theanga oibre, agus misneach a thabhairt do dhaoine í a úsáid. D'fhéadfaí leas a bhaint as grúpa Microsoft Teams, liosta seachadta agus Féilire na Gaeilge chun an fhoireann a choinneáil ar an eolas faoi imeachtaí, agus smaointe nó acmhainní a roinnt.

Le himeacht ama, d'fhéadfadh an líonra nascadh le grúpaí mac léinn agus le comhpháirtithe seachtracha, ar nós *Gaeilge Nuada* agus *Gréasán Gaeilge na hEarnála Poiblí*, chun an rannpháirtíocht a leathnú amach agus saol na Gaeilge ar an gcampas a neartú. Mar chuid den chur chuige sin, d'fhéadfaí sruth Gaeilge a chruthú ar bhonn píolótach i naíolann na hOllscoile. Fiú trí chéim bheag, ar nós am a chur i leataobh chun Gaeilge a labhairt leis na páistí, seisiúin scéalaíochta

Maynooth University could test a similar approach with the other constituent colleges of the National University of Ireland. Rather than each institution trying to develop Irish-medium teaching in isolation, a shared pilot could focus on a small number of subjects where demand is strongest and pool resources to develop and deliver Irish-medium modules. A programme like this would provide a practical starting point for longer-term growth in Irish-medium higher education. It would allow the partner institutions to learn what works, identify the supports required, and build a stronger case for future expansion.

### 3.1.3

## Building an Irish-language community on campus

While physical spaces and signs create potential, it is people and activities that will realise the aspiration of a bilingual campus. The data outlined in Chapter 2 revealed that goodwill toward Irish is very high among staff and students, even among those who don't speak the language, and that a striking 85% of staff respondents and 82% of student respondents would like to improve their Irish.

The following recommendations seek to convert this goodwill into action by fostering a vibrant Irish-language community on-campus by means of regular activities, social events, and supportive networks. The recommendations focus on student and staff engagement with Irish outside the classroom, making the language a normal and fun part of daily campus life.

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#### **Recommendation 11: Build an Irish-language network on campus**

Creating regular, low-pressure opportunities to use Irish is important for both fluent speakers and learners. A practical step already underway is Lárionad na Gaeilge's weekly Pop-Up Gaeltacht, open to all staff on Wednesday mornings in the TSI Café. Building on this, the University could formalise a Staff Irish Network to encourage informal, supportive use of Irish among staff across all areas of the institution.

These regular meet-ups provide a space where fluent speakers can chat naturally, while learners can take part at their own pace, without pressure. To be effective, they should be easy to find, predictable, and genuinely welcoming. The aim is to make Irish feel normal and accessible in everyday work life, and to reduce the hesitation that can stop people from using the language at all. A simple online channel, such as a Microsoft Teams group or a mailing list, alongside a dedicated Féilire na Gaeilge (Irish-language Calendar), could help staff keep track of dates, share updates, and exchange ideas or useful resources.

Over time, the network could also link up with student groups and external partners, such as the Maynooth-based *Gaeilge Nuada*, and the national public sector Irish network, *Gréasán Gaeilge na hEarnála Poiblí*, to broaden participation and strengthen Irish-language life on campus. As part of this wider approach, the University could also explore a pilot of an Irish-language stream within the campus crèche. Even a modest initiative, such as a designated Irish-speaking time, Irish-language story sessions, or bilingual signs and parent communications, would create another everyday setting where Irish is heard and

trí Ghaeilge a réachtáil, nó comharthaí agus teachtaireachtaí dátheangacha a úsáid le tuismitheoirí a bhfuil Gaeilge acu, d'fhéadfaí áit eile a chothú ar an gcampas ina mbeadh an Ghaeilge le cloisteáil agus á húsáid. Léireodh sé freisin go bhfuil ról ag an teanga i ngach cuid de shaol an champais.

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### **Moladh 12: Scéim 'Tairiscint Ghníomhach' a chur i bhfeidhm chun toilteanas i leith úsáid na Gaeilge a chur in iúl**

Is minic a bhíonn baill foirne agus mic léinn toilteanach Gaeilge a úsáid, ach nach mbíonn aon bhealach acu sin a chur in iúl. D'fhéadfaí scéim shimplí 'tairiscint ghníomhach' a chur i bhfeidhm, trí shuaitheantas "Fáinne Mhaigh Nuad" nó láinnéar Gaeilge a chur ar fáil, chun bealach a thabhairt do phobal na hOllscoile a thabhairt le fios go bhfuil siad sásta Gaeilge a úsáid. Dhéanfadh comharthaí den chineál sin an Ghaeilge a normalú i gcomhthéacsanna neamhfhoirmeálta agus gairmiúla, rud a chabhródh le cothú an phobail teanga ar an gcampas.

Ba cheart don scéim a bheith deonach, éasca a thuiscint, agus ba cheart treoir shoiléir a chur ar fáil le go dtuigfí í. D'fhéadfaí an scéim a sheoladh mar chuid de Sheachtain na Gaeilge nó ag mórócáid eile Ghaeilge.

## **3.1.4**

### **Cúrsaí ionchuimsitheachta agus inrochtaineachta**

Ionas go mbeidh borradh faoin nGaeilge ar an gcampas, is gá go mbeadh sí ionchuimsitheach agus inrochtana do gach ball de phobal na hOllscoile. Is gá freastal gníomhach a dhéanamh ar ghrúpaí nach raibh baint acu leis an nGaeilge go dtí seo, mar gheall ar a gcúlraí, easpa deiseanna nó drocheispéiris leis an teanga. Go hachomair, is gá a chinntiú go gcuirfear gach duine san áireamh agus an Ghaeilge á cur chun cinn.

Thug na torthaí a leagadh amach i gCaibidil 2 léargas ar dhinimic chasta: tá suim ag formhór phobal na hOllscoile, agus ag na baill foirne go háirithe, sa Ghaeilge, ach ag an am céanna, tá cineál faitís orthu maidir le húsáid na teanga. Ina theannta sin, cruthaíodh nach raibh an rochtain chéanna ag mic léinn Chlár Rochtana Mhá Nuad (MAP) ar an nGaeilge ar scoil. Tá an-tábhacht ag baint le dul i ngleic leis na bearnaí agus leis an bhfaitíos sin chun pobal bríomhar Gaeilge a chothú a bhfuil éagsúlacht ag baint léi. Baineann na moltaí seo a leanas leis an nGaeilge a fhí isteach leis na hiarrachtaí eile atá á ndéanamh mar chuid den chlár ionchuimsitheachta, agus le teagmháil a dhéanamh leo siúd nach mbeadh fáil acu ar ranganna, spásanna ná imeachtaí Gaeilge murach na hiarrachtaí sin.

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### **Moladh 13: An Ghaeilge a fhí le creat comhionannais, éagsúlachta agus ionchuimsitheachta (CÉI) na hOllscoile**

Chinntedh an chéim sin go dtabharfaí meas ar an teanga mar chuid d'éagsúlacht chultúrtha na hOllscoile agus go mbraithfeadh cainteoirí (agus foghlaimoírí) Gaeilge gur cuid den phobal iad agus go bhfuil meas orthu.

D'fhéadfaí an Ghaeilge a nascadh le polasaithe CÉI na hOllscoile; mar shampla, d'fhéadfaí an teanga a chur san áireamh i gcúrsaí oiliúna na mball foirne chun tábhacht chultúrtha na teanga a mhíniú agus chun na beannachtaí bunúsacha a mhíniú dóibh.

used, and would help reinforce the message that the language has a place in all parts of campus life.

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**Recommendation 12: Introduce an active offer scheme to make willingness to use Irish visible**

Staff and students who are willing to use Irish often lack a clear way to show that preference. A simple active offer scheme, such as a "Maynooth Fáinne" badge, themed lanyard, or other visible symbol, would allow individuals to signal their openness to using Irish in everyday situations. Introducing such cues would help normalise Irish in casual and professional interactions and build a stronger sense of linguistic community on campus.

The scheme should be voluntary and easy to understand, with guidance on its meaning and use. It could be launched as part of Seachtain na Gaeilge or another high-profile Irish-language event.

### 3.1.4

## Inclusion and accessibility

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For Irish to thrive on campus, it must be inclusive and accessible to all members of the university community. This means proactively reaching out to groups who historically may not have engaged with the language, whether by lack of opportunity, because of their background, or due to negative experiences with the language. In short, it must be ensured that the promotion of Irish at Maynooth University is inclusive of everyone in the institution.

Research findings outlined in Chapter 2 highlighted a complex dynamic: many members of the university community, and staff especially, show an interest in Irish, but also an apprehension towards using the language. Additionally, respondents in the Maynooth Access Programme (MAP), while equally supportive of and interested in Irish, were shown to have had less access to the language at school. Addressing these gaps and concerns is essential to build a vibrant and diverse Irish-language community. The following recommendations focus on integrating the Irish language into broader inclusion efforts and reaching out to those who might not otherwise access Irish language classes, events or spaces.

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**Recommendation 13: Integrate Irish into the University's EDI Framework**

This measure would ensure that the language is respected as part of the University's cultural diversity and that Irish-language speakers (as well as learners) feel included and valued.

Irish could be integrated into EDI policies; for example, diversity training for staff could include a segment on the language, and on the history of the language on campus, explaining its cultural significance and encouraging familiarity with and use of basic greetings.

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#### **MoLadh 14: An ceangal idir Oifig na Gaeilge agus an Oifig CÉI a chothú**

Moltar caidreamh níos dlúithe a chothú idir Oifig na Gaeilge agus Oifig an Leas-Uachtaráin um Chomhionannas, Éagsúlacht agus Ionchuimsitheacht. Tugann na torthaí a leagtar amach i gCaibidil 2 le fios go bhfuil tacaíocht ann don chur chuige sin.

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#### **MoLadh 15: For-rochtain spriocdhírthe do mhic léinn a bhfuil Clár For-Rochtana Mhá Nuad ag tacú leo agus do mhic léinn idirnáisiúnta**

Ba cheart go gcuirfí fáilte faoi leith roimh mhic léinn idirnáisiúnta agus roimh mhic léinn ó chúlraí éagsúla ag imeachtaí Gaeilge na hOllscoile. D'fhéadfaí seisiúin eolais spriocdhírthe a chur ar siúl chun mic léinn a spreagadh le páirt a ghlacadh sa teanga ar an gcampas ag pé leibhéal a oireann dóibh. Ba cheart aird faoi leith a thabhairt dóibh siúd nach raibh an rochtain chéanna acu ar an nGaeilge ar scoil. Ba cheart go mbeadh an Ghaeilge ina cúis mhórtais do phobal na hOllscoile uile, go gcothódh sí muintearas, agus go dtabharfadh sí mic léinn Éireannacha agus mic léinn idirnáisiúnta le chéile.

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#### **MoLadh 16: Seisiúin ionduchtaithe**

Is deis iad na seisiúin ionduchtaithe agus Seachtain Fáilte na Mac Léinn chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar bhealach ionchuimsitheach ón uair a thosaíonn mic léinn agus baill foirne nua san Ollscoil.

D'fhéadfaí Bonnchúrsa i dTeanga agus i gCultúr na Gaeilge a chur ar siúl le go bhfaigheadh daoine nua blaiseadh fáiltiúil ar an nGaeilge. Ina theannta sin, d'fhéadfaí ríomhphost a sheoladh amach le 'frása na seachtaine' ann, agus cuirí chuig ranganna agus imeachtaí cultúrtha.

Chuirfeadh a leithéid de thogra teachtaireacht shoiléir in iúl: is gné bheo de shaol na hOllscoile í an Ghaeilge in OMN agus tá sí oscailte is inrochtana do gach éinne, is cuma cén cineál eispéiris a bhí acu leis an teanga roimhe seo.

### **3.1.5**

## **An polasaí teanga agus an rialachas**

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Chun dualgais reachtúla agus gealltanais straitéiseacha na hOllscoile a chomhlíonadh, agus an Ghaeilge a leabú ar fud an champais, ní mór athruithe a dhéanamh ar an infreastruchtúr institiúideach a bhaineann leis an bpleanáil teanga in OMN. Is é is sprioc leis na moltaí sa chuid seo cur le cumas OMN an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar bhonn struchtúrtha agus cinntiú go bhfuil na daoine, na hacmhainní agus an creat cuí rialachais ann chun campas dátheangach a chothú amach anseo.

Sa chuid seo pléitear struchtúr Oifig na Gaeilge, athruithe ar an struchtúr rialachais a bhaineann leis an nGaeilge, agus cur chuige chun an polasaí teanga a fhí isteach le straitéisí eile na hOllscoile.

Freagraíonn moltaí an rannáin seo na torthaí a leagadh amach i gCaibidil 2, torthaí a chuir in iúl go bhfuil an t-infreastruchtúr reatha polasaí agus pleanála teanga faoi bhrú. Níl aon dabht ach go bhfuil Oifig na Gaeilge faoi bhrú le blianta beaga anuas. Má ghlactar leis na hathruithe institiúideacha a leagtar amach sa

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**Recommendation 14: Foster the link between Oifig na Gaeilge and the EDI Office**

Findings outlined in Chapter 2 suggest there is support for a more integrated approach between the Irish Language and EDI Offices, and possibly even a structural alignment of Irish language efforts with EDI initiatives.

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**Recommendation 15: Targeted outreach to students supported by the Maynooth Access Programme and international students**

Irish-language events should consciously welcome and involve non-Irish-national students and those from diverse ethnic backgrounds. For students who may not have had the same access to Irish as other students, targeted information sessions can be organised to encourage engagement with the language on campus at whatever level they are comfortable with. The Irish language should function on campus as a genuine point of connection: a shared source of pride that is open to everyone, and that brings Irish and international students together.

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**Recommendation 16: Orientation sessions**

New staff induction sessions and students' Welcome Week present a good opportunity to promote inclusive engagement with the Irish language from the outset of an individual's time at Maynooth University.

Initiatives such as an Introduction to Irish Culture and Language session would provide early, welcoming exposure to Irish. Supplementary measures might include advertising Irish-language events and a phrase of the week on digital billboards across the campus.

Such initiatives send a clear message: Irish is a living part of university life in Maynooth, and it is open and accessible to all, regardless of prior experience with the language.

### 3.1.5

## Language policy and governance

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In order to realise the University's strategic commitment of embedding Irish across the campus and to fulfil its statutory obligations, changes are required to the institutional infrastructure supporting language planning in MU. The recommendations in this section aim to strengthen Maynooth University's capacity to promote Irish at the structural level, ensuring that the right people, resources, and governance are in place to sustain a bilingual campus environment into the future.

This section covers the structure of Oifig na Gaeilge, changes to the structure of governance around Irish, and integration of language policy objectives into wider University strategies.

These recommendations respond to the findings outlined in Chapter 2 that the current language policy and planning infrastructure in Maynooth University, while well-intentioned, is under strain. Of particular note is the pressure under which Oifig na Gaeilge has been operating for several years. By making the

chuid seo, déanfar na gealltanais atá ag an Ollscoil i leith na Gaeilge a leabú ní hamháin ina cuid cáipéisí straitéiseacha ach sa chaoi ina bhfeidhmíonn sí freisin. Cruthófar timpeallacht ina mbeidh cur chun cinn na Gaeilge á phleanáil, á chomhordú agus á mhaoirsiú ar bhealach córasach, leis an dul chun cinn a chinntiú.

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### **Moladh 17: Oifigeach na dTeangacha Oifigiúla a cheapadh**

Cuireann Alt 4B d'Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla 2003 (arna leasú in 2021) ceangal ar cheannaire gach comhlachta phoiblí comhalta foirne eile den chomhlacht a cheapadh ón bhfoireann ardbhainistíochta, oifigeach a bheidh freagrach as maoirsiú agus tuairisciú a dhéanamh ar chomhlíonadh an Achta sa chomhlacht. Níl aon Oifigeach Teangacha Oifigiúla ag Ollscoil Mhá Nuad faoi láthair; dá bhrí sin, níl an institiúid ag cloí leis an dualgas sin faoin Acht. Ba cheart an tOifigeach a cheapadh gan mhoill.

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### **Moladh 18: Cur le hacmhainní Oifig na Gaeilge**

Is féidir leis an Ollscoil an brú atá ar Oifig na Gaeilge faoi láthair a aithint trí acmhainní breise a chur ar fáil di. D'aithneodh OMN ar an gcaoi sin go mbeidh dualgais bhreise ag teacht ar an Oifig agus Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021 á chur i bhfeidhm le linn na míonna agus na mblianta atá amach romhainn.

Múnla amháin a d'fhéadfadh a bheith ina eiseamáir do OMN is ea an struchtúr atá i bhfeidhm sa COBÁC, áit a bhfuil triúr ag plé le hOifig na Gaeilge: Oifigeach Pleanála Teanga atá freagrach as cur i bhfeidhm Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla; Comhordaitheoir Tionscadail atá i gceannas ar chur chun cinn na Gaeilge ar an gcampas trí thionscadail ar nós na Scéime Cónaithe; agus Riarthóir Gaeilge atá freagrach as aistriúchán agus as riarachán. Mar rogha eile, dá mbeadh beirt in Oifig na Gaeilge d'fhéadfaí an ról a roinnt idir Oifigeach Pleanála Teanga, a bheadh freagrach as an gcomhlíonadh, agus Oifigeach Forbartha Gaeilge, a bheadh freagrach as imeachtaí agus as cur chun cinn na Gaeilge i measc na foirne agus na mac léinn.

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### **Moladh 19: Athstruchtúrú a dhéanamh ar an gcóras soláthair aistriúcháin**

Baineann cuid mhór den bhrú atá ar Oifig na Gaeilge faoi láthair leis an ualach aistriúcháin atá uirthi. Is minic a chuirtear cuid den ualach sin ar bhaill foirne eile a bhfuil Gaeilge acu, go háirithe i Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge agus i Lárionad na Gaeilge, nuair a bhíonn an oifig báite in obair agus aistriúcháin á lorg faoi dheifir. Léiriú ar dhea-thoil na mball foirne céanna is ea an comhoibriú sin, ach níl sé inmharthana go fadtéarmach. Tá baol ann go gcuirfean an iomarca brú ar bhaill foirne a bheith ag plé le haistriúcháin nach mbaineann lena gcuid dualgas féin.

Chun a chinntiú go gcloífidh an Ollscoil le riachtanais Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021 agus go n-úsáidfear a cuid acmhainní go héifeachtúil, moltar go dtabharfaí córas isteach chun na tionscadail aistriúcháin a bhainistiú agus a chur in ord tosaíochta. Ba cheart tús áite a thabhairt d'ábhar a bhfuil an-tionchar ag baint leis: ábhar ón Oifig Iontrála, cáipéisí acmhainní daonna, fógraí do mhic léinn agus don fhoireann, mar shampla. D'fhéadfaí córas dá

institutional changes outlined in this section the University's commitment to Irish will be embedded not just in its strategic literature, but in the way it operates, creating an environment where progress in promoting Irish is systematically planned, executed, and monitored.

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**Recommendation 17: Appoint an Official Languages Officer**

Under section 4B of the Official Languages Act 2003 (as amended in 2021), each public body must appoint a senior manager as Official Languages Officer who is responsible for overseeing and reporting on the public body's statutory compliance with the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021. Maynooth University currently has no Official Languages Officer; the institution is currently noncompliant in this regard and an Officer should be appointed without delay.

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**Recommendation 18: Expand the capacity of Oifig na Gaeilge**

By increasing the resources that are available to Oifig na Gaeilge, the University would acknowledge the pressure that is on the Office at present and the additional responsibilities that it will have as the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021 is implemented over the coming months and years.

One structure that could be used as a model is the practice set by University College Dublin in which a Language Planning Officer is responsible for the implementation of the Official Languages Act; a Project Co-ordinator oversees the promotion of Irish on-campus through projects such as the Scéim Chónaithe; and an Irish Language Administrator is responsible for translation and administration. Alternatively, a two-person Oifig na Gaeilge could see the role split between a Language Planning Officer and Irish Development Officer, with the former responsible for compliance and the latter responsible for events and the promotion of Irish among staff and students.

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**Recommendation 19: Re-structure the system by which translations are procured**

Much of the pressure under which Oifig na Gaeilge is currently operating arises from the volume and breadth of translation requests. In practice, this pressure is often displaced onto other Irish-speaking staff, particularly in Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge and in Lárionad na Gaeilge, who are frequently approached to provide ad hoc translation support when the Office is at capacity and translations needed urgently. While this reflects goodwill and collegiality, it is not a sustainable model, and it risks placing an unfair additional burden on staff whose core duties lie elsewhere.

To ensure compliance with the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021 while using resources efficiently, it is recommended that the University introduce a system to triage, track, and prioritise translation needs. Priority should be given to high-impact, widely-read content, such as admissions materials, HR documentation, key student information, and public notices. This system could be implemented through an online request form in which the purpose, audience, deadline, and format of each request is provided. In addition to this, it may be

leithéid a chur i bhfeidhm trí fhoirm iarratais ar líne trína mbaileofaí eolas ar chuspóir, ar lucht léite, ar spriocdháta agus ar fhoirm an iarratais. Ina theannta sin, ba cheart féachaint ar na deiseanna a bhaineann leis an aistriúchán ríomhchuidithe – is é sin, sainuirlisí gairmiúla aistriúcháin a d'fhéadfadh cur le luas, le héifeachtúlacht agus le leanúnachas na hoibre aistriúcháin a dhéanfaí san Ollscoil.

Moltar freisin go gcuirfí acmhainní breise ar fáil chun tacú leis an obair aistriúcháin, trí acmhainn inmheánach a mhéadú nó trí úsáid a bhaint as conraitheoirí seachtracha. Chabhródh na céimeanna sin le hOifig na Gaeilge agus í ag plé leis an aistriúchán, agus d'fhágfaidís nach mbeadh an Oifig ag brath an oiread céanna ar bhaill foirne i ranna eile a bhfuil Gaeilge acu.

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### **MoLadh 20: Athbhreithniú ar théarmaí tagartha Choiste na Gaeilge**

Moltar athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar théarmaí tagartha Choiste na Gaeilge. Ba cheart sainmhíniú a dhéanamh ar a bhfuil i gceist le “maoirseacht” go praiticiúil, bíodh an fhorbairt polasaí, an mhonatóireacht ar an gcomhlíonadh, agus/nó an tuairisciú i gceist. Ba cheart soiléiriú a dhéanamh ar na spriocanna atá le baint amach ag an gCoiste, ar nós tuairisc bhliantúil a fhoilsiú, plean gnímh a réiteach don institiúid agus/nó creat a fhorbairt chun monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar chur i bhfeidhm an pholasaí teanga.

Ba cheart do na téarmaí tagartha a shoiléiriú an ról comhairleach nó feidhmiúcháin atá ag an gCoiste. An bhfuil sé mar aidhm aige comhairle a thabhairt, monatóireacht agus tuairisciú a dhéanamh, nó polasaí a fhorfheidhmiú? Ba cheart feidhmeanna an Choiste a leagan amach go sonrach; mar shampla, “monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar an gcomhlíonadh le hAcht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla”, agus ráitis ghinearálta ar nós “úsáid na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn”, a sheachaint. Moltar freisin go dtiocfadh an Coiste le chéile ní ba mhinice, agus go ndéanfaí athbhreithniú ar mhaoiniú an Choiste lena chinntiú go mbeadh na hacmhainní cuí aige a chuid cúraimí a chomhlíonadh.

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### **MoLadh 21: Plean Gnímh institiúideach don Ghaeilge a chur i bhfeidhm**

Bheadh Plean Gnímh institiúideach don Ghaeilge ina seift struchtúrtha d'Ollscoil Mhá Nuad chun pleanáil, monatóireacht agus tuairisciú a dhéanamh ar chur i bhfeidhm na ndualgas pleanála teanga, idir áitiúil agus náisiúnta. Foilsíodh an chéad Phlean Gníomhaíochta de chuid Rialtas na hÉireann faoin bPlean Náisiúnta um Sheirbhísí Poiblí Gaeilge i mí Eanáir 2026 agus, de réir mar a chuirfear gníomhartha an Phlean sin i bhfeidhm agus de réir mar a leanfaidh leis an ullmhúchán do na caighdeáin teanga nua, chuirfeadh plean áitiúil ar chumas na hOllscoile gníomhartha náisiúnta a aistriú go bearta a d'fheilfeadh do chomhthéacs na hOllscoile, ó thaobh amlínte agus réimsí freagrachta de.

Leagann Plean Gníomhaíochta an Rialtais béim freisin ar an ngá atá ann, i gcás comhlachtaí poiblí a bhíonn ag plé leis an bpobal ar bhonn rialta, athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar na hacmhainní inmheánacha atá acu, ar na struchtúir atá ann cheana a neartú, agus ar shocruithe soiléire a chur i bhfeidhm maidir le ceisteanna freagrachta agus tuairiscithe, socruithe atá riachtanach chun seirbhísí trí mheán na Gaeilge a sholáthar go héifeachtach. Thabharfadh

worth exploring the opportunities afforded by machine-aided translation – that is, dedicated professional translation tools that could increase the speed, efficiency and consistency of translation work within the institution.

Additional translation capacity should also be made available, either through increased in-house resources or external contractors. Collectively, these measures would manage demand, reduce pressure on Oifig na Gaeilge, and avoid ad hoc reliance on Irish-speaking staff in other units.

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#### **Recommendation 20: Review the terms of reference of Coiste na Gaeilge**

It is recommended that the terms of reference of Coiste na Gaeilge be reviewed and updated. The revised terms should define what “oversight” means in practice, whether that be policy development, monitoring compliance, and/or reporting. They should also set clear, expected outputs, such as an annual report, an institutional action plan, and/or a framework for tracking language policy implementation.

The terms should clarify whether Coiste na Gaeilge is an advisory or executive body, and whether its role is to advise and report or to enforce policy. General aims, such as “promote the use of Irish”, should be replaced with specific functions; for example, “monitoring compliance with the Official Languages Act”. Finally, it is recommended that meeting frequency be increased and that the Committee’s funding be reviewed to ensure it is adequately resourced to fulfil its remit.

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#### **Recommendation 21: Implement an institutional Irish Language Action Plan**

An institutional Irish Language Action Plan would provide Maynooth University with a structured mechanism for planning, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of local and national language planning commitments. The Government of Ireland’s first Action Plan under the *National Plan for Irish Language Public Services* was published in January 2026 and, as its actions are implemented and preparation continues for the introduction of new language standards, a local plan would enable the University to translate national actions into context-specific measures, timelines and areas of responsibility.

The Government Action Plan also highlights the need, in the case of public bodies with significant public-facing responsibilities, to review internal capacity, strengthen existing structures, and put clear arrangements in place for accountability and reporting as enabling conditions for effective delivery of Irish-medium services. A local Action Plan would provide the University with a practical framework to respond to these expectations by setting out the actions required to meet statutory obligations, defining measurable targets for bilingual service provision, and establishing clear lines of accountability.

Finally, the local Action Plan would serve as the main instrument through which the proposed Bilingual Campus Policy could be implemented across the institution. It should be reviewed and updated as national guidance develops and language standards are introduced, ensuring ongoing alignment with national requirements while advancing Irish as a living campus language.

plean áitiúil creat praiticiúil don Ollscoil chun freagairt do na dualgais sin. Leagfadh sé na céimeanna amach is gá a ghlacadh chun na dualgais reachtúla a chomhlíonadh; leagfadh sé spriocanna réadúla amach le haghaidh soláthar seirbhísí dátheangacha; agus leagfadh sé línte soiléire freagrachta amach.

Bheadh an plean áitiúil ina phríomhuirlis freisin trína bhféadfaí Polasaí an Champais Dhátheangaigh a chur i bhfeidhm ar fud na hinstitiúide. Ba cheart athbhreithnú a dhéanamh ar an bplean de réir mar a fhorbrófar na treoracha náisiúnta agus de réir mar a thabharfar na caighdeáin teanga isteach, chun a chinntiú go mbeidh sé ag teacht i gcónaí leis na riachtanais náisiúnta agus, ag an am céanna, go mbeidh sé ag cothú na Gaeilge mar theanga bheo ar an gcampas.

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### **Moladh 22: Fóram tras-aonaid Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla a bhunú**

Moltar fóram a bhunú a bheadh dírithe ar chomhlíonadh Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla. Bheadh sé mar aidhm ag an bhfóram ceisteanna agus ábhair imní a bhaineann le cur i bhfeidhm an Achta a phlé, monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar fhorbairtí, agus eolas a roinnt de réir mar a fhoilseofar treoir reachtúil bhreise. Moltar go mbeadh príomhpháirtithe leasmhara ó gach cuid den Ollscoil mar chomhaltaí de chuid an fhórait, lena n-áirítear ionadaithe ó Acmhainní Daonna, Airgeadas, TF, Cumarsáid agus réimsí eile. Chabhródh coiste dá leithéid le sprioc straitéiseach na hOllscoile a bhaint amach; is é sin, an Ghaeilge a leabú in oibríochtaí na hOllscoile. Tá an moladh seo bunaithe ar fhóram den sórt céanna a bunaíodh sa Choláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath, in 2022.





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### **Recommendation 22: Establish a cross-unit Official Language Act Implementation Forum**

It is recommended that a forum be established whose focus is on compliance with the Official Languages Act. That forum will function as a space for sharing questions and concerns as to the implementation of the Act and for monitoring developments and sharing knowledge as further statutory guidance is released. It is recommended that membership of the forum comprise key stakeholders from across the University, including representatives from Human Resources, Finance, IT, Communications and others. The effective functioning of such a committee would expedite the strategic goal of embedding Irish into the operations of the University. This recommendation is informed by a similar forum that was established in University College Dublin in 2022.

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### **MoLadh 23: Cur leis an tacaíocht a thugtar do mhic léinn**

Moltar go ndéanfaí ról lánaimseartha de ról Oifigeach Gaeilge Aontas na Mac Léinn, Ollscoil Mhá Nuad. Ról páirtaimseartha atá ann faoi láthair, rud a chuireann bac ollmhór ar chur chun cinn na Gaeilge, dar leis na mic léinn.

Moltar go n-oibreodh Ollscoil Mhá Nuad go dlúth le hAontas na Mac Léinn chun ról an Oifigigh Gaeilge a dhéanamh lánaimseartha sabóideach, díreach mar atá in Ollscoil na Gaillimhe agus i gColáiste na Tríonóide, áiteanna a bhfuil post lánaimseartha déanta de ról Oifigeach Gaeilge Aontas na Mac Léinn le blianta beaga anuas, tar éis do na mic léinn sin a éileamh.

Ba cheart tacaíocht bhreise a thabhairt do Chuallacht Cholm Cille agus do mhic léinn atá ar an Scéim Chónaithe chun go mbeidh ar a gcumas níos mó imeachtaí Gaeilge a chur ar siúl. D'fhéadfaí an tacaíocht sin a chur ar fáil i bhfoirm mhaoinithe agus scéim meantóireachta struchtúrtha a chabhródh le mic léinn nua páirt a ghlacadh i saol na Gaeilge in OMN agus muinín a chothú iontu. Tá sampla inmheánach i Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge ar fiú tagairt a dhéanamh dó: togra meantóireachta sóisialta arna mhaoiniú ag scéim STRIVE ina dtéann meantóirí, ar mic léinn iad, chuig imeacht Gaeilge in éindí le mic léinn na chéad bhliana chun cabhrú leo dul isteach i saol na Gaeilge in OMN. Tá ag éirí go han-mhaith leis an togra agus d'fhéadfadh sé a bheith ina mhúnla trína gcuirfí leis an rannpháirtíocht in imeachtaí na Cuallachta agus na Scéime Cónaithe.

De réir na dtorthaí a leagadh amach i gCaibidil 2, braitheann baill na Cuallachta nach bhfaigheann siad mórán tacaíochta ón Ollscoil agus go dtiteann cuid mhór den fhreagracht a bhaineann le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge in OMN orthusan. Chabhródh tacaíochtaí den chineál thuasluaite leis an ualach sin a roinnt ar bhealach níos cothroime, le cur leis an rannpháirtíocht, agus le gníomhaíochtaí sóisialta Gaeilge a normalú i measc na mac léinn. Ina theannta sin, dá gcuirfí le hacmhainní Oifig na Gaeilge, d'fhéadfaí comhoibriú níos dlúithe a fhorbairt idir an Oifig agus an Chuallacht, lena n-áirítear tacaíocht phraiticiúil a thabhairt dóibh chun imeachtaí a phleanáil agus a chur chun cinn.

## **3.1.6**

### **An caidreamh seachtrach agus comhpháirtíochtaí**

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#### **MoLadh 24: Cur leis an gcaidreamh atá ag an Ollscoil le heagraíochtaí áitiúla agus náisiúnta Gaeilge**

Moltar go suífeadh ionadaí ó Oifig na Gaeilge ar choiste Ghaeilge Nuada, an eagraíocht phobail áitiúil a chuireann an Ghaeilge chun cinn i Maigh Nuad. Ina theannta sin, moltar nasc foirmeálta a bhunú idir Oifig na Gaeilge in OMN agus Oifigeach na Gaeilge i gComhairle Contae Chill Dara. D'éascódh na naisc fhoirmeálta sin an comhoibriú leanúnach idir OMN agus tionscnaimh planála teanga sa cheantar áitiúil agus ar fud an Chontae.

Tá tábhacht ar leith ag baint leis an gcaidreamh idir OMN agus Gaeltacht na Mí, ceantar nach bhfuil i bhfad uainn. Tá socruithe ad hoc ann cheana féin ag baill áirithe den fhoireann acadúil agus ghairmiúil san Ollscoil le comhoibriú le foireann Chomharchumann Ráth Chairn. Is iomaí deis a bheidh ann chun an ceangal sin a chothú, cúrsaí Gaeilge agus malartú eolais ina measc, má chuirtear an caidreamh atá idir an dá eagraíocht ar bhonn foirmeálta. Is maith go bhfuil tús

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### **Recommendation 23: Increase support for students**

It is recommended that the role of the MSU Oifigeach Gaeilge be made full-time. It is currently a part-time position which students have identified as a major barrier to the effective promotion of Irish.

Maynooth University should work closely with MSU to establish a full-time, sabbatical Oifigeach Gaeilge role – following the example of other universities like University of Galway and Trinity College Dublin, which, after student-led campaigns, created full-time Oifigeach Gaeilge positions in recent years.

Further support should be given to Cuallacht Cholm Cille and to students on the Scéim Chónaithe to enable them to run more Irish-language events. This support could take the form of dedicated funding and a structured mentorship scheme, designed to help new students participate confidently in Irish-language campus life. A useful internal model already exists. Under the STRIVE scheme, a social mentoring initiative has been funded in Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge in which Irish-speaking student mentors accompany first-year students to a designated Irish-language event as an initial point of entry. This approach is reported to work very well and could be adapted to support participation in Cuallacht and Scéim Chónaithe activities.

Findings outlined in Chapter 2 suggest that members of the Cuallacht currently feel they carry much of the responsibility for promoting Irish with limited institutional backing. Strengthening supports such as those mentioned above would help to distribute that workload more fairly, grow participation, and normalise Irish-language social activity across the student body. In addition, an expanded Oifig na Gaeilge would enable closer collaboration with the Cuallacht, including practical support for planning and promoting events.

## **3.1.6**

### **External engagement and partnerships**

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#### **Recommendation 24: Deepen links with local and national Irish-language organisations**

It is recommended that a representative from Oifig na Gaeilge sit on the committee of *Gaeilge Nuada*, the local community organisation that promotes the use of Irish in Maynooth. Moreover, it is recommended that a formal link be established between Oifig na Gaeilge and the Oifigeach Gaeilge in Kildare County Council. These formalised links will facilitate sustained cooperation between Maynooth University and local and county-wide efforts to promote Irish.

Of particular importance is the relationship between Maynooth University and the communities in the nearby Meath Gaeltacht. There already exist ad hoc arrangements between individual members of academic and professional staff in the University and Comharchumann Ráth Chairn. There are a number of avenues for fruitful cooperation on language courses and knowledge exchange if the relationship between the two organisations is formalised. It is good to note that

curtha ag Déan Dhámh na nDán agus na nDaonnachtaí leis an bpróiseas sin le déanaí.

Moltar go ndéanfadh an Ollscoil teagmháil le hiarmhac léinn le Gaeilge ar bhealach foirmeálta. D'fhéadfaí an caidreamh sin a chothú agus suíochán a chruthú ar Choiste na Gaeilge d'ionadaí na n-iarmhac léinn, agus nuachtlitir nó liosta seachadta a chur ar bun d'iarmhac léinn a bhfuil suim acu sa Ghaeilge. Ina theannta sin, is féidir an caidreamh céanna a chothú trí chomhoibriú idir an Oifig um Fhorbairt agus um Chaidreamh le Céimithe (OFCC) agus Oifig na Gaeilge maidir le himeachtaí a chur ar siúl le hiarmhac léinn na hOllscoile, go háirithe le linn Sheachtain na Gaeilge.

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### **MoLadh 25: Leanúint ar aghaidh leis an nGaeilge a chur chun cinn sa Centre Culturel Irlandais (CCI) i bPáras**

Ar deireadh, moltar go dtógfaí ar an gcomhpháirtíocht atá ar bun le 20 bliain anuas idir Lárionad na Gaeilge agus an Centre Culturel Irlandais (CCI). D'fhéadfaí cur le dea-thionchar na comhpháirtíochta seo do OMN agus do phobal na Gaeilge sa CCI, trí níos mó deiseanna taistil a chruthú do bhaill foirne OMN a d'fhéadfadh cur leis an togra le linn dóibh seal cónaithe a chaitheamh sa CCI, agus do na foghlaimeoirí Gaeilge a d'fhéadfadh tairbhe a bhaint as sealanna tumoideachais in Éirinn. B'fhiú, chomh maith, cur leis an gcomhoibriú atá ar bun cheana féin le Conradh na Gaeilge agus le hAmbasáid na hÉireann i bPáras le cur le tionchar na hoibre chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn i bPáras féin agus ar bhonn níos forleithne ar mhór-roinn na hEorpa.



the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities has recently initiated that process.

It is recommended that the University engage with Irish-speaking alumni in a formalised manner. This relationship could be built through the creation of a seat on Coiste na Gaeilge for a representative of Maynooth University alumni and the establishment of a newsletter or mailing list for graduates interested in Irish. Moreover, the relationship can be fostered through collaboration between the Development and Alumni Relations Office (DARO) and Oifig na Gaeilge on Irish-language alumni events, especially during Seachtain na Gaeilge.

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**Recommendation 25: Continue to support the promotion of Irish at the Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris**

Finally, it is recommended that Lárionad na Gaeilge continue to build on its 20-year partnership with the Centre Culturel Irlandais (CCI), Paris. The positive impact of this partnership for both MU and the Irish-language community in the CCI could be further enhanced through increased mobility opportunities for MU staff who might contribute to the project during short residencies in the CCI, and for Irish-language learners who could deepen their engagement with the language through immersive learning opportunities in Ireland. Enhanced collaboration with Conradh na Gaeilge and the Irish Embassy in Paris could also help to increase the impact of the work to promote the use of the language in Paris and further afield on the European continent.

## 3.2 Conclúid

Tá léargas tugtha sa tuarascáil seo ar thraidisiún uasal Gaeilge Ollscoil Mhá Nuad; ar an rath atá ar an teanga faoi láthair san Ollscoil; agus ar an méid is féidir le pobal na hOllscoile a bhaint amach ó thaobh chur chun cinn na Gaeilge de.

I gCaibidil 1 tugtar spléachadh ar thraidisiún na Gaeilge i Maigh Nuad, ó bhí an scoláire ceannródaíoch Eoghan Ó Gramhnaigh ann ag deireadh an naoú haois déag, go dtí an obair atá idir lámha ag Scoil an Léinn Cheiltigh sa lá atá inniu ann, an obair mhór atá déanta ag glúnta mac léinn i gCuallacht Cholm Cille, agus díograis Oifig na Gaeilge le roinnt blianta anuas.

Léirítear i gCaibidil 2 den tuarascáil staid reatha na Gaeilge ar champas na hOllscoile: áit a bhfuil dea-thoil i measc an phobail i leith na teanga agus fonn orthu a bheith ag plé leis an nGaeilge níos mó, ach a bhfuil dúshláin phraiticiúla rompu.

Tá an Ollscoil ag pointe cinniúnach ina stair faoi láthair. I gCaibidil 3, leagtar amach fíis don Ghaeilge san Ollscoil, le gur féidir dul i ngleic leis na dúshláin sin ar bhealach cruthaitheach díograiseach. Fíis atá ann don teanga ina bhfuil níos mó ná dualgas i gceist léi: cuid bheo bhríomhar í de ghnáthshaol na hOllscoile, údar mórtais, spraoi agus muintearais do chách.

Chun an fhíis sin a bhaint amach, beidh ar an Ollscoil ar fad oibriú le chéile mar fhoireann. Faoi ardbhainistíocht na hOllscoile atá sé na hathruithe polasaí a mholtar sa cháipéis seo a chur i bhfeidhm agus na hacmhainní cuí a chur ar fáil. Is féidir le hoifigí agus ranna acadúla an Ghaeilge a thabhairt isteach ina gcuid oibre ach an tacaíocht chuí a fháil; is féidir le hOifig na Gaeilge, Cuallacht Cholm Cille agus AMLMN a bheith ag obair leis na mic léinn agus lena gcumann, chun iad a spreagadh le húsáid a bhaint as an teanga; agus is féidir leis na baill foirne agus leis na mic léinn uile, beag beann ar a gcumas, páirt a ghlacadh in imeachtaí agus úsáid a bhaint as seirbhísí Gaeilge de réir mar a chuirtear ar fáil iad.

Is plean atá sna moltaí a leagtar amach i gCaibidil 3, ach is é pobal na hOllscoile, i ndeireadh na dála, a thabharfaidh an plean sin chun críche. Níl aon amhras ach go bhfuil bunchloch láidir in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad ó thaobh na Gaeilge de: tá oidhreacht ar leith againn mar institiúid; tá a lán dea-thola i measc phobal na hOllscoile i leith na teanga; agus tacaíonn na polasaithe náisiúnta leis an dátheangachas anois níos mó ná riamh.

Is gá a aithint go raibh srianta áirithe ag baint leis an staidéar seo. Cé gur chomhlánaigh breis is 3,300 mac léinn agus ball foirne na suirbhéanna, ní mór a aithint gur sampla féinroghnaithe a bhí i gceist, agus go raibh an ráta rannpháirtíochta níos ísle i measc na mac léinn (c. 17%) ná mar a bhí i measc na mball foirne (c. 47%). Is ar chumas féintuairiscithe a bhí na torthaí cumais bunaithe agus mar gheall air sin is torthaí tascacha seachas torthaí deifnídeacha iad siúd. Ós rud é gur bailíodh corpas mór sonraí cáilíochtúla ó 50 agallamh

## 3.2 Conclusion

**This report has outlined the distinguished history of Irish at Maynooth University, the strong position the language currently occupies, and the significant potential for its continued development within the University community.**

Chapter 1 highlighted the deep roots of Irish in Maynooth, from the pioneering work of Eoghan Ó Gramhnaigh in the late nineteenth century to the scholarship of the School of Celtic Studies today; from the contribution of generations of students in Cuallacht Cholm Cille to the sustained efforts of Oifig na Gaeilge in recent years.

Chapter 2 examined the contemporary reality of Irish on campus: a community characterised by goodwill towards the language and an appetite for further engagement, but also by practical challenges that must be addressed.

MU currently stands at a crossroads. Chapter 3 set out a vision for the future, in which these challenges are met with creativity and commitment, and Irish is experienced not as an obligation or token gesture, but as a living, everyday part of university life: a source of pride, enjoyment, and belonging for all.

To realise this vision, the University as a whole will need to work together. Senior management is best placed to implement the policy changes proposed in this document and to provide the necessary resources. Academic and administrative units can integrate Irish into their day-to-day work, given the appropriate support. Oifig na Gaeilge, Cuallacht Cholm Cille and MSU can work with students and their societies to encourage active engagement with the language. Finally, staff and students at every level of proficiency can take part in events and make use of Irish-language services as they are made available.

The recommendations presented in Chapter 3 provide a clear roadmap for this work, but their success ultimately rests on the active engagement of the wider University community. What is certain is that Irish is in a position of strength at Maynooth: the Irish language here is supported by a distinctive historical legacy, sustained by a community full of goodwill and curiosity, and underpinned by a national language policy environment in which public sector bilingualism is a priority.

It is necessary to recognise the methodological constraints of this study. While the surveys were completed by over 3,300 staff and students, it must be acknowledged that this was a self-selecting sample, and that the overall response rate among students (c. 17%) was comparatively lower than that of staff (c. 47%). Results relating to language proficiency relied on self-assessment, and should therefore be viewed as indicative rather than definitive measures of competence. Given the scale of qualitative data gathered through 50 interviews and 5 focus groups, the approach to analysis was pragmatic, focusing on key themes relevant to the objectives and scope of the study. Further in-depth

agus 5 ghrúpa fócais, bhí cur chuige pragmatach ag teastáil don anailís, le díriú isteach ar na príomhthéamaí a bhain le cuspóirí agus le scóip an tionscadail. D'fhéadfaí anailís théamach níos cuimsithí a dhéanamh ar na sonraí sin amach anseo, le cur leis na léargais atá sa tuarascáil seo.

Ní bhaineann na srianta sin de luach na dtorthaí, áfach; léiríonn siad go bhfuil gá le tuilleadh taighde ar an ábhar agus le plé leanúnach i measc phobal na hOllscoile chun a chinntiú go gcuirfear i bhfeidhm na moltaí a leagtar amach i gCuid 3.1 ar bhealach cothrom cuimsitheach inmharthana. Tá gá le tuilleadh taighde ar na réimsí a phléitear sa tuarascáil seo, ina measc: conas is féidir seirbhísí Gaeilge a chur ar fáil, bailíocht an chumais fhéintuaisricthe, agus na constaicí struchtúrtha a chuireann cúl go minic ar pholasaí teanga in institiúidí tríú leibhéal.

Na moltaí atá sa tuarascáil seo, tá siad uailmhianach ach tá siad bunaithe ar fhianaise. Má ghlactar leo anois, is féidir le hOllscoil Mhá Nuad a bheith ina heiseamláir de champas dátheangach, áit ina bhfuiltear ag cloí leis na dualgais reachtúla agus ag déanamh níos mó ná sin, ag léiriú céard is dea-chleachtas ann agus an teanga á cur chun cinn in institiúid tríú leibhéal.

Ag breathnú chun cinn, is féidir Ollscoil Mhá Nuad a shamhlú i gceann deich mbliana: campas ina gcloistear an Ghaeilge go nádúrtha i gcomhráite laethúla na mac léinn; ina gcuirtear fáilte roimh chuariteoirí i nGaeilge ag pointí seirbhíse; ina mbíonn an chomharthaíocht agus na fógraí digiteacha dátheangach i ngach áit; ina dtugann mic léinn idirnáisiúnta faoin nGaeilge mar chuid dá dtaithí idirchultúrtha; ina n-aithnítear go bhfuil na ranna acadúla i Scoil an Léinn Cheiltigh ar thús cadhnaíochta i dteagasc, i dtaighde agus i dtástáil na Gaeilge; ina mbíonn deis ag gach mac léinn agus ball foirne tairbhe éigin a bhaint as an nGaeilge i saol an champais; agus ina dtuigeann siad go mbaineann oidhreacht uasal Ghaeilge leis an gcampas céanna.

Is féidir an fhís sin a fhíorú. Má ghlactar leis na moltaí a leagtar amach sa tuarascáil seo, beidh Ollscoil Mhá Nuad in ann campas dátheangach a bhaint amach, áit a mbeidh an teanga faoi bhláth agus áit a ndéanfaidh sí saibhriú ar eispéireas phobal na hOllscoile ar fad.

thematic analysis of the dataset could be conducted in the future to build on the insights presented in this report.

These limitations do not diminish the value of the findings; rather, they underline the need for further research and ongoing dialogue with the University community to ensure that the recommendations in Section 3.1 are implemented in a fair, inclusive, and sustainable manner. Further research is needed across the areas highlighted by the report, including the feasibility of providing Irish-medium services, the validity of the self-assessed competency findings, and the structural barriers that can limit successful language policy implementation in a third-level institution.

By acting now on those ambitious, evidence-based recommendations, Maynooth University has the opportunity to establish itself as a model of a bilingual campus; to not only meet but exceed legislative requirements; and to demonstrate how an Irish university can foreground and celebrate the Irish language in its local context while complying with statutory obligations.

Looking ahead, one can envisage Maynooth University a decade from now: a campus where Irish is heard in everyday conversation among students; where staff at service points routinely greet visitors in Irish; where bilingual signage and digital displays are the norm; where international students embrace Irish as part of their intercultural experience; where academic departments are recognised for their leadership in Irish-language research; where every student and member of staff has the opportunity to benefit, in some respect, from the presence of Irish in their University life; and where staff and students are aware of the campus's unique Irish language heritage.

This future is attainable. By following the recommendations set out in this report, Maynooth University can realise the vision of a thriving bilingual campus in which Irish flourishes and enriches the entire University community.

**Ní leor an dea-thoil amháin chun dul chun cinn a bhaint amach i réimse na pleanála teanga. Chun fíorathrú a chur i gcrích, teastaíonn struchtúir agus freagrachtaí soiléire, infheistíocht leanúnach i bhforbairt foirne, agus timpeallacht champais ina bhfuil an Ghaeilge le feiceáil agus le cloisteáil, chun a chinntiú gur gnáthchuid de shaol laethúil na hOllscoile í an Ghaeilge feasta.**

**Goodwill alone is not enough to achieve progress in language planning. To deliver real change, clear structures and responsibilities, sustained investment in staff development, and a campus environment in which Irish is seen and heard are required, to ensure that Irish becomes a normal part of everyday university life.**





## Liosta na léaráidí / List of Figures

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|    |  |     |
|----|--|-----|
| 1  | “Cuireann an Ghaeilge le saibhreas na hOllscoile.”<br>“Irish adds value to the University.”  | 66  |
| 2  | “Ba cheart an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar an gcampus.”<br>“Irish should be promoted on campus.”   | 68  |
| 3  | Cumas Gaeilge féinmheasúnaithe na mball foirne<br>Self-reported staff proficiency  | 80  |
| 4  | Cumas Gaeilge féinmheasúnaithe na mac léinn<br>Self-reported student proficiency   | 84  |
| 5  | “Ba mhór agam níos mó deiseanna Gaeilge a úsáid ar an gcampus.” (Mic léinn)<br>“I would like to have more opportunities to use Irish on campus.” (Students)                | 84  |
| 6  | “Ba mhaith liom feabhas a chur ar mo chuid Gaeilge.” (Baill foirne)<br>“I would like to improve my Irish” (Staff)  | 90  |
| 7  | “Ba mhaith liom feabhas a chur ar mo chuid Gaeilge.” (Mic léinn)<br>“I would like to improve my Irish.” (Students)   | 96  |
| 8  | “Ar mhaith leat tabhairt faoi chúrsa le feabhas a chur ar do chuid Gaeilge?” (Mic léinn)<br>“Would you be interested in taking a course to improve your Irish?” (Students) | 96  |
| 9  | “Is buntáiste í an Ghaeilge i gcomhthéacs deiseanna gairme.” (Mic léinn)<br>“Learning Irish is beneficial for career opportunities.” (Students)                            | 104 |
| 10 | Iardháltaí Gaelscoileanna nach n-úsáideann an Ghaeilge riamh ar an gcampus.<br>Student respondents who attended Irish-medium schools but never use Irish on campus.        | 106 |
| 11 | “Ba mhaith liom feabhas a chur ar mo chuid Gaeilge.” (Baill foirne)<br>“I would like to improve my Irish.” (Staff)   | 110 |
| 12 | “Bheadh spéis agam Gaeilge a úsáid i mo ról.” (Baill foirne)<br>“I would be interested in using Irish in my role.” (Staff)   | 110 |
| 13 | “D’fhéadfainn cuid de mo ról a dhéanamh trí mheán na Gaeilge.” (Baill foirne)<br>“I would be able to perform some of my role through the medium of Irish.” (Staff)         | 110 |
| 14 | “Bíonn mo dhóthain deiseanna agam an Ghaeilge a úsáid in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad.” (Baill foirne)<br>“I have enough opportunities to use Irish in Maynooth University.” (Staff)  | 120 |
| 15 | “Bíonn sé éasca teacht ar dhaoine ar an gcampus chun Gaeilge a labhairt leo.” (Baill foirne)<br>“It’s easy to find people on the campus to speak Irish to.” (Staff)        | 120 |
| 16 | “Tuigim cén áit ar féidir liom an Ghaeilge a úsáid ar an gcampus.” (Baill foirne)<br>“I know where I can use Irish on the campus.” (Staff)                                 | 120 |
| 17 | “Ba cheart go mbeadh níos mó spásanna Gaeilge-amháin ar an gcampus.”<br>“More space on campus should be dedicated to using Irish.”   | 124 |
| 18 | “Ba mhaith liom níos mó Gaeilge a fheiceáil ar chomharthaí na hOllscoile.”<br>“I would like to see more Irish-language signage on the campus.”                             | 128 |
| 19 | Tuiscint ar Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021 (Baill foirne)<br>Awareness of the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021 (Staff)                                   | 170 |

## Liosta na dtáblaí / List of Tables

|   |   |    |
|---|---|----|
| 1 | Dáileadh an chumais i measc na foirne de réir na roinne<br>Distribution of staff proficiency by department  | 80 |
| 2 | Cumas faoi cheilt i measc na foirne<br>Untapped staff proficiency   | 82 |
| 3 | An modh foghlama ab fhearr le baill foirne a bhfuil suim acu tabhairt faoi chúrsa Gaeilge<br>Preferred learning method among staff interested in taking an Irish course | 90 |
| 4 | An modh foghlama ab fhearr le mic léinn a bhfuil suim acu tabhairt faoi chúrsa Gaeilge<br>Preferred learning methods among students interested in an Irish course       | 99 |

## Liosta na ngiorrúchán / List of abbreviations

|             |   |  |
|-------------|---|--|
| AMLMN / MSU | Aontas na Mac Léinn Mhá Nuad                    | Maynooth Students' Union                             |
| CCI         | Centre Culturel Irlandais                       | Centre Culturel Irlandais                            |
| CÉI / EDI   | Comhionannas, éagsúlacht agus ionchuimsitheacht | Equality, diversity and inclusion                    |
| CROMN / MAP | Clár Rochtana Ollscoil Mhá Nuad                 | Maynooth Access Programme                            |
| FA / AS     | Foireann acadúil                                | Academic staff                                       |
| FTCE / CEFR | Fráma Tagartha Comónta Eorpach do Theangacha    | Common European Framework of Reference for Languages |
| GFML/ SFG   | Student focus group participants                | Grúpa fócais na mac léinn                            |
| ML          | Mac léinn                                       | Student  |
| OMN / MU    | Ollscoil Mhá Nuad                               | Maynooth University                                  |
| FP/ PS      | Foireann phroifisiúnta                          | Professional staff                                   |
| TEG         | Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge                      | Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge                           |
| TS / EC     | Teagmhálaí seachtrach                           | External contact                                     |

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## Lárionad na Gaeilge

Taighde, Teagasc agus Tástáil

Ollscoil Mhá Nuad,  
Maigh Nuad,  
Co. Chill Dara, Éire





**Ollscoil  
Mhá Nuad**  
Ollscoil na hÉireann  
Má Nuad